

The Book of PSALMS
Psalms 83 – 84
“Israel’s Enemies & The House of God”

Psalm 83 – “A Prayer Against Israel’s Enemies”

(This is the last Psalm of Asaph.)

(v1-4) Today Israel is in the same position as yesterday - One commentary reads, “Two names of God open the psalm — Elohim and El, and two names close it — Jehovah and El Elyon (God Most High). The last name reminds us of Abraham's victory over the kings and his meeting with Melchizedek (Gen 14:18-20). Asaph was troubled because the Lord had said nothing through His prophets and done nothing through His providential workings to stop the huge confederacy from advancing. Literally he prayed, "Let there be no rest to you" (see 28:1-2; 35:21-22; 39:12; 109:11; Isa 62:6). These were God's enemies, attacking God's people, and threatening God's "protected ones" (see 27:5 and 31:21), so it was time for God to take notice and act! The invaders were many, they were united, and they proudly lifted their heads as they defied the Lord God of Israel (see 2:1-3). They had secretly plotted together but were now "roaring like the sea" (v. 2 "tumult"; see 46:3). Their purpose was to destroy God's people and take possession of the land (v. 12). It appears that Moab and Ammon, the incestuous sons of Lot (Gen 19), were the leaders of the coalition, encouraged by Assyria, which was not yet a world power (v. 8). Moab and Ammon would come from the east, along with the Ishmaelites, and Edom would come from the southeast along with their neighbor Gebal. Ishmael was the enemy and rival of Isaac (Gen 21:1-21). The Hagerites lived northeast of Israel and the Amalekites lived southwest. The people of Philistia and Phoenicia (Tyre) were west of Israel. The enemy came against Israel from every direction and had the people surrounded!”

(v5-8) A consortium of nations, tribes and peoples are against Israel. Just like the Arab League, the United Nations, and soon the European Union with their world leader, the Anti-Christ in the Great Tribulation.

> Observe the geography:

- **Edom ... Hagrites.** The list of nations represents Israel’s enemies throughout its history. Edom descended from Esau and lived SE of Israel. The Ishmaelites, descendants from Abraham and Hagar, were Bedouin tribes. The Moabites descended from Lot (cf. v. 8) and were tribal people living E of the Jordan (cf. Jdg 11:17, 18; Is 15, 16). The Hagrites were a nomadic tribe living E of the Jordan (1Ch 5:10, 19, 20).

- **Gebal ... Tyre.** Gebal was probably a community S of the Dead Sea, near Petra in Edom. Ammon, a nation descending from Lot, was located E of the Jordan River. The Amalekites, nomads living SE of the Jordan River, were descendants of Esau (cf. Ge 36:12, 16; Ex 17:8–13; Nu 24:20; Jdg 6:3; 1Sa 15:1–8). Philistia was located SW of Israel (Jdg 14–16). Tyre was NW of Israel (cf. Eze 27).

- **Assyria** - This dominant nation of the eighth century B.C. took captive the northern 10 tribes of Israel in 722 B.C. Assyria used smaller nations, like Moab and Ammon (the children of Lot; cf. Ge 19:36–38), to accomplish its military goals. (MacArthur Study Bible)



> Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum list the nations as follows:

- *Edom* - Southern Jordan
- *Ishmaelites* – Ishmael was one of the fathers of all the Arabs
- *Moab* – Central Jordan
- *Hagarenes* – Egypt
- *Gebal* – Lebanon
- *Ammon* – Northern Jordan
- *Amalek* – The Sinai Peninsula
- *Philistia* – The Gaza Strip
- *Tyre* – Lebanon
- *Assyria* – Primarily Iraq and parts of Syria

(v9-12) The Psalmist gives a victorious history lesson, as well as a request of God to do the same against these enemies of Israel.

- **Verse 9 Midian and Jabin** - The psalmist reminds God of past victories; Gideon had defeated the Midianites (Judges 7:19–25); Barak and Deborah defeated Jabin and his army commander, Sisera, near the Brook Kishon (Judges 4, 5).
- **Verse 11 Oreb and Zalmunna** - These men were leaders of the Midianites when they were defeated by Gideon (Judges 6–8).

(v13-18) God will answer this prayer!

Psalm 84 – “Blessed are those Who Dwell in the House of God!”

(v1-4) God’s house is lovely; it is our desire to dwell in the house of the LORD forever!

(v5-8) The pilgrim’s progress- Hebrews 11:11-16. The *Valley of Baca* speaks of “weeping” or “balsam tree.” The valley was an arid place on the way to Jerusalem, but the pilgrims on the way to a festival in Jerusalem would worship God and turn the valley into a place of joy!

(v9-12) Meditate on these verses for they are glorious!