

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith LXXXII: Resting In God's Sure Coming Judgment Of Unjust Judges (Psalm 82:1-8)

I. Introduction

- A. Similar to Psalm 58, Psalm 82 predicts God's judgment on unjust judges, what is applicable in our time as many citizens and regularly complain today about "activist" judges who push a political agenda above the law.
- B. Psalm 82 emphasizes the *certainty* of this judgment, and acts to encourage oppressed people today as follows:

II. Resting In God's Sure Coming Judgment Of Unjust Judges, Psalm 82:1-8.

- A. The introductory remarks of this psalm comprise the first part of verse one in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1048), so we stay with the numbering system of the English Bible in this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 82:1-8 as follows:
 - 1. "Elohim stations Himself, takes His stand (*nasab*, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 662) in the assembly of the 'Elohim' [judges; *Ibid.*, p. 43; (Elohim generally means "God," but it can also refer to judges or rulers who carry some degree of His authority over other people in their occupations.); He passes judgment in the midst of the 'Elohim' [judges]," Psalm 82:1.
 - 2. "'How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked?' Selah," Psalm 82:2.
 - 3. "'Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the right of the poor and oppressed,'" Psalm 82:3.
 - 4. "'Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked,'" Psalm 82:4.
 - 5. "'They know nothing, they understand nothing. They walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken (a figure of insecurity in society due to errant judgments by the judges)," Psalm 82:5.
 - 6. "'I Myself (emph. pron.) said, 'You (emph. pron.) are 'Elohim' [judges], and all of you are sons of the Most High!'" (Psalm 82:6)
 - 7. "'Surely you will die as common men (*'adam*, *Ibid.*, Kittel; Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 45-50; **NOT 'ish**, "noblemen," as they were in their offices as judges), and you will fall like every other ruler,'" Psalm 82:7.
 - 8. "'Rise up, O Elohim, pass judgment on the earth, because You (emph. pron.) inherit all the nations," v. 8.
- C. We note significant observations and applications regarding this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. The psalmist addresses the people of the congregation who have faced unjust judgment by powerful judges, people who are afflicted by such oppression, so the emphasis throughout the psalm is on God's sovereign and sure dealings of judgment on the unjust judges as the solution to this tension.
 - 2. Accordingly, God takes His place as the Supreme Justice to pass judgment on the whole assembly of unjust judges who abuse their offices for the sake of personal interests or agendas, v. 1.
 - 3. The sins of these judges are unjust rulings where the wicked are shown unfair partiality while vulnerable people who are innocent and needy are abused by the rulings of the unjust judges, v. 2-3.
 - 4. The psalmist notes that the cause of this injustice is spiritual ignorance and darkness in the judges (v. 5a), what leads to rulings that cause even the foundations of the social order to shake in instability, v. 5b.
 - 5. God Himself claims that He Himself has set up these men as judges (v. 6a) to represent His rulings by how they function in court (v. 6b). Note how this claim agrees with Romans 13:1 and 1 Peter 2:13-15.
 - 6. However, these judges have failed in their callings from God, so He promises to give them an ignoble end, dying like common men instead of honored noblemen, going the route of all [evil] rulers who die, v. 7.
 - 7. The Psalmist calls on God to rise up and judge the whole world as the Inheritor of the nations (v. 8), making Him sovereign as Almighty God over not only the abusive judges, but also over the wicked men these judges shelter by their unjust court rulings, what encourages the afflicted to rest in the Lord!

Lesson: *If the godly are oppressed due to the unjust rulings of judges, God wants them to recall that He is the Supreme Justice Who will administer justice upon such unjust judges as well as judge the whole world! Thus, the oppressed godly need to absolve their frustration by putting their hope in God and His coming, sure judgment!*

Application: *(1) If we face an unjust ruling by an unjust, "activist" judge, may we put our hope in God's final justice that will be administered on all such judges. (2) If we sense instability in society due to unjust rulings, God wants us to hope in Him for the final resolution to the problem instead of becoming insecure over the instability in society that the bad rulings produce. After all, our Source of security should not be our society, but the LORD!*