

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

LXXXIII: Resting In God's Vengeance On One's Relatives

(Psalm 83:1-18)

I. Introduction

- A. Family and even extended family in one's relatives are generally considered to be supportive of a given party.
- B. However, sometimes great wrongs occur to a party by his relatives, producing special frustration and pain.
- C. We must leave the matter of vengeance with our relatives for God to handle, what Psalm 83:1-18 instructs:

II. Resting In God's Vengeance On One's Relatives, Psalm 83:1-18.

- A. The introductory remarks of this psalm comprise the first 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 83:1-18 as follows:
 1. "O Elohim, do not stay inactive; do not be silent and do not be undisturbed, O Elohim," Psalm 83:1.
 2. "Because, behold how Your enemies are boisterous, and how Your foes rear their heads," Psalm 83:2.
 3. "Against Your people they make crafty counsel, and they conspire against those You treasure," Psa. 83:3.
 4. "They say, 'Come, and let us destroy them as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more,'" 4.
 5. "Because with one mind they plot together; against You they form an alliance --" (Psalm 83:5)
 6. "the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, of Moab and the Hagrites (NIV)," Psalm 83:6.
 7. "Gebal (Byblos) Ammon and Amalek; Philistia, with the people of Tyre," Psalm 83:7.
 8. "Even Assyria has joined them to lend strength to the descendants of Lot. Selah," Psalm 83:8.
 9. "Do unto them just as You did to Midian, as You did to Sisera and Jabin at the River Kishon," Psalm 83:9.
 10. "who perished at Endor and became as manure on the ground," Psalm 83:10.
 11. "Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna," Psalm 83:11.
 12. "who said, 'Let us take possession of the pasturelands of Elohim,'" Psalm 83:12.
 13. "O my Elohim, make them like tumbleweed, like chaff before the wind," Psalm 83:13.
 14. "As fire consumes the forest or a flame sets the mountains ablaze," Psalm 83:14.
 15. "so pursue them with Your tempest and terrify them with Your storm," Psalm 83:15.
 16. "Cover their faces with shame so that men will seek Your Name, O Jahweh," Psalm 83:16.
 17. "Let them be ashamed and dismayed forever; let them be humiliated and perish," Psalm 83:17.
 18. "Let them know that it is You, Whose name is Jahweh, that You by Yourself, are the Most High over all the earth," Psalm 83:18.
- C. We note significant observations and applications regarding this psalm (as follows):
 1. Five of the ten nations named as Israel's foes in verses 6-8 were "relative" nations [**Ammon** and **Moab**, the descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot (Gen. 19:29-38); the **Ishmaelites**, descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael by Sarah's handmaid (Gen. 16:1-16); the **Amalekites**, descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother (Gen. 36:12) and **Edom**, Esau's descendants in general (Gen. 36:9)], but *these "relative" nations were in league with the Gentile nations* (Hagrites, Gebal, Philistia, Tyre and Assyria) *in order to destroy Israel*.
 2. Also, the reference in v. 8 to Israel's enemies of Moab and Ammon being "the descendants of Lot," Abraham's nephew, emphasizes the **relationship** of these nations to Israel as *relative* nations!
 3. Thus, the psalm's appeal to God for His vengeance on Israel's foes readily applies to a believer's need for vengeance with relatives who have wronged him, which appeal is given in Psalm 83:1-5, 9-18.
 4. This appeal has historical precedents: the psalmist recalls God's vengeance on Midian (v. 9) and its princes Oreb and Zeeb and kings Zebah and Zalmunna via Gideon (Jud. 7:1-8:21), and the Midianites descended from Abraham through his mistress Keturah whom he wed after Sarah's death, Gen. 23:1-20 with 25:1-6. Thus, if God has already previously exacted vengeance on one's relatives for past wrongs, these are signals of God's just dealings yet again to be administered in His justice.
 5. The purpose of such divine vengeance is the glory of God Himself, Psalm 83:18.

Lesson: *If a believer is wronged by a relative, as in cases where others wrong him, he must leave room for divine vengeance, and draw encouragement from God's past acts of vengeance that He will deal out justice for His glory!*

Application: *If badly wronged by a relative, may we leave room for God's vengeance by returning kindness for evil (Romans 12:19), drawing encouragement from God's past acts of similar vengeance that He WILL deal justly!*