

A Sun and Shield

Psalms Eighty-Two, Eighty-Three and Eighty-Four

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~ Our Spiritual Safari begins this leg of our continuing expedition through the entire Word of God with a Psalm that has been very much misunderstood. In fact, I would say it is completely misunderstood today. The critic will generally drag out this particular Psalm – eighty two – for ridicule in an attempt to deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Naturally, the inability to comprehend the prophetic nature of all the Psalms leads to wild and weird displays of interpretation and application – even by well-meaning Christians. Unless we understand that nearly every single Psalm we have examined thus far looks forward to the future of the Godly remnant of the Nation Israel at the end of this age, during the Great Tribulation period, we commit a misapplication and misquoting that is, frankly, blasphemous.

Until we can interpret Psalms in their proper settings, failure at conveying them to others is inevitable and imminent. The Psalms deal with the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, friends. That's first and foremost. God will execute a judgment *in that day* in which Christ returns to establish His Kingdom here upon the earth; when God the Father also saves the remnant of the nation Israel, and the only reason God the Father is going to do that is for the Glory of His Only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. To begin anywhere else with your interpretation of the Psalms is to miss the meaning altogether; it simply cannot be otherwise....

~~XXXXXX~~ ~ (A Psalm of Asaph)

1 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.

2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Psalms Eighty-Two, Eighty-Three and Eighty-Four

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4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

***5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness:
all the foundations of the earth are out of course.***

6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.

7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

~ God hasn't stood in the congregation of the mighty yet; it will happen — *in that day* — when the Millennium Kingdom is established. The Lord will “*judge among the gods*” — meaning He will judge the judges. This is very important to understand. See, the judges of today that sit on the benches of our courtrooms stand in God's place; particularly when they have the authority to take a life. To entrust a man with that much power, He simply must be a Godly man! That was all written into the Mosaic Law. The Pharisees knew this when they accused Jesus of blaspheme for claiming He was God, too, by the way. Whenever one judges the fate of another man, they assume the role of God Almighty. Well, when the Lord Jesus comes to this earth to establish His Kingdom, He is going to defend the poor, fatherless, needy and afflicted. That, my friend, is as foreign to modern “*justice*” as one can possibly get.

In this world, we have rich man's justice and poor man's justice — and they are two very different justices. Anyone who denies that fact is simply not worthy of thoughtful consideration. That judicial imbalance may be the biggest problem any society has. Frankly, the number of Godless men in offices of power today scares me to death. The rich man never receives the full wrath of man's law; but the poor man pays dearly for the smallest infractions against man's laws. Some people use that truth as a reason to throw out *ALL* law; but what they really mean is: there shouldn't be any law unless they are personally wronged. Well, God says, “*I want you to defend the poor and give everyone equal justice.*” That's just not happening, friends. I hear a lot of talk about affording the poor an opportunity; and the

politician speaks incessantly of it — as if they had thought it up — but it isn't new. In fact, that idea is at least as old as the Book of Psalms....

XXXXDD ~ (A Song or Psalm of Asaph)

1 Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God.

2 For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head.

3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

5 For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee:

~ This is the last Psalm from Asaph, and it concludes a cluster of Psalms that belong together; and we have considered them that way. Frankly, this Psalm is puzzling. It doesn't seem to fit anywhere into the history of the nation Israel. I believe that's why it was just thrown in as his final Psalm; but that's just a guess — and since our safari doesn't guess at the Bible, don't quote me on that. Some have attempted to fit this into the time of Jehoshaphat; others have made claims that vary widely. Well, I would rather tell you readers I just don't know as opposed to guessing. What we do know for sure is that Asaph is speaking of those people who express their hatred of God and who have plotted against His chosen people — the nation Israel....

6 The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;

7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

***8 Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot.
Selah.***

~ The Ishmaelites in verse six definitely refer to the Arab's. The "children of Lot" were Moab and Edom. Because we cannot pinpoint a historical time period, it would *SEEM* to indicate it looks forward to the future. Apparently, these nations existed at one time, but have since disappeared, and will reappear again. Today, Israel is surrounded and inhabited by mostly Arabs – although not all are Arab – but they join together in one accord as Moslems. Either way you cut it, they are opposed to the nation Israel. That makes this a very interesting passage of Scripture to me, and a deeply mysterious passage, too. That said, I don't see any point dealing with the first half of this Psalm further; although I think we could deal with it further in many ways, considering the second half of the Psalm – but let's just move on....

9 Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison:

10 Which perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth.

11 Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna:

12 Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

13 O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind.

14 As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire;

15 So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

16 Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

17 Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish:

~ Verses nine through the end constitute an imprecatory Psalm asking God to send righteous judgment. The last half brings a retrospect of the past. Asaph is saying to God, “.... *judge as You have judged in the past.*” We saw how the nations mentioned in verse nine were judged in the Book of Judges. Many people seem to think God won’t judge in the future — as He has in the past; but, I have some bad news for you: God hasn’t changed. Whatever God has done in the past could easily be repeated in the future. Now, I don’t think we should be praying this type of prayer today. We’re told to pray for our enemies; but I am not going to pray that they keep on being my enemy. No, I pray that the Lord would choose them for salvation — and that they would turn to God — but that may mean that He has to deal with them in judgment. That’s the way we are to call for judgment; just as Asaph had the right to call for judgment in this Psalm. Again, this is so important to understand that I just don’t feel like I can make it clear enough to you readers....

18 That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.

~ I am convinced that the only way this world is going to know and accept that God is God today is for Him to move in judgment. The goodness and mercy of God should lead men to repentance — but it doesn’t. If men and women had any sensitivity to the goodness and love of God, they would be drawn to Him; but, because their hearts are so utterly hardened and insensitive today, it only seems to drive them further and further away from Him.

When this country was a frontier and pioneering nation, we were totally dependant upon God. Our modern day sophistication and affluence has lulled us into the lie that we no longer need Him. That’s the realm Satan presently operates in. The devil reminds us that we have nuclear weapons, and a monster-sized army. Amazingly, those are exactly the reasons we need God more than ever. See, friends, the devil isn’t stupid — Satan is smarter than you and I put together; you can bet your life on that....

לְחַלְחֵל ~ (To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah)

1 How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my King, and my God.

4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.

5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.

6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

7 They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

12 O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

~ We are still in the Leviticus section of the Book of Psalms; and verse one of Psalm eighty-three takes us into the tabernacle. The sons of Korah served in the tabernacle – and later in the temple. When our Spiritual Safari considered first Chronicles chapter twenty-six, I intentionally passed right over this reference. Beginning at verse one of that chapter, there is a long list of the Korhites. Remember, one of them had led the rebellion against Moses and was judged accordingly. Only by the grace of God did that family escape total judgment; and, being Levites, here they are serving in the temple. These were the temple guards at each gate, by the way.

Does your heart cry out for the True and Living God today? Do you love to meet with God's people? I recognize there are churches where one might be heavily criticized — and likely become the subject of gossip and ridicule — and there isn't much real fellowship – trust me, I know all about that — but it may be where God wants you. I also know there are still wonderful, God-fearing, Bible-loving churches around. It may take some effort to find them — but they are out there. And, either way, the church body is the place for real fellowship.

If we will pray and ask for the leading of the Lord, then He *will* lead us to a genuine Bible-believing church, and Spirit-filled teacher, who honestly preaches the Word of God — and to a place where the Lord Jesus Christ is exalted. It will do you well to search that place out and get involved. There was a time when the church was the center of social life in this country; unfortunately, I realize it isn't even the center of religious life today. It's, well, it's something else entirely. Even so, the sanctuary is the best place for us to look upon the Face of the Messiah — the Lord Jesus Christ. The sanctuary is the place of worship. The writer of this Psalm was a simple doorkeeper in the sanctuary. Interestingly, that's sort of what I am in my church. The only place you are ever going to grow and be blessed is in the church; it simply will not be otherwise ~

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