

Sunday Night Message

March 1, 2015

Psalm 83

Series – The Psalms

Text – Psalm 83

Introduction to the Psalms of Asaph

Psalm 73 through 83 (as well as Psalm 50, are attributed to Asaph. Asaph was a musician who was also a worship leader in the sanctuary. (See 1 Chronicles 15:16–19; 16:4–7, 37–42; 2 Chronicles 5:12–14; 29:13; 35:15).

This is the last of the psalms of Asaph. This is an imprecatory prayer, which is a cry for justice; a cry for God to make things right.

I The Prayer (vs. 1; 13 – 17)

These verses tell us what the psalmist is actually asking God to do.

II The Problem (vs. 2 – 8)

See PowerPoint slide

Some have tried to place this coalition of nations historically within the time of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20:1 – 30. However, only three nations are mentioned there. Here in Psalm 83, there are 10 nations mentioned.

The scene depicted here does not seem to fit perfectly in any period of biblical history. However, we know that all of these nations have been the enemies of God's people throughout their history; and many still are today. Israel is still surrounded by nations that hate them.

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!¹

The world around us hates the church and the Christians that are fully yielded to God:

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14)

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me." (John 15:18-21)

On a practical note, when everything in your world has turned against you, pray.

III The Past (vs. 9 – 12)

See Judges 7 – 8 for the victory described here in these verses. Asaph was asking God to move against Israel's present (and perhaps future) enemies as he did in the time of Gideon.

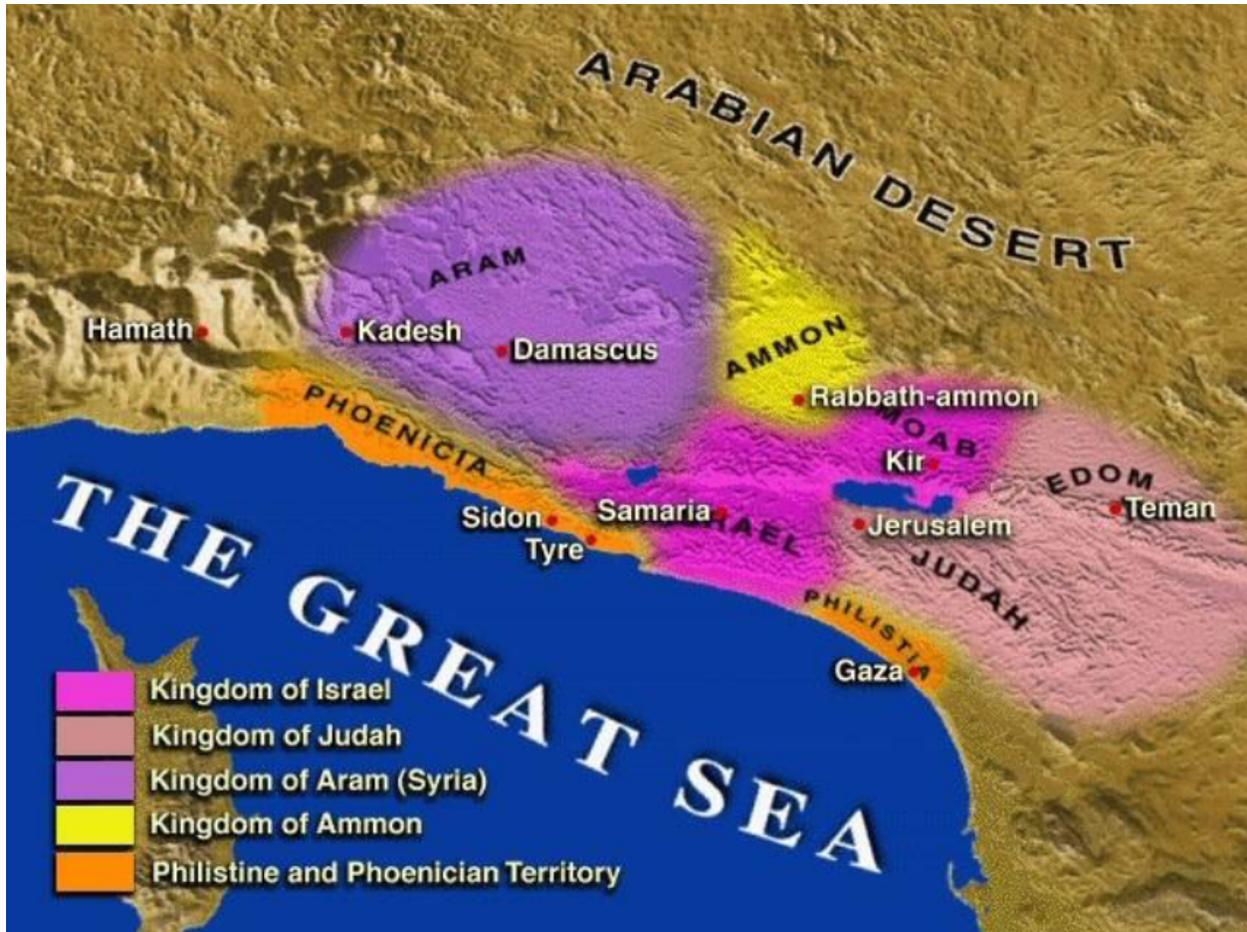
IV The Purpose (vs. 16b; 18)

- 1 That the enemies of God's people would seek God's face (v. 16 b)
- 2 That God would be glorified (v. 18)

These should be the prayer requests that are on our lips today. If were to ask God to move in judgment against this world today, it would be for these same reasons.

Of course, some day God will move in a final judgment against those that hate Him. (See 2 Peter 3)

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). *Be worshipful* (1st ed., p. 270). Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries.



PowerPoint slide of some of the nations that were in existence during the time of Elijah, which may not be the accurate historical context we are dealing with in this psalm, but it will give us a general idea of the locations of these nations.