

Studies in Psalms by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalm 83

1/9/13

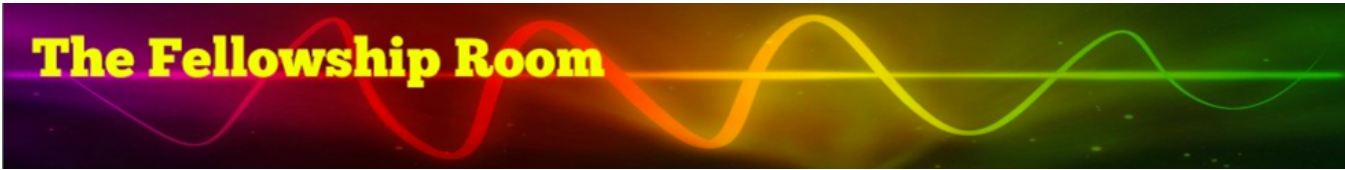
Vs. 1-8 describe the ominous situation Israel is in;
Vs. 9-18 place their appeal before God.

This is the last of the dozen Psalms written by Asaph. Again, there doesn't seem to be any certainty as to when, why, where, or what this Psalm specifically refers to, but there is no reason to question its place in the Book.

Verses 1-8: In **verse 1**, there are three ways God could be silent: closed mouth ("silent"), deaf ears ("hold Your peace"), or be in a state of tranquility ("still"). Typically, when trouble arises, people mistake God's quietness for either His inability to respond or His insensibility to their needs. God's silence is not always a sign of either, but may be His way of waiting for people to listen to Him, and obey (what He has said in the Bible, for instance).

By contrast, **verse 2-5** describe the activities of enemies: (**verse 2**) "make a tumult," lift "up their head," (**verse 3**) take "crafty counsel against" God's "people," "consulted together against" God's people, (**verse 4**) planned to "cut them off from *being* a nation," (**verse 5**) "form a confederacy against" God. **Verses 6-8** make a composite picture of enemies of the past, thus indicating that God's people have lived, and still live, in a hostile world. **Verse 6:** Edom (Jacob's rejected brother, [Genesis 25:20](#)); Ishmaelite's (Ishmael's mother, Hagar, was Sarai's handmaid, [Genesis 16:8-11](#), and he was not the child promised by God, [Galatians 4:21-31](#)); Moab (a son of incest by Lot and his daughter, [Genesis 19:30-38](#), whose people caused sin among Israelites, [Numbers 25:1-4](#)); Hagrites (vanquished out of Palestine, [1 Chronicles 5:18-21](#)); **Verse 7:** Gebal (vanquished out of Palestine, [Joshua 13:5-6](#); [1 Kings 5:18](#)); Ammon (a son of incest by Lot and his other daughter, [Genesis 19:36-38](#), whose people were slaughtered by King Saul, [I Samuel 11:11](#)); Amalek (grandson of Esau, [Genesis 36:12](#), whose people were constant enemies of Israel, [Numbers 14:45](#), and were to be destroyed, [Deuteronomy 25:17-19](#)); Philistia and its city of Tyre (constant conquerors of Israel, Book of [Judges](#)); **Verse 8:** Assyria (founded by Nimrod and often powerful destructive people to Israel, [Genesis 10:9-11](#)).

Verses 9-12: Call to God to destroy enemies as He had done before: **Verses 9-10:** Midian ([Numbers 31:1-12](#)), Sisera ([Judges 4:15-24](#)), Jabin ([Judges 4:24](#); [Judges 5:20-21](#)). **Verse 11-12:** Oreb and Zeeb ([Judges 7:25](#)), Zebah and Zalmunna ([Judges 8:4-28](#)), who thought to capture Israel's Promised Land.



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Verses 13-18: Only God can destroy these enemies like: (**verse 13**) restless “whirling dust,” and “chaff” blown by wind; (**verse 14**) fire burns wood, forest fire on the mountain; (**verse 15**) the terror of “tempest,” the fear of a storm. The purpose is to bring them to “shame” (**verse 16-17**) and humility before God; and (**verse 18**) prove that “the LORD” is “the Most High over all the earth.”

The church of Christ today, as the body of Christ ([Colossians 1:18](#)), lives among diverse enemies ([John 15:18-25](#); [1 John 3:11-13](#)), and still needs for God to hear and help ([Acts 18:1-10](#); [2 Corinthians 13:11](#)).

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