

Part 3 – The League of Nations

In part 2 we learned that it took *a lot* of work for the heathen nations to form a confederate together against the Lord God (YHVH) and against His ‘hidden ones’ (i.e. Israel) who He was protecting, because they (the southern kingdom of Judah) were actually obeying Him at the time this Psalm was written. And it took a lot of work for the leaders of the heathen nations to come together - in agreement, to form a military alliance between their many nations - simply because *they often fought each other*. So, they had to decide to put away their differences (for the time, at least) and work together to fight against Israel. And their intent wasn’t merely to conquer Israel (the southern kingdom of Judah) but to actually annihilate them – even anything that would cause future generations to have any memory they even existed. How some things never change. The world still tries hard to erase the fact that the true Israelites are not the “Jews” living in the tiny land we now call “Israel” (which used to be called Palestine) but are truly the white Caucasians living in the Christian nations. And the heathen nations are *still* trying to annihilate them (physically) today too. However, much of this isn’t done through external warfare anymore, but by sending *many* ‘refugees’ to into the, already overpopulated Christian nations. And the heathen nations are also trying to eradicate true Christianity too, in many ways. From infiltrating Churches, to political persecution, to flooding social media with all sorts of things that defile the heart and mind... truly, the attack on our people (and Christians in general, despite their race) has *not* stopped. Yet, this confederation of heathen nations coming against Israel (likely the southern kingdom of Judah when Jehoshaphat was ruling) was a real military campaign of ten heathen nations. And the Psalmist is now going to tell us about them...

Psalm 83

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

Now, the word ‘**tabernacles**’ here simply means *a tent* (#168). While many of these nations likely had *permanent* buildings to live in while in their home countries, while out to war, they had to stay in tents. And then the first of the heathen nations mentioned is ‘**Edom**’, which was *the elder twin-brother of Jacob* and also refers to the region occupied by his descendants, which is Idumaea (#123). The Edomites were generally to the south and south/east of the land of Israel, just south of the Moabites. The [Smith’s Bible Dictionary](#) says that “*the Lord gave to Esau was hence called "the country of Edom,"* (Genesis 32:3) *and his descendants were called Edomites* (Gen 36:9, 43). *Edom was also called Mount Seir and Idumea also*” (Ezek 35:15). Many of Esau’s descendants *today* can be found in the country of Russia.

And then there were the ‘**Ishmaelites**’, which were descendants of Abraham’s eldest son (by Hagar), Ishmael (#3459, #3458 – Gen 16:11). The angel of the Lord (YHVH) told Hagar that Ishmael would be *a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren* (Gen 16:12). So, God prophesied

(rightly so) that he would be forever in conflict with others, including his half-brother, Issac. Yet, because Abraham loved him *so dearly* (and was deeply grieved when God told him to send Ishmael away so he would not inherit Isaac's promised blessings), God also promised Abraham that: *I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation* (Gen 17:20). And true to His Word, God has indeed made Ishmael's descendants great today. The Arabs are greatly wealthy thanks to their nations being rich in oil and other valuable minerals. And, unlike true Israel, many of them still know who they are today. And the Ishmaelites (Arabs), in the days this Psalm was written, probably lived in the very same areas they do today, which is East of Israel but *further* east than Edom, Moab and Amon.

And then there's '**Moab**' (#4124), who is another family member Israel. Moab was the son of Lot (Abraham's nephew) by one of his own daughters (Gen 19:37). And his descendants are called the Moabites, as was their territory. Their territory was also to the east of Israel, north of Edom and South of Ammon. The [Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) says of Moab: "*Zoar was the cradle of the race of Lot. From this centre the brother tribes spread themselves. The Moabites first inhabited the rich highlands which crown the eastern side of the chasm of the Dead Sea, extending as far north as the mountain of Gilead, from which country they expelled the Emims, the original inhabitants, but they themselves were afterward driven southward by the warlike Amorites, who had crossed the Jordan, and were confined to the country south of the river Arnon, which formed their northern boundary. (Numbers 21:13; Judges 11:18) The Israelites, in entering the promised land, did not pass through the Moabites, (Judges 11:18) but conquered the Amorites, who occupied the country from which the Moabites had been so lately expelled. After the conquest of Canaan the relations of Moab with Israel were of a mixed character, sometimes warlike and sometimes peaceable.*"

And then there were the '**Hagarenes**', which were probably from another descendant of Hagar (but not of Abraham) (#1905). The [Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) says of the Hagarenes (Hagarites): *(named after Hagar), a people dwelling to the east of Palestine, with whom the tribes of Reuben made war in the time of Saul. (1 Chronicles 5:10,18-20) The same people, as confederate against Israel, are mentioned in (Psalms 83:6) It is generally believed that **they were named after Hagar**, and that the important town and district of Hejer, on the borders of the Persian Gulf, represent them.* Because they were likely descendants of Hagar, it's probable that they lived close to their brothers, the Ishmaelites, for they too lived east of Palestine.

Psalm 83

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

We're now told of five more heathen nations that came against Israel (likely the southern kingdom of Judah) in this Psalm 83. The first of which is '**Gebal**'. The *Strong's Concordance*

says that Gebal was *a region in Idumaea* (#1381) but it comes from a word that means a mountain, *as a place in Phoenicia* (#1380). And the [Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) backs this up, for it says that Gebal was ***a maritime town of Phoenicia, near Tyre*** (Ezekiel 27:9) known by the Greeks as *Byblus*. It is called *Jebail* by the Arabs, thus reviving the old biblical name. And other Biblical Scriptures (1 Kings 5:18; Joshua 13:5) also support the notion that Gebal was a Phoenician port primarily known for trade and craft. So, they would have been to the north of Israel.

And then there's 'Ammon' (#5983), who was also born out of an incestuous relation between Lot (Abraham's nephew) and another one of his daughters, after they fled Sodom (Gen 19:34-38). And, like Moab, they were another one of Israel's historic enemies (Jud 10:7-8, 2 Sam 12:26) and often dragged Israel into war and immorality (especially Moab, Numbers 25:1). While the [Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) says that *the precise position of the territory of the Ammonites is not ascertainable*, it's likely their territory was also to the east of Israel, north of Moab (see the *Atlas of the Bible Lands* by Hammond). The *Smith's Bible Dictionary* also says of Ammon: *Their capital city was Rabbath, called also Rabbath Ammon on the Jabbok. We find everywhere traces of the fierce habits of marauders in their incursions.* (1 Samuel 11:2; Amos 1:13) *and a very high degree of crafty cruelty to their toes.* (Jeremiah 41:6,7; Judges 17:11,12). So, despite being 'family', Ammon also often warred against Israel.

And then there was 'Amalek' (#6002), whose descendants were known as the *Amalekites* (Gen 14:7, Num 13:29, etc.). Amalek was actually a grandson of Esau (Gen 36:12) and they had the audacity to attack Israel shortly after they came out of the Promise Land, likely due to the great water source that the Lord (YHVH) miraculously provided for Israel (Ex 17). And while God gave Israel's army the victory over them, God declared that Israel was to have perpetual war with the Amalekites until they were utterly destroyed (Ex 17:14-16). Thus, the Amalekites were one of Israel's most bitter, and recurrent, enemies (Ex 17:8; Jud 6:3; 1 Sam 15:1-9, 30:1) until David finally subjugated them (1 Chronicles 4:43). However, this Psalm proves that even after the time of David the Amalekites were still enemies of Israel; so, as of the writing of this Psalm, God's command still had yet to be finished. And while it's not clearly written where Amalek's territory was, since they attacked Israel while they were in the wilderness, it's likely that they were south of the Promise Land. And since they were family to the Edomites, they probably lived close to them; likely just west of them (which would be south of the Promise Land that Israel inherited).

And then there were the 'Philistines' (#6429), who were probably Israel's most frequent, and perhaps, most vicious adversaries (Judges 3:1-3, 16:28-30; 1 Samuel 17:2-3, 14:52) until David finally dominated them too (2 Samuel 5:25, 8, 1 Chronicles 18:1). However, like most of Israel's enemies, they too fought against Israel after David and Solomon died. As the [Smith's Bible Dictionary](#) says, "*the whole of Philistine was included in Solomon's empire. Later when the Philistines, joined by the Syrians and Assyrians, made war on the kingdom of Israel, Hezekiah*

formed an alliance with the Egyptians, as a counterpoise to the Assyrians, and the possession of Philistia became henceforth the turning-point of the struggle between the two great empires of the East.” So, it’s not at all surprising that they are included in this list of heathen nations conspiring against Israel (the southern kingdom of Judah). Note also that the land of the Philistines was in the area we now call the Gaza Strip, which is to the west (and south of part of) Israel’s land that they inherited (the Promise Land). So, this great military alliance of heathen nations wasn’t just from the east, it was from all directions...

And then there was ‘Tyre’, which was also called ‘Tyrus’ (#6865). The [Smith’s Bible Dictionary](#) says that it “*was a commercial city of Phoenicia, on the coast of the Mediterranean. Its Hebrew name, Tzor, signifies a rock; which well agrees with the site of Sur, the modern town, on a rocky peninsula, formerly an island... In the Bible Tyre is named for the first time in Joshua 19:29, where it is adverted to as a fortified city in reference to the boundaries of the tribe of Asher. But the first passages in the Hebrew historical writings, or in ancient history generally, which actual glimpses of the actual condition of Tyre are in the book of Samuel, (2 Samuel 6:11) in connection with Hiram king of Tyre sending cedar wood and workmen to David, for building him a palace; and subsequently in the book of Kings, in connection with the building of Solomon’s temple. It is evident that under Solomon there was a close alliance between the Hebrews and the Tyrians. Hiram supplied Solomon with cedar wood, precious metals and workmen, and gave him sailors for the voyage to Ophir and India, while on the other hand Solomon gave Hiram supplies of corn and oil, ceded to him some cities, and permitted him to make use of some havens on the Red Sea (1 Kings 9:11-14; 26-28; 10:22) These friendly relations survived for a time the disastrous secession of the ten tribes, and a century later Ahab married a daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, (1 Kings 16:31) who, according to Menander, was daughter of Ithobal king of Tyre. When mercantile cupidity induced the Tyrians, and the neighboring Phoenicians, to buy Hebrew captives from their enemies, and to sell them as slaves to the Greeks and Edomites, there commenced denunciations, and at first threats of retaliation (Joel 3:4-8; Amos 1:9,10).* So, while Israel historically had good relations with Tyre/Tyrus, at some point in time that relationship soured so much that Tyre/Tyrus decided to join in on this massive heathen conspiracy to ‘erase’ Israel from off the face of the earth. Note also that Tyre (Tyrus) was (like Gebal) to the north of Israel...

Psalms 83

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

And now we see that ‘Assur’ also joined in on the conspiracy. The *Strong’s Concordance* tells us this was *Assyria* (#804) and the [Smith’s Bible Dictionary](#) says that “*Assyria was peopled from Babylon, (Genesis 10:11) and both classical tradition and the monuments of the country agree in this representation.*” So, Assyria (as is well known from archeological evidence) was actually quite far away from Israel – to the northeast of Israel, in what we now call Iraq. Their capital,

Ninevah, is thought to have been on the eastern bank of the Tigris River, near the modern city of Mosul. And, while Assyria wasn't a powerful nation when Israel entered the Promise Land (or in the days of David and Solomon), they eventually became a powerful nation also known for afflicting Israel (2 Kings 15-20). In fact, it was the Assyrians who eventually took the ten northern tribes of Israel (as well as much of Judah and Benjamin) captive (2 Kings 18:9-12).

Now, the word '**joined**' (here in Ps 83:8) means *to unite* or *to lend* (#3867) and the word '**holpen**' means *the arm* (as *stretched out*) or, figuratively, *force* (#2220). So apparently, the Assyrians were powerful enough they were considered the 'strong arm of Lot', which implies that the Moabites and Ammonites were *leading* this league of heathen nations to destroy the nation of Israel. And don't forget that these ten heathen nations were to the *north* (Gabal, Tyre, Assyria), *south* (Amalekites, Edom), *east* (Edom, Moab, Ammon, Ishmaelites, Hagarenes, Assyria) and *west* (Philistines) of Israel. So again, the heathen nations conspiring to destroy Israel (the southern kingdom of Judah) were pretty much *surrounding* them.

Now, this verse ends with a 'selah' (#5542) and that always means to '*stop and think*' about what *has been said* with what is *going to be said*. This 'selah' thus connects the *first part* of this Psalm - where the Psalmist calls upon God to help them from the great league of heathen nations coming against them - with the *latter part* of this Psalm - where He'll ask God to pour out upon these heathen nations the *same kind of fate* (sevenfold destruction) as the Lord (YHVH) has done for Israel in the past. So, the following few verses will give us *seven historical examples* of past destructions the Lord has poured out upon the heathen nations coming against Israel; and that's what the Psalmist is asking the Lord (YHVH) to do to the *current* (at the time this Psalm was written) confederacy of heathen nations marching towards them (most likely those in the southern kingdom of Judah at the time of Jehoshaphat's rule). And because the next few verses are linked together in the Psalmist's request for 'seven-fold destruction' of their enemies, we'll pick this up in part 4. But, as we close, let's always remember: when the Lord God Almighty (YHVH and Jesus Christ) is on our side (meaning, we're on HIS side), then no matter how many people come against us, we'll always be on the winning (victorious) side. As Jesus said: ***lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*** (Matt 28:20) ...

5 *I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.*

6 ***The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?***

7 *The LORD taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.*

8 ***It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.***

9 ***It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes.***

10 *All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.*

11 *They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.*

12 They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

*13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: **but the LORD helped me.***

*14 **The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.***

Ps 118:5-14

*57 But thanks be to God, **which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.***

*58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be ye steadfast, unmoveable**, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that **your labour is not in vain in the Lord.***

1 Cor 15:54-58

We'll pick this up in part 4...

AMEN.