

1 *A Song or Psalm of Asaph. 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. (Psalm 83)*

The patriotic poet Asaph, in this his final song, catalogs all the historic enemies of the people of God, rehearses their ultimate malignant designs, and, recalling Israel's past humiliations and defeats, entreats the Lord for their enemies' complete and final overthrow.

The enemies of God, and His people may be grouped as follows: 1) Edom (Saul), and his descendants, including Amalek. 2) Ishmael, Hagarites, Moab and Ammon. These answer to false religion, illegitimately conceived and birthed perverted Christendom, spiritual bastards, children of the flesh, rather than children of God's promise and power (Isaac). 3) Philistia, Tyre, Assyria and Gebal. These, the neighboring nations, which resented the intrusion, peculiarities and claims of God's people, answer to the world, its political, social and economic powers.

These have been the historic enemies and persecutors of natural Israel. They have no love or affinity for each other, nothing in common but one thing, and for that they have allied themselves together; to wit, the destruction of God's people. Their objective is singular, and closed to compromise: Erasing them from the face of the earth. This has been evidenced from Biblical times to the infamous "Final Solution" of the Third Reich, to the Palestinian steadfast refusal to recognize the nations of Israel or her right to exist.

But we are more concerned with the spiritual fulfillment of these types in the realized substance of the New Covenant, and God's true Israel, the Church. We may be certain of this: There is a real conspiracy between godless flesh, false religion, and the world, to rid the planet of every vestige of true Christianity. The conspirators are, for the most part, men who do not see or know themselves as conspirators, but who nevertheless have a driving aversion and hatred for Christian power and influence, and will do anything to wipe it out of sight and conscience.

That is the *external* enemy. As powerful and virulent as he may be, he is nothing in comparison to the *internal* one. And this is where our spiritual warfare must center. The great hostilities are those warring within ourselves where the flesh and the Spirit are in uncompromised conflict. Christianity may be erased only by suffocating the spiritual life in each and every individual Christian.

How may we make certain that we prevail in this conflict, that Christ and spiritual life does not die in our souls? Asaph does not leave us without an answer here. We must cry out to God constantly, invoking through the Spirit the excellencies to mortify sin in our members. If we, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live (Romans 8:13). Do we have hope that we are elect? Then let us give all diligence to make our calling an election sure.

-C.M.