

“WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS”

[Rather than: “More than Defeated”]

Psalm 44

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INTRODUCTION

We are a sinful people. Generally we cannot say that the suffering we experience is not due at least in some sense to our sinfulness—whether directly or indirectly. But for the child of God there are times when our suffering is due to our relationship with God. Such is the case with the Israelites in Psalm 44—written again by the sons of Korah. Although there are many Psalms wherein individuals complain that they are suffering not due to sin on their part, this is the only Psalm and only passage in Scripture where the nation itself claims innocence in its suffering. This psalm may be divided into five sections:

- I. You have helped us (1-3).
- II. You must help us (4-8).
- III. But you are not helping us (9-16).
- IV. But we are not guilty before you (17-22).
- V. Please help us (23-26)!

We will look at the plight of Israel and then when finished with the details, see how all of this applies to us. We have an **amazing discovery in store for us!**

But, what possible time period is the background? When could Israel claim innocence from forgetting God and from idolatry—v. 20? When could they say that they did not deserve the divine punishment or discipline brought upon them, and when could they say they were suffering for His sake (v. 22)?

- Not the period of the Maccabees—armies not defeated; too late for the writing of the psalms.
- Not the time of exile—no armies.
- Not time of kings ruling at the time of exile—were not righteous; they deserved punishment.
- Not days of Jehoshaphat and Joash, for again their armies not defeated by enemies so that God was not helping them.
- The only period when Israel could claim such faithfulness to the covenant and not being deserving of divine discipline was the time of David; the time was likely that of the Syrian—Ammonite/Edomite conflict when Edom took advantage of David’s conflict in the north with Syria and invaded and captured and killed many Israelites—recorded in II Sam. 8:13-14; I K. 11:15.

I. YOU HAVE HELPED US [in the past]: 1-3

- A. We have heard from our fathers of the amazing work you did in Egypt, the wilderness, and Canaan. (1)
- B. You drove out Canaanites and afflicted them (2).
- C. You Planted Israel and spread them out in the land (2).
- D. They did not do it [their sword, arm]; you did it [your hand, arm, light of your face/presence--3].

II. YOU MUST HELP US (4-8).

- A. **You are my King!**—I am totally dependent upon You (4)
 - **You/He/God**—King
 - Deliverances—“salvations”—can only be commanded by You
 - B. You make us as *strong as an Ox* (5)
 - With our strong horns we will “push back” our enemies—**through You.**
 - With our strong hooves we will “trample down” the “risers up against us”—**through your name.**
 - C. You have saved us from our enemies and have put them to shame (7).
 - D. Without you we can do nothing (6, 8)
 - Can’t depend on my earthly defenses or powers (6)
 - We “boast/praise” in you **all day long**; “give thanks to your name **forever.**
- III. BUT YOU ARE NOT HELPING US (9-16).
- A. You have rejected us as unclean, bring us dishonor, don’t go before our armies (9).
 - B. We are defeated, despoiled, eaten up like sheep, scattered, sold for a pittance (10-12).
 - C. We are reproached, scoffed at, derided, made a byword and a laughingstock (shaking head; 13-14).
 - D. We are mortified and humiliated by their voices and mocking faces (15-16).
How much worse can things get? YOU HAVE DONE ALL THIS!
- IV. BUT WE ARE NOT GUILTY BEFORE YOU (17-22).
- A. We have not forgotten You nor been unfaithful to Your covenant with us (17).
 - B. Neither our hearts nor our steps have turned back or gone astray (18).
 - C. You have crushed us in a desolate place, and covered us with “the shadow of death (19).
 - D. Since you are omniscient, and know all heart secrets, we could not hide apostasy (20-21).
 - E. **“For your sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter” (22).**
IT IS FOR YOU THAT WE ARE SUFFERING AS WE ARE!
- V. PLEASE HELP US (23-26)!
- A. Rouse yourself—wake up O God; don’t **reject us forever** (23).
 - B. Don’t Hide your face and forget our affliction and oppression (24).
 - C. We grovel in the dirt—**soul and body** (25).
 - D. Rise up—be our Help; redeem us—for the sake of your **loyal love** (26).

CONCLUSION

Notice the beginning and end of this psalm: You have been our help in the past (1); rise up and help us now (26). **Yes, the psalmist sounds very defeated and down—not much excitement in suffering for God’s sake all the day** (22). But Paul quotes v. 22 in Rom. 8:36; let us look at the context: Romans 8:31-35; 37-39.

WE ARE NOT MORE THAN DEFEATED; WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS!