

Waking God up

“Awake O Lord! Why do You sleep? Rouse Yourself! Do not reject us forever.”

Psalm 44:23

We're startled by the boldness exhibited by the Psalmist in this plea for God to act on behalf of His people.

Never would you hear such a prayer from any pulpit in the Christian Church of the 21st century. Where have we gone wrong in our day? Why don't we have people who are able to pray with such passion?

Looking at the context of this petition, we observe that the Psalmist first of all says in Verses 1-2 that he had heard of God's mighty work on behalf of His people in past generations. In Verses 3-8 he acknowledges that the victories of the past were not won by the skills of the armies of God, but by God himself. God gave His people the victory and they trusted Him for it.

Then, in Verses 9-16 he speaks of the problem the nation is experiencing that causes his sorrow. He says that God has “rejected and humbled us” Verse 9. He goes on to say that God “gave us up...You sold Your people...” and on it goes. He is saying that God is behind his grief.

Then in Verse 17 the man of God states that the people have not gone away from God, they have not forgotten God. He recognizes in Verses 20-21 that if they had deserted God then calamity should come on them. But this was not the case. So, why the suffering?

Small wonder that this person cries out as he does. He has no explanation for the way the nation is hurting. He can't see gross sin in

the lives of God's people. So for the one who prays like this, the reality is—no reason can be found for such treatment by God. Therefore he can speak in such a manner.

We seek to be rational and think through our situation as the Psalmist did. He knew how God had helped His people in the past. He knew that God will eventually bless the ones who follow Him. What he's asking for is that the blessing would come sooner rather than later. He wants to adjust the timetable of God. There's no sin in such a petition to God.

When the disciples found themselves in a life threatening storm, Jesus was asleep in the stern of their boat. In a panic they woke Him up and asked if He didn't care that they were about to perish. Jesus got up and told the wind to “shut up”—as one commentator put it. In Psalm 107:24-38 and Job 38:8-11 we read that only God can control nature to put His will into effect.

Here Jesus demonstrates that He also has the power reserved for Yahweh. This is a great lesson concerning the identity of Jesus. We do well to recognize Jesus' power over all things. He not only cures people the doctors of the day could not, but He changes the weather to suit His purposes. Today with all our technology we can't even predict the weather, let alone any efforts to try and control it.

But the disciples had to get into the storm before they saw the deliverance of God. We too have to experi-

ence some very difficult times in order to have the power of God working in our situation. If all of life was a breeze we would have no need of the Creator, nor would we know who He was because there would be no situations where His power was called for.

Jesus rebuked the disciples after calming the storm because they didn't realize Who He was. Their lack of faith gave rise to terror. Faith is based on facts concerning who Jesus is. Do you recognize who Jesus is today? Do you have the God-man walking with you through your storms? If so then call out to Him and tell Him what the Psalmist told God. Remind God of your efforts to walk well with Him. Tell Him that you have not trusted in yourself or your skills Psalm 44:6. Speak to Him and say that you have not strayed from His way Psalm 44:17-18. Then call on Him to show you that He is not asleep.

If you have not walked well with God then you need to seek Him for forgiveness of your ways and ask Him for Jesus' sake to remove your guilt and invade your life, to take charge of your way, and guide you in His truth. He stands ready to rescue all who will put their trust in Him.

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