

Psalm 83:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

Analysis

Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession. This verse reveals the confederacy's motivation: seizing *ne'ot Elohim* (נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים), "the pastures/dwelling places of God"). The term *ne'ot* (נְאוֹת) can mean pastures, dwelling places, or beautiful habitations. The phrase likely refers to Canaan itself—the Promised Land, God's gift to Israel, where His temple stood and His name dwelt. The enemies don't merely want territory; they want God's inheritance, His possession.

Nirshah lanu (נִרְשָׁה לָנוּ), "let us possess/inherit for ourselves") uses language of inheritance and possession. This echoes the Canaanites' original claim to the land that God dispossessed and gave to Israel. Now their descendants conspire to reverse that judgment, to repossess what God Himself allocated. The audacity is staggering—they claim ownership of God's property, challenging His right to bestow inheritance as He chooses.

The theological issue transcends real estate. These enemies attack God's sovereign right to choose, bless, and establish His covenant people. Their conspiracy ultimately targets God's purposes and authority. This pattern repeats throughout Scripture: Pharaoh refused to release Israel (God's firstborn son, Exodus 4:22-23); Haman plotted Jewish genocide; Antiochus desecrated the temple; Rome destroyed Jerusalem. Satanic opposition always aims at God's covenant people and purposes because attacking them attacks God's redemptive plan.

Historical Context

The land of Canaan held enormous strategic and agricultural value—situated at the crossroads of three continents (Africa, Asia, Europe), controlling vital trade routes, containing fertile valleys and abundant water sources. Surrounding nations coveted this territory for economic and military reasons. But Israel's claim rested on divine gift, not human conquest—God promised it to Abraham (Genesis 15:18-21), confirmed it to Israel (Deuteronomy 11:24-25), and drove out Canaanites to establish His people there (Joshua 21:43-45). When enemies conspired to seize it, they challenged God's covenant promises and His sovereign right to bestow territory as inheritance.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that opposition to God's people is ultimately opposition to God Himself affect your response to persecution or hostility?
2. What modern parallels exist to enemies seeking to possess "the houses of God"—attempting to claim what God has established or promised?
3. Why does Satan consistently target God's covenant people throughout history, and how does understanding this spiritual warfare inform Christian perseverance?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶת־לְכֹהֶן יְרַשֵּׁה אֲמָרוּ אֲשֶׁר־
H834 Who said H559 H3423 H0 H853 H4999
in possession

אֱלֹהִים:

of God

H430

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 20:11 (Parallel theme): Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org