

WHEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY IS ABUSED

PSALM 82

Introduction:

God holds ultimate authority over all nations and all men. But for the sake of the governance of the affairs of men, He has chosen to delegate some of His judicial authority to human beings. Since they enjoy the use of some of God's authority, they are actually called "gods" by the psalmist. The name *elohim* is used of them just as it is of the deity.

The psalm emphasizes the role of the judges in society. Those who sit in the seat of judgment sit with divine authority. It is an awesome view of the role of the judiciary. But in a broader sense this can be expanded in a society like ours. Parental authority is delegated authority. The authority of the school teacher and administrator is judicial authority. Is this not a fearful thought? You actually represent God in the matters of the home, the school, or any place else where you exercise authority.

But this psalm found its way into the Bible because some were abusing their delegated authority. Instead of using their authority to make sure justice was done, they were actually using it to allow men to act unjustly. Instead of using it to protect the weak, they were actually using it to oppress the weak. What happens when God's delegated authority is abused in this way?

- I. WHEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY IS ABUSED, THE
ABUSERS BECOME ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD. (V. 1-4)
- II. WHEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY IS ABUSED, THE
FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIETY ARE WEAKENED. (v. 5)
- III. WHEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY IS ABUSED, THE
ABUSERS ARE CONDEMNED TO DEATH. (v. 6-7)
- IV. WHEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY IS ABUSED, AN APPEAL
CAN BE MADE TO GOD. (v. 8)