

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith LXXXI: God's Encouragement That We Repent For Restoration (Psalm 81:1-16)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Facing so as to admit and confess our sins to the Lord is never easy. It is humbling to admit we are wrong.
- B. However, facing and confessing our sins is absolutely essential to enjoy God's blessing, and Psalm 81:1-16 presents this truth with significant force due to its unique historical setting (as follows):

#### **II. God's Encouragement That We Repent For Restoration, Psalm 81:1-16.**

- A. The introductory remarks of this psalm comprise the first verse in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1047), so we stay with the numbering system of the English Bible in this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 81:1-16 as follows:
  1. "Sing for joy to Elohim, our Strength; shout aloud to the Elohim of Jacob," Psalm 81:1.
  2. "Begin the music, strike the tambourine, play the melodious harp and lyre," Psalm 81:2.
  3. "Sound the ram's horn at the New Moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our Feast;" (Psalm 81:3)
  4. "this is a decree for Israel, and ordinance of the Elohim of Jacob," Psalm 81:4.
  5. "He established it as a statute for Joseph when we went out against Egypt, where we heard a language we did not understand," Psalm 81:5.
  6. "He says, 'I removed the burden from their shoulders; their hands were set free from the basket,'" Ps. 81:6.
  7. "'In your distress you called and I delivered you, I answered you at the waters of Meribah. Selah,'" v. 7.
  8. "'Hearken, O My people, and I will solemnly admonish you -- if you would but hearken unto me, O Israel!'" (Psalm 81:8)
  9. "'You shall have no foreign god among you; you shall not bow down to an alien god,'" Psalm 81:9.
  10. "'I Myself (emph. pron.) am Jahweh, your Elohim Who brought you up out of Egypt. Open wide your mouth and I will fill it,'" Psalm 81:10.
  11. "'But My people would not hearken to My voice; Israel would not submit to Me,'" Psalm 81:11.
  12. "'So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts to walk in their own counsels,'" Psalm 81:12.
  13. "'If My people would but listen to Me, if Israel would walk in my ways,'" Psalm 81:13.
  14. "'how quickly would I subdue their enemies and turn My hand against their foes!'" (Psalm 81:14)
  15. "'Those who hate Jahweh would cringe before Him, and their punishment would last forever,'" Psa. 81:15.
  16. "'And you would be fed with the finest of wheat; with honey from the rock would I satisfy you,'" v. 16.
- C. We note significant observations and applications regarding this psalm (as follows):
  1. Psalm 81 was "associated with the Feast of Tabernacles" (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Psalm 81) when Israel was to dwell in makeshift booths for eight days to commemorate God's having caused the people to live in such booths during their wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan (Leviticus 23:33-44).
  2. Thus, the psalmist's formation of this psalm not only celebrates the Feast of Tabernacles (v. 1-3), but it also recalls God's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage in the Exodus (v. 4-6) and His provisions of the nation in the wilderness journeys as God led the nation toward the Promised Land (v. 7-10).
  3. However, along with God's goodness is recalled the failure of the nation to obey and trust the Lord in the wilderness journeys (v. 11-12), so the psalmist continues with an admonition to the worshipers at the Feast of Tabernacles in their **current** era to heed God for blessing opposite the forefathers' failures, v. 13-16.
  4. In verses 13-16, the author implied God's encouragement for His people to heed Him and turn from their wicked ways that He might richly bless them! If we recall the wilderness journeys of Israel, we note that God's provision at the waters of Meribah (Ex. 17:1-7) came after the nation had sinfully put God to the test (Ex. 17:2, 7), and that after God had given manna from heaven and quail following the murmurings of the people (Ex. 16:2-3, 4ff). God had still been willing to be gracious to the nation in her past, so recalling the **past** at the Feast of Tabernacles also acted as a motive to repent and depart from sin for blessing **now!**
  5. God's offer of fine wheat and honey from the rock recall Moses' song at Deut. 32:13-14 that figuratively promises God's making even the most barren places fertile for His people, Bib. Know. Com., O. T., p. 318.

**Lesson:** *God wants us to recall His past acts of grace that we be motivated to repent of our sins today for blessing.*

**Application:** *May we always recall God's past acts of grace to be spurred to face and confess our sins for blessing!*