

PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS

Psalm Eighty-One - Encouragement To Be FAITHFUL To Follow The Lord And His Word ALONE (Psalm 81:1-16)

I. Introduction

- A. A basic truth in Scripture is that a loss of divine blessing occurs with the believer's failure to follow the Lord and His Word as a priority where obeying Him and His Word leads to rich blessings.
- B. As basic as this truth is, nonetheless, believers always seem to have the problem of not being **consistent** to apply it to the extent that our lot is often a mixed bag of blessings scattered among various troubles.
- C. Psalm 81:1-16 is an encouragement to faithfulness, the encouragement being God's constant willingness to bless irrespective of past failures by the believer's **consistently** keeping this priority straight.

II. Encouragement To Be FAITHFUL To Follow The Lord And His Word ALONE, Psalm 81:1-16.

- A. The Feast of Tabernacles, commemorating the release of Israel from Egyptian bondage, began on the fifteenth of the seventh month, which is during our early Fall. It was a time of celebrating the goodness of God, for the harvest is plentiful and the weather is lovely so that the people can feast out-of-doors under booths of tree limbs. At this time, the psalmist called the people to praise the Lord in music, Ps. 81:1-4.
- B. The psalmist recalled the command of God to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles in Ps. 81:5-6.
- C. However, though God had rescued the people from Egypt, they complained at Meribah about the lack of water, Ex. 17:1-7. Nevertheless, God was faithful to Israel, and provided water for them there, Ps. 81:7.
- D. Based upon His faithfulness to such faithless Israel, the psalmist made a plea for the current generation to become **consistent in heeding, submitting** to and **obeying** the Lord to enjoy His **constant** blessings:
 1. The psalmist recalled the pleading of the Lord to Moses' generation to hearken to Himself in not following false crutches, or idols so that He would be able to bless them in righteousness, Ps. 81:8-10.
 2. Sadly, God was aware that Israel had not heeded that admonition, resulting in their being turned over by God to follow their own counsels, plans and devices, Ps. 81:11-12.
 3. As a result, they were deluged with troubles from subjugation to enemies like the experience back in the original Egyptian bondage, Ps. 81:14.
 4. Yet, in spite of this failure following Moses' era, God was willing still to rescue His people from enemy bondage if they would merely return to following, submitting and obeying Him and His ways, 81:13-14.
 5. In fact, Israel's current dominating enemies who hated the Lord would forever cringe before Him as He ran interference for His people who would turn to Him for help, Ps. 81:15.
 6. On top of that, God would feed the current generation with the finest of wheat and with honey from the rock, Ps. 81:16! This statement pictures the capacity of God to restore if God's people would faithfully return to Him and faithfully follow Him as follows:
 - a. At Meribah (Ps. 81:7 with Ex. 17:1-7), the people had complained, but God in grace had given them water out of the rock; at this time after all of Israel's faithlessness, God was willing not only to supply water out of a rock, but even **honey** out of it, Ps. 81:16b!
 - b. The picture of God's willingness to feed Israel the finest of wheat in Ps. 81:16a alludes to His having fed Moses' generation of Hebrews with manna in Exodus 16:4. Since the manna feeding had followed the faithless complaint by Israel for not having food in the wilderness (Ex. 16:1-3), and since God was now promising not to feed just manna, but the **finest** of **wheat**, a **luxury** (Ps. 81:16a), the psalmist showed the great willingness of God to restore His flippant, often faithless people if they would but return and faithfully heed, submit to and obey His Word, cf. P s. 81:8, 11b, 13b!

Lesson: (1) God urges us to be FAITHFUL in heeding, submitting to and obeying His Word to enjoy a CONSISTENT general provision of blessings in life. (2) This FAITHFULNESS includes (a) paying attention to Scripture, Ps. 81:8b, (b) submitting to Scripture, Ps. 81:11b and (c) obeying Scripture versus other authorities or man's counsels, Ps. 81:13b with Ps. 81:9-10, 12.

Application: We believers must watch that we don't let our ideas or the input of others, or our relationships with other people take the place of heeding, submitting to and obeying God and His Word. Failure here means a loss of divine blessing where success includes consistent blessing! Watch to be CONSISTENT in keeping God and His Word absolutely FIRST, or else!