

Evening Sermon – November 22, 2020

“Preparing for Parties” Psalm 81

I. Praise God for Who and What He is (to us)

¹ Sing aloud to God our strength; make a joyful shout to the God of Jacob. ² Raise a song and strike the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the lute. ³ Blow the trumpet at the time of the New Moon, at the full moon, on our solemn feast day. Psalm 81:1–3 (NKJV)

1. Verse :3’s reference to the New Moon was a reference to a new month, the Hebrews used a lunar calendar, and in Scripture the New Moon was an occasion of celebration, a time to “Sing” and “shout” to God!

“The original setting of the psalm was clearly the Feast of Booths (v. 3).” R. C. Sproul – 2005 Reformation Study Bible

BOOTHS, FEAST OF (חג הסוכות, *chag hassukkoth*, σκηνοπηγία, *skēnopēgia*).

Also known by its transliteration, Sukkot. One of Israel’s three great annual festivals, celebrated at the time of the agricultural harvest, in gratitude for Yahweh’s present and historical provision. *Lexham Bible Dictionary*

This was somewhat like our Thanksgiving, both in regard to the time of year and the subject matter. Other commentators hint at the Passover as an occasion for this Psalm - :5-6

2. There is a call in this Psalm for (1) Singing :1; (2) joyful shouting :1 (3) Singing again :2 with the timbrel, the harp, the lute and the trumpet :2-3
3. This praise is God is because of His strength - :1, He is a mighty God and because of Who He is to us, the God of Jacob, means He is the God Who belongs to His people, our God –

³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be their God.* ⁴ And God will

wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21:3–4 (NKJV)

II. Praise and thank God for what He has done for us

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1. Such praise and thanksgiving are righteously commanded by God because of what He has done for us -

⁴ For this is a statute for Israel, a law of the God of Jacob. Psalm 81:4 (NKJV)

2. Before the nation of Israel is brought out of Egypt, Joseph is cared for, and prospers within Egypt -

⁵ This He established in Joseph as a testimony, When He went throughout the land of Egypt, where I heard a language I did not understand. Psalm 81:5 (NKJV)

3. The praise is for the exodus (from Egypt) and God’s care for Israel in the wilderness -

⁶ “I removed his shoulder from the burden; His hands were freed from the baskets. ⁷ You called in trouble, and I delivered you; I answered you in the secret place of thunder; I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah Psalm 81:6–7 (NKJV)

A. Removal of burdens, is salvation from slavery in Egypt – Verse 6.—“Pots.” The bricklayer’s baskets; hanging one at each end of a yoke laid across the shoulders.—*William Kay*.

B. Calling to God “in trouble” is a reference to seemingly lacking water in the wilderness, but God provided water out of a rock -

⁷ So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?” Exodus 17:7

C. For the Christian, the Exodus corresponds to our salvation from sin gained for us by Christ, Massah and Meribah to His provision of the Holy Spirit in a dry and thirsty (spiritual) land –

⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:4 (NKJV)

³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." ³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. John 7:37–39 (NKJV)

While the worldling drinks in happiness, if it will bear the name, with the mouth of an insect, the Christian imbibes bliss with the mouth of an angel. His pleasures are the same in kind, with the pleasure of the infinitely happy God.—*John Ryland*.

III. *God's goodness to us, obliges us not only to praise and thanksgiving, but also to repentance and obedience –*

⁴ Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Romans 2:4 (NKJV)

1. *God blesses but also "admonishes" His people, He calls them, us to "listen" –* ⁸ "Hear, O My people, and I will admonish you! O Israel, if you will listen to Me! Psalm 81:8

2. *He commands us not to worship false gods -*
⁹ There shall be no foreign god among you; Nor shall you worship any foreign god. Psalm 81:9

3. *He redeems, and would gladly feed, but we don't "heed" so He gives us up, even to our own ways*
¹⁰ I am the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt; Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it. ¹¹ "But My people would not heed My voice, and Israel would have none of Me. ¹² So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, To walk in their own counsels. Psalm 81:10–12 (NKJV)

IV. *Oh, the blessings that would flow, if obedience to God we'd show -*

¹³ "Oh, that My people would listen to Me, That Israel would walk in My ways! ¹⁴ I would soon subdue their enemies, And turn My hand against their adversaries. ¹⁵ The haters of the LORD would pretend submission to Him, But their fate would endure forever. ¹⁶ He would have fed them

also with the finest of wheat; and with honey from the rock I would have satisfied you." Psalm 81:13–16 (NKJV)

1. *Listen to God, be a doer of His Word -*
:13 *A Listening to God means reading and hearing His word, believing the Bible –*

:13 *B – means not Just hearing but DOING –*
²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. James 1:22–25 (NKJV)

2. *Our obedience results in God's help –*
:14 *God subdues enemies –*
Verse 14.—"Turned my hand." God expresseth the utter overthrow of the enemies of his people, but by the *turning of a hand*: if God do but turn his hand, they are all gone presently, soon subdued. If he do but touch the might, the pomp, the greatness, the riches and the power of all those in the world that are opposers of his church, presently they fall to the ground: a touch from the hand of God will end our wars.—*Joseph Caryl*.

When we are obedient, God turns His hand, away from disciplining us, to defeating our enemies!

:15 *Haters (who would be persecutors) become pretenders, hypocrites, they pretend to be godly because the godly are blessed!*

3. *Obedience brings God's best blessings, even now –*
:16 *Eat fine wheat and the sweetest of sweet –*
³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV)

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