

Sunday Night Message

February 15, 2015

*Psalm 81*

Series – The Psalms

Text – Psalm 81

## **Introduction to the Psalms of Asaph**

Psalm 73 through 83 (as well as Psalm 50, are attributed to Asaph. Asaph was a musician who was also a worship leader in the sanctuary. (See 1 Chronicles 15:16–19; 16:4–7, 37–42; 2 Chronicles 5:12–14; 29:13; 35:15).

## **Introduction to Psalm 81**

“upon Gittith” – literally means, “a winepress”; believed to be a musical instrument that was played in Gath, which is a city of the Philistines. (found in Psalms 8, 81, and 84)

### **I The Ordinance of a Feast (vs. 1 – 5)**

This psalm is associated with a feast, most likely the feast of Tabernacles, which celebrates the Lord’s provision for Israel as they wandered in the wilderness after being delivered from Egypt. (See Leviticus 23 for a description of the Feasts of Israel)

The Jewish religious year begins in the month of Nisan (our March–April), during which the Feast of Passover is celebrated (Ex. 12). The civil year begins with Tishri (our September–October), the seventh month in the religious year, during which the Jews celebrate the Feast of Trumpets (first day, “Rosh Hashanna”), the Day of Atonement (tenth day, “Yom Kippur”), and the Feast of Tabernacles (days fifteen to twenty-two). (See Lev. 23:23–44 and Num. 29.) The first day would be new moon and the fifteenth day the full moon.<sup>1</sup>

Notice that God had ordained these feasts when Israel was still in Egypt.

These feasts were organized, scheduled seasons of memorials and praise. The people were commanded to remember what the Lord had done for them, and

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<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2004). *Be worshipful* (1st ed., p. 264). Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries.

at these times they were to sing praises to His name. Instruments were also to be used.

Notice also that the nation is referred to as Israel, Jacob, and Joseph.

## **II The Opportunity in Israel's Future (vs. 6 - 10)**

v. 7 - "the secret place of thunder" - see Exodus 19

v. 7 - "the waters of Meribah" - see Exodus 17: 1 - 7; Numbers 20:1 - 13

v. 10 - "open thy mouth wide and I will fill it" - God promised abundant provision for His nation, but they had to obey the condition in v. 9.

The same promise apply to Christians today - see Matthew 6:24 - 33

*"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)*

## **III The Outline of Israel's Failure (vs. 11 - 16)**

The last 6 verses explain what Israel chose to do as a nation, and they also outline what all too many of God's people do today: they satisfy the lusts of their flesh, and they walk according to their own counsel. They do what they want.

*"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."  
(Proverbs 3:5-6)*