

Psalm 81

by Henry Law

The sermon emphasizes the importance of publicly worshiping God, obeying His commands, and hearkening unto Him, in order to experience His love, power, and blessedness.

Scripture: Psalm 81:1-13

Topics: "Public Worship", "Obedience To God"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the importance of observing public ordinances as a constant duty to publicly worship God and assemble in joyful crowds within the sanctuary. He emphasizes the significance of celebrating appointed seasons with reverence to deepen gratitude and love for God's mercies. Law reminds the congregation of God's deliverance from oppression and bondage, urging them to heed His call, obey His commandments, and avoid the worship of false gods to fully receive His blessings and provision.

Transcript

Observance of public ordinances is enjoined. The path of obedience is the path of blessedness. May we listen to our God; He will appear rich to multiply mercies.

1-3. "Sing aloud unto God our strength; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm and bring here the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day."

It is a constant duty publicly to worship God, and to assemble in joyful crowds within the sanctuary. It runs on through the year's course. But there are especial times which should awaken especial thanksgivings. It is most wise to celebrate appointed seasons with all the aids which reverence can bring. Thus gratitude and love will kindle into brighter flame, and sense of mercies will take deeper root. Thus shall we ripen for the day when every crown shall be cast at the Redeemer's feet, and endless Hallelujahs issue from all lips.

4-5. "For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt; where I heard a language that I understood not."

Such service was enjoined to the elders of faith's house. It was ordained to promote their wisdom, joy, and profit. Doubtless the true light now brightly shines, and we have passed from the shadowy forms of types

and emblematic worship. But the essence of true religion abides the same. If forms are not observed, reality may soon be lost. We are called to note the period when these injunctions were given. It was at the moment of their deliverance from the slavery of Egypt; from the oppression of those who were aliens both in heart and tongue.

6-7. "I removed his shoulder from the burden; his hands were delivered from the pots. You called in trouble, and I delivered you; I answered you from the secret place of thunder; I proved you at the waters of Meribah."

Grievous burdens oppressed the groaning people, but God delivered them, and their servile bondage ended. In the wilderness trouble continued; but from the cloud--the home of thunders--answers responded to their cry, and faith grew strong by frequent trial.

8-10. "Hear, O My people, and I will testify to you; O Israel, if you will hearken unto Me; there shall no strange god be in you; neither shall you worship any strange god. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt; open your mouth wide, and I will fill it."

The Lord tenderly expostulates. He stoops to crave attention. He assures those who if they would obey, He, and He alone, would be their God, and no vile deluders should mislead them. He reminds them that He is the same God who wrought such wonders for them in their early days. He assures those who He is the same in the infinitudes of His love and power; that they were not straitened in Him; that if they would be willing to receive, He would fill them until no more could be contained. Let us thus open our hearts, and doubt not that He will fully occupy.

11-12. "But My people would not hearken to My voice; and Israel would not submit to Me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels."

We shudder at the madness of rebellious man. He closes his ears; he rejects God, and thus God leaves him. Terrible curses follow. The decree goes forth, Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.

13-16. "Oh that My people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in My ways! I would soon have subdued their enemies, and turned My hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord would have submitted themselves unto Him; but their time would have endured forever. He would have fed them also with the finest of the wheat; and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied you."

Mournful is this upbraiding note. The scene is darkened by a picture of the blessedness thus forfeited. No mercy would have been withheld from the obedient. Their enemies would have fallen low before them. There would have been no evening to their bright days of joy. Their life would have been a perpetual feast. Their table would have been luxuriantly spread by God's own hand. Let us be wise, and hearken diligently, that we may enjoy such blessedness.

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