

# Psalms 81-84

by W.F. Anderson

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*The 81st Psalm is a call to rejoice in redemption, specifically the redemption of God's people from the land of Egypt and their deliverance into the good land that God has promised them.*

**Duration:** 30:38

**Scripture:** Exodus 24:8, 1 Samuel 15:22, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 31:6-14, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Obedience To God", "Salvation Through Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses Psalm 81 and its three sections: the call to rejoice, the division, and the call to regret. The speaker emphasizes the importance of obedience and listening to God's word for experiencing His blessings and deliverance. The sermon also highlights the significance of Jesus Christ's obedience and sacrifice on the cross for our salvation and sanctification. The speaker encourages the audience to reflect on their own obedience and attitude towards God's word and to seek a closer relationship with Him.

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## Transcript

If none of thee there succeed, he should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat, and was coming out of the rock, should I have satisfied thee. Did you notice in the title of this 81st psalm? It's a repeat musician of one giveth. Now, there are only three psalms, and all the 150 of them have the title giveth, or that word contained in the title.

And that's the 8th psalm, and the 81st psalm, and the 84th psalm. The meaning of the type is really not known. It may have been a musical instrument that was originated in gas, it may have been a song that was sung in gas.

It was used by the people of Israel. But at least there are those three psalms that contain this word giveth in the title. The 8th psalm is taken up with God's creation.

The 81st psalm is taken up with God's redemption. And the 84th psalm is taken up with God's house. In the 84th psalm, the psalmist was saying, How any will I thy tabernacle, O Lord of hosts.

But in this 81st psalm, he's occupying with redemption, what God has done for his people in delivering them out of the land of Egypt, and bringing them into the good land that he has promised them. Going back to the 8th psalm, it's how excellent is thy name in all the earth. It's the psalm of creation.

And we learn to appreciate, once we're redeemed, we learn to appreciate something of God's creation. It was not without reason that the psalmist had to pen those words, Heaven above is softer blue, Earth around is sweeter green. Something lives in every hue Christmas eyes have never seen.

Birds with gladder songs o'erflow, Flowers with deeper beauties shine, Since I know as now I know, I am his, and he is mine. And well could we praise God for the beauties of his creation. But what is there to bring a song out of the hearts of Christians, like the joys and glories of the redemption that God has wrought for us in the person of his beloved Son.

The fact that we have salvation, the forgiveness of sins, we possess eternal life, we've been born into the family of God, we've been redeemed. And then you'll think in the 84th psalm, we've been brought into the house of God. The three psalms that are tied together, each of them is addressed to the chief musicians.

Each of these three psalms. And if we could take a word from the second chapter of the epistle to the heathens, the Lord Jesus Christ is going to lead the assembled company of his saints in this song of praise. And if these are ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, and I'm spiritualizing of course, for there was a chief musician appointed in the days of David.

But if these psalms are ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, then in the eighth psalm we see him as the firstborn of all creation. And you're aware of the fact that the term firstborn is a title, more than a description. It doesn't have to do with birth, it has to do with prominence.

It's the place that he occupies. The Lord Jesus Christ is the firstborn of all creation in Colossians chapter 1 because he is the creator of all things. He is the chief.

He is over all God's creation, creator and sustainer of all things. God's excellent one. But in the 81st psalm, in redemption, we see him as the firstborn from the dead.

The one who died once and was buried and was raised again the third day. It's in him that we have our redemption. He's the firstborn from the dead.

And in the 84th psalm, which is the psalm of God's house, he's seen as the firstborn among many brethren. When in that glorious coming day of which we've been reminded, all God's people are at home, and the fulfillment of God's purposes for us is then seen. We are conformed to the image of his Son.

When that takes place, he will be seen. There is that great pattern to which we are all conformed. And he's going to have that chief place among many brethren.

The firstborn. That in all things he might have the three of us. But you notice also those to whom this psalm is ascribed, or who perhaps may have written these three psalms.

David wrote the eighth psalm. No wonder that David could praise the God of creation if he kept the sheep out on the hillside, looking up to the stars in the universe that God has made. He glorified the God who has put them all there.

But in this 81st psalm, a psalm for Asaph. 1 Chronicles 16, Asaph was appointed by David to be the chief over those he should send to give praise to God in the service of the tabernacle. The 84th psalm, the psalm of God's house, perhaps the most precious of all, was for the sons of Cain.

The sons of Cain. You remember the history of Caul, David, and Abel, who raised a rebellion against Moses and the Arabs, and told that they were just as holy as either Moses or Aaron, and that Moses and Aaron had no more right to the presence of God than David. And you remember the subsequent judgment of God upon them when Moses told the people of Israel to separate themselves from the testimony of these ungodly men, and to demonstrate to whom God had chosen.

That God was speaking through Moses, and unusual death would be visited upon Caul, David, and Abel, and all that appertained to them. And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them alive down into the pit. One moment standing in the sunlight of that glorious day, with all its possessions around them, and in the door they came out.

The next moment the earth had swallowed them alive, Of course. Rebel against God. And yet we read in the 26th chapter of that same book, the sons of Korah perished not.

And the sons of Korah have the 84th Psalm. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord God. Were not you and I in a similar condition? Were we not by nature and practice rebels against God? And to think of it, to be brought into the house of God.

Which house are we? Like the apostles of the Hebrews. To be brought into the house of God. Have you grasped something of the privilege of that? Have we time this afternoon to trace the experience of Israel as they came out of Egypt? You're aware of the fact that they were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb in the land of Egypt.

They were redeemed by the power of God through the Red Sea, delivered from their slavery in the land of Egypt. And in the song that they sang in the 15th of Exodus, we have a word, I will prepare him a habitation. They never said that at all.

Actually, what they said is, I will pray. It never dawned upon their mind. It was not until the 25th of Exodus that God gave instructions that a house should be prepared for him where he would dwell in the midst of his people.

It was not that the people were causing God to dwell in their midst. It was God who, in his gracious manner, moved to dwell in the midst of his people. And as a result of the covenant of Exodus, chapter 24, the sacrifice offered there, the relationship into which he has brought the people of God, God has brought Israel among them.

And because of that covenant relationship, Israel had the house of God. And was a privileged, a living God dwelling in their midst. A sinful people.

Conscious of their iniquity. Aggravated and provoking God for 40 years in the wilderness. And yet here they are with the presence of God in their midst.

You talk about the sons of Cork. They had every reason to praise the goodness and glory of God. And you're aware in New Testament language, we're not talking about a literal building of bricks and stones.

In the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, there are different aspects. And redemption from the penalty of sin is typified in the Passover. In Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.

In that Passover which redeemed them from the penalty, death, there was no provision in itself for their entry into the presence of God. Now it's one thing to have your sins forgiven. It's one thing to be cleared of every charge that's against you before the face of a righteous judge.

But it's another thing to live in the presence of that Savior. Or to use the illustration I constantly refer to, it's a Robert Anderson music. If the Queen of England pardoned a criminal from the death penalty in the jail, he could walk the streets of any city a free man, knowing that that sentence will never be executed upon him.

But that in itself does not give him the right to enter into the palace and sit down and dinner with the Queen. But God said to the people of Israel he wanted to bring them to his death. And God is not satisfied just to deliver us from the penalty of our sins.

God is not satisfied just to remove condemnation from us. God is not satisfied just to clear us of all charges, but to bring us to himself, the house of God. Do we grasp this? Hasn't a lot of the scripture lost its meaning for us? We have said it so often where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst.

Is he? Is that God's house? Are we in any sense conscious of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ this afternoon in the midst of his people? How would it change our attitude in this service? How different would we be if we knew that he was here? How eagerly we would come to meet with him, God's house. What a privilege. What a privilege.

Until the execution of that covenant in Exodus 24, the people were forbidden to draw near to the presence of God. But it was all changed because of the blood of the covenant. Because of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have access into the presence of God.

But very briefly in this 81st Psalm, redemption in the 81st Psalm is occupied with three things. First of all is salvation itself. In the sixth verse, God says, I remove his shoulder from the burden, his hands were delivered from the pot.

There is salvation itself. In verse 9 there is sanctification. Now I am aware that what God is saying is that you ought to be taken into captivity when you hear, Worship of strange gods in your ears.

There be kept from all that. Kept from it very practically, there is sanctification. And in verse 10, Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.

And there is satisfaction. And in the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ has provided for us from his finished work upon the cross, from his first and unfinished ministry at the right hand of God. All these three are for us.

What do we know of them? To remove thy shoulder from the burden. Is there only what it meant? Labeling of slaves in the land of Egypt. Under the lash of a taskmaster.

Their lives made miserable by reason of hard bondage. There only was it meant that thy shoulder removed of that burden. What do we know? In practical experience of delivering from the power of sin.

Do we speak of it as a doctrine? And yet persist in slavery to habits and quirks of temperament that bring no glory to God. What do we know of delivering from the power of sin? Or what do we know of practical

sanctification of being set apart to God? What do we know of this redemption? That is called for such rejoicing in the first five verses of this 81st Psalm. And finally, what do we know of satisfaction? Have we all had to speak of how true it is what we've been hearing this afternoon that materialism has come into the lives of the people of God almost as much as it has into the world and our cheap occupation so often becomes things.

And yet God has opened my mouth wide and I will fill it. There's satisfaction. And I suppose in one sense, as Mr. Thatcher was speaking in Florence this past week, there's a difference between contentment and satisfaction, but I'm going to leave it as it is.

What do we know of being satisfied with the Lord Jesus Christ? What do we know? I'm going to suggest to you in this 81st Psalm there are two keys to this threefold redemption. The first of them is found in verse 8. Hear, O my people. And the second one is found in verse 10.

Open thy mouth wide. Could I speak of them as obedience and faith? Hear, O my people. And yet we are not to be just hearers of the word, but we are to be doers of it.

God gave us ears and we delight in the sounds that we can hear. Thank God for hearing. But the chief purpose for which He gave us ears was to hear His word and do it.

And listen to the Lord Jesus Christ in the 40th Psalm, that God had digged His ears. God had formed an ear. And why did God form an ear? That there might be obedience to His word.

I'm not sure that the 40th Psalm has anything to do with the perpetual sermon of Exodus 21 or Jerusalem 15. There, when a slave decided that he did not want to leave his solitude either out of love for his wife or out of love for his master, his angel, good woman, Jew, his ear was bored through with it all. And it was at times the outward symbol of perpetual servitude.

Nor am I sure it had reference to the 50th of Isaiah that God opened the ear of the Lord Jesus. But it seems to me it's the very formation of the ear. Why did God give a man an ear? To hear His word.

And the fact that you and I have physically is the forms of God that we are to hear with our body's words. Now when you come to the Tent of Hebrews, that quotation is changed. The body has now been prepared.

Why did God serve a body by the action of the Spirit of God in the womb of a virgin? Why that His Son might take the place of a virgin? Why did God the Son move around this earth in the land of Palestine? Why did He move around a human body? What is the purpose of that body? That He might be obedient. Even as far as death. And that's the cross kind of thing.

He came as a servant. And the body that was formed for Him was represented by the ears of a 40-strong, a perfected boat to serve God, to serve man. And I'm reminded that in a glorified body He is at the right hand of God this afternoon to meet our needs.

Still serving. What then was the key to God's blessing for His people long ago? The same key to His blessing for us today. Obedience.

Heart. Listen. And obey.

Now to be very practical. What do I do with the word as I read it? What do I do with it? I may outline it, exegete it if I can, and preach it. But God gave that word to be obeyed.

Not to be outlined primarily. To be obeyed. And I am fully persuaded the key to the blessing of God, the first key in the life of an individual or the life of a local church is implicit obedience to what God says.

And it's a searching thing. It will not do for me to take the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount and brush them aside. No, I am persuaded there will be no laws in a coming kingdom age.

Are there not things there that I must learn to obey? I was stopped short in Florence some time ago by an intelligent young couple. College graduates. And though later on they confessed they were not entirely sincere, they had had a bad day and were somewhat cynical to start with, when I went to visit them about the things of God and about the gospel, I began to open my Bible with various scriptures about the gospel, and they stopped me saying, now wait a minute.

You want us to become what you call a Christian. You are persuaded of what we are now. We are not Christians.

Now they said, we've been reading our Bibles, and before we become Christians as you want us to be, we want you to do one thing for us. Show us one Christian in the city of Florence. Oh, that would be easy.

Until they began to turn to certain passages in the New Testament. Now they said, show us a person that goes out to the chapel that's doing that. And before I was through, before they were through, I had closed my Bible and gone home.

Obedience. We weren't doing it. Heart.

How do you read the Bible in your devotion? When God speaks. Is there the desire to obey? Remember the word of the Lord Jesus Christ. If any man were to do his will, he shall know of this doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.

Now he did not say if any man desires to know God's will. We are always so concerned with knowing the will of God. But God doesn't say anything about that.

The Lord Jesus said if any man desires to do his will. And I have half an idea that the reason I want to know God's will is not to decide whether or not I'll obey him. If it suits me.

But the Lord says if any man desires to do his will, Obedience. The second key. Our letting hold of what God is.

Why? Do you really expect God to do great things in your life or in your local assembly? Do you really think he can or will? Do you actually expect him to do anything? I personally believe we make no real ventures for God if we have no faith in God. I've asked myself many a time, why is it you sat here in Florida and the assembly is grown as an ass, why is it there aren't other assemblies planted around Florida? Why haven't you made a venture? It may well be the time has not been right when we were ready. That may well be.

But I would like to suspect we've never had the faith to open our mouths. Obedience and faith. Now look at the result.

The result in the last section of the 81st Psalm. First of all, there would be subjection on the part of God's enemy. Verse 14, I would soon have subdued their enemy and turned my hand against their adversary.

And the second result would have been satisfaction. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat. Now this is what could have been.

This psalm is divided into three sections. There is first of all the call to rejoice in the first five verses. There is second the word of redemption in verses 6 through 10.

The last section is the cry of regret. This God says is what might have been if Israel had hearkened and opened their mouth. As you read the history of the people of Israel in the Old Testament, as you go through the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, as you listen to the prophets in those days warning the people what would happen if they persisted in their quest, you sit and read and wonder, Israel, how could you have been so blind? And when you read of the warnings and the exhortations and the encouragements of the prophets, what God would do for them if they would obey Him.

But it never came to pass. But I wonder one day when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ, if God is not going to say, now this is what could have been if you had been willing to obey. This is what your life might have been.

This is what that local church could have been in that city If you had been willing to obey, hearken, O my people, hear His word, not just to read it and know it. O God, keep us from the attitude of those who came to Jeremiah professing a sincere desire to know the will of God as to whether they should stay in the land or go down to Egypt. And when they got the word of the Lord, they refused to obey Him.

God keep us from a curiosity. Just to know. God give us a hope.

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