

Psalm 81

The new moon and the shofar are mentioned, in reference to the feast of Rosh Hashanah and the recently completed Days of Awe at the "solemn feast day" of Yom Kippur. But the connection to **Leviticus 17** is the mention of "strange gods" in **verse 9**, recalling the "worship of devils after whom they have gone a whoring" in **Leviticus 17:7**.

"To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of Asaph."

Targum: "upon the harp which came from Gath;"

Septuagint: "for the winepresses"

This psalm, according to Kimchi, is said concerning the going out of the children of Israel from Egypt; and was composed in order to be sung at their new moons and solemn feasts

The Syriac version has: "a psalm of Asaph, when David by him prepared himself for the solemnities."

Psalm 81:1 - "Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob."

Psalm 81:2-3 - "Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day."

Targum: "blow the trumpet in the month of Tisri"

Rashi - the day of the judgment of the Holy One, blessed be He.

The Syriac version points to "the full moon," which would mean the Feast of Tabernacles. The first and eighth days of Tabernacles also are called "a solemn assembly" (**Leviticus 23:33**).

- **John 1:14** - "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt (tabernacled) among us..."

Psalm 81:5 - "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."

Rashi - As a testimony for Jehoseph He ordained it: On Rosh Hashanah, Joseph went out of prison. It is explained in tractate Sotah (36b) that [the angel] Gabriel taught him seventy languages.

Psalm 81:7 - "Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah."

Rashi - You called in secret between Me and you, but I answered you with a voice of thunder. Although it was revealed and tried before Me that you were destined to provoke Me with the waters of Meribah.

Probably refers to when the Lord looked out of the pillar of cloud at the Red sea upon the Egyptian host, and troubled them; at which time the voice of his thunder was heard in heaven (**Psalm 77:16**).

Psalm 81:9 - "Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me; There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god."

"Hear" = *sh'ma* - hear under and obey. (**Deuteronomy 6:4**) - "Hear O Israel..."

God calls to repentance those who "separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart" (**Ezekiel 14:7**).

Psalm 81:10 - "I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

Targum: "open thy mouth to the words of the law, and I will fill it with every good thing."

See **Psalm 103:5** - "Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Psalm 81:12 - "So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust (*shěriyuwth*): and they walked in their own counsels."

lust = *shěriyuwth* - hardness, stubbornness of heart

Paul quotes this in **Romans 1:24** - "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:"

Why do we choose our own path instead of depending on God to supply?

- **Psalm 37:4** - "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires (*mish'alah*) of thine heart."

Desire here is a different word:

desires = *mish'alah* - desire, petition, prayer

Psalm 81:14 - "I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries."

- **Proverbs 16:7** - "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Rashi - I would return my blow from upon you to lay it upon them

Psalm 81:15 - "The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever (*olam*)."

Rashi - [The time of] their retribution [would be] forever.

Psalm 81:16 - "He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee."

Rashi - (**Deuteronomy 32:13**): "He suckled them with honey from the rock. Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape."

Aben Ezra interprets this of the water which flowed out of the rock at Horeb, which was sweeter than honey

- **1 Corinthians 10:4** - "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."