

Part 5 – The Lord is My Helper

In part 4 we learned how God had a right to demand Israel not have any other gods nor worship idols. For, He was the one who bought (redeemed/ransomed) them from Egyptian bondage by plaguing Egypt with mighty plagues and then causing them to give Israel whatever riches they wanted before they left. And we also learned how God testified to Israel that **if** they would only ‘open up’ their mouth wide, He *would* fill it. But, this wasn’t referring to physical food any more than Jesus was in John 6. Rather, He was using an idiom (Hebrew figure of speech) that meant if Israel would only greatly *desire* to learn of His Word (His righteousness) He would spiritually fill them with *truth* by helping them to learn to hear (*and* obey) His righteous Laws, which He gave them *for their good* (Deut 10:13). He then went on to testify how Israel consistently refused to hear (or obey) Him. And because they did so *habitually*, He finally pulled back and let them walk in their own foolish counsels (purposes) and do what their filthy hearts desired. While God chastises us for our good, because He loves us (Heb 12), if we consistently harden our hearts to His chastisements, He will eventually stop doing so and let us go on in our sinful ways *until* we are *finally* ready to repent... or are destroyed from our own vile ways. And this is the thought we pick up with in this great Psalm...

Psalms 81

13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!

Yet again this verse echoes the ‘Song of Moses’, in Deut 32:29, when God said (speaking of Israel): *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!* So, our Heavenly Father is lamenting that His people *so often* did not obey Him. The word ‘**oh**’ here is a *conditional particle* meaning ‘**if**’ but, by implication, it’s *a wishful thought*, as in ‘I wish they would have obeyed Me!’. And then the word ‘**hearkened**’ means *to hear intelligently*, often with implication of *attention and obedience* (#8085). And then the word ‘**ways**’ means *a road* (as trodden); figuratively, *a course of life* or *mode of action* (#1870). And the reason He wished Israel would have obeyed Him was because His ways are ‘*the way*’ to life, even to *eternal* life (John 14:6). As Jesus so profoundly explained, God’s Word (and Holy Spirit) – and this includes His Laws – *are what gives us life*, and that’s because God’s Word (and Holy Spirit) is ***truth*** (John 17:17). Moses laid this out to Israel as well...

*15 See, I have set before thee this day **life and good**, and **death and evil**;*

*16 In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God **shall bless thee** in the land whither thou goest to possess it.*

*17 **But if** thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them;*

18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it.

19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

*20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that **thou mayest obey his voice**, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for **he is thy life, and the length of thy days**: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*

Deut 30:15-20

David testified to this also in Ps 16:11 when He said God would show Him ‘the path of life’ and again, in Ps 23:3, when He said that the Lord leads him in ‘the paths of righteousness’. And again, in Ps 36:9, David wrote: *For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.* And Paul explains this quite simply in Rom 8:6 when he wrote that, *to be carnally minded is death; but **to be spiritually minded is life and peace**.* And of course, Jesus also told us that **He is the** path to life, even to eternal life...

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

*51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, **he shall live for ever**: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

John 6:48-51

While this metaphor offended many who could only think carnally, Jesus later clearly explained what He meant to His disciples, when He said that: *It is the spirit that quickeneth* (makes us alive); *the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words** that I speak unto you, they **are spirit**, and **they are life*** (John 6:63). And again, in Rom 8:4, Paul explained that *the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*. So, walking in God’s ‘ways’ (which His Laws teach us) is simply studying His Word to *learn* what **is right** verses *what is wrong and then* striving sincerely (from our heart) to actually DO what is right – not faking it or being hypocritical – but truly, (again, from our heart) striving to *obey* God. And when we fall short (which we all do, Rom 3:23) then we should repent *sincerely* and strive *hard* to do better.

But so much of the time Israel was not serious about pleasing God. They were willing to worship Him when times were good but, as soon as a bit of hardship came, they wilted like a flower in the sun that *has no roots*. They couldn’t handle even a few days in the wilderness before they started complaining to Moses. If they *really* believed God was leading them to the Promise Land, they would have asked *respectfully* for help, instead of acting like God wasn’t *able* to help them (thus implying He wasn’t going to fulfil His promise to lead them to the Promise Land). Jesus Christ explained this kind of mindset (i.e. people who *don’t* have the faith to patiently weather

the hard times because they don't *really* believe God's promises) in the parable of the sower [you can learn about this parable in this study: <https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1288>]. And in Luke 8:15, He summed up what it takes to obtain God's promises: *But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, **keep it**, and bring forth fruit with **patience***. It takes patience, along with faithfully *obeying* God *from the heart*, to bring forth fruit for God, which is what causes Him to fulfil His promises of blessing and protecting us. And in Heb 10:36, Paul reminded us that: *ye have need of patience, that, **after** ye have **done** the will of God, ye might receive the promise*. And again, in Heb 12:1 he said: *let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*. So, it takes determination to, not only *learn* God's Word (*how* to do what's right) but, also to strive *hard* to obey Him *and* to 'stick with it'. Many people are *so impatient* to receive God's blessings that they quickly give up on Him and turn away to false gods and idols (of which there are many, even today). But, if we *truly* believe that God is real, and that Jesus Christ *really* is the Messiah (which He *really* is) then *we won't let our faith waver just because hard times come*. Our Heavenly Father is truly *very* faithful; more so than *anyone* else. And when He promises something (like we'll be blessed for obeying Him) then He will make good on His promises. But, *we can't be impatient for them*. For, just as it takes time for your garden to grow before you can reap the blessings from it, so too does it take time for *you* to grow spiritually mature (and become fruitful in good works for the Lord) before you can reap blessings from God.

And we should also understand that, our Heavenly Father won't pour out the blessings any quicker than we can handle. For, if we're blessed too quickly then most people have the bad habit of becoming prideful, and complacent, and that's what often causes them to turn away from our Heavenly Father. King Solomon was a good type for this. While he had more wisdom, and blessings, from God (than perhaps anyone ever has) his heart eventually fell away from the very God (Yehovah) who blessed him so much. So again, *patiently obeying* Him is *the key* to receiving blessing from our Heavenly Father. And our Heavenly Father truly desired that Israel would have done this. Why? Because, just as we enjoy giving our children good things, so too does our Heavenly Father. Thus, He *really wanted* to bless Israel, as He goes on to say...

Psalms 81

14 I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

The Lord (YHVH) is now testifying to Israel what He would have done for them **if** they had *only obeyed* Him. And remember, He really did want to bless Israel; but He could *not* bless their disobedience, because doing so would be condoning sin, which He'll never do, because our Heavenly Father is *righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works* (Ps 145:17). And that's *why* He chastised them when they did evil (Heb 12, Dan 8:14). Now, the word '**soon**' here means *a little* or few and has been translated as *a little while* (#4592). And the word '**subdued**' means to *bend the knee*; hence, *to humiliate* or *vanquish* (conquer, subjugate) and has also been

translated as *bring down* (low), *into subjection*, *under*, *humble* and *subdue* (#3665). And the word ‘**turned**’ means *to turn back* (hence, *away*) or *to retreat* (#7725). So, God points out (as He’s testifying to Israel here) that He really would have caused them to subdue (conquer) their enemies **if** they had only been *obedient* to Him. In fact, even if they had just repented sincerely and began to try and obey Him (sincerely), He would have saved them from their enemies. And there are *many* historical accounts (ex: Judg 4:4-24, Judges 5:18-23, Judg 7:15-25, 1 Sam 7:7-13, 2 Kings 6:6-23, 2 Kings 7:3-11, 2 Chron 13:7-20, 2 Chron 14:9-15, 2 Chron 20:12-30) that prove that’s exactly what He did for them at times. But, perhaps one of the best examples of this, is when He saved Jerusalem from the Assyrians - who had already taken the northern tribes of Israel into captivity and had even conquered all the other towns in the southern kingdom of Judah. But, since the king of the southern kingdom of Judah, Hezekiah, was actually trying hard (very sincerely) to do what was right – and begged God to save Jerusalem – our Heavenly Father did indeed save Jerusalem. And He also saved it for ‘His name’s sake, which the Babylonians had slandered (2 Kings 19:34). And not only was Jerusalem saved, He freed all the other towns in the southern kingdom of Judah as well, *because* He killed off 185,000 Assyrians (even their most mighty warriors) *in one night*! And that caused the Assyrians to quickly retreat back to Assyria, where the king was then assassinated by his *own sons* (2 Kings 19:35-37). So, God had proved that He would subdue Israel’s enemies; *but* there was a stipulation, which He clearly laid out in Lev 26 and Deut 28 (among many other places, such as the prophets). They had to repent sincerely and strive to obey Him. And that’s why God also said in the ‘Song of Moses’...

30 How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?

31 For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter:

33 Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

Deut 32:30-33

So, when Israel began to act *just like the heathen* (evil and perverted) God *refused* to protect (save) them *because* they were doing wickedly and *would not repent*. And again, this is quite righteous for God to do so. For, helping those who do evil *is not a righteous thing*, as a prophet told king Jehoshaphat (king of the southern kingdom of Judah) when he kept helping the wicked king Ahab (king of Israel at that time): *Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD* (2 Chron 19:2). It was only because Jehoshaphat had been (and continued to) working hard to clean up his own country, and tried to get the people in his own nation to *obey* God, that he was not punished as harshly as he otherwise would have been (2 Chron 19:3). So, our Heavenly Father refuses to help (or even condone) evil, even if it meant His own ‘chosen people’ had to be punished by heathen nations attacking, invading and even taking them out of the Promise Land to live in foreign nations as

*slaves. But again, He clearly points out here in Ps 81:14 that, He would have subdued their enemies and cause they to flee from Israel **if** they had only tried *hard* (sincerely) to *obey* Him...*

Psalms 81

15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever.

This verse picks up with the prior verse where God promised He would have subdued Israel's enemies (be in the northern kingdom of Israel or the southern kingdom of Judah) if they had only listened to His Voice (His Laws/Word and prophets) and 'walked' in His ways (obeyed Him from the heart). And so here in this verse 15, He's simply saying that the 'haters of the Lord' (and the word '**Lord**' is God's Sacred Name, *Yehovah* #3068) would have been forced to submit to Israel, as they had back in the days of David and the most of Solomon's rule (before he started worshiping false gods and idols). And the phrase 'haters of the Lord' essentially means Israel's enemies... *when* they were obeying the Lord (YHVH). But, when they were disobeying Him then, they made themselves an enemy *to Him*! And this is still how it is today. As James 4:4 says: *know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God*. We cannot love the 'world' (the flesh things in life, i.e. Satan's wicked ways) and think we can still be pleasing to our Heavenly Father. Israel tried this many times and *it never worked out well for them* because they always ended up doing evil things, just like the heathen did. As John so aptly warned us...

*15 **Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world**. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

*16 For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh**, and the **lust of the eyes**, and the **pride of life**, is not of the Father, but **is of the world**.*

*17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: **but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever**.*

1 John 2:15-17

The Greek meaning of the word '**world**' is helpful to understand what John is really speaking of. It's the Hebrew word *kosmos* (#2889) and means **orderly arrangement**, i.e. *decoration*; by implication, *the world* (in a wide or narrow sense, including its inhabitants, literally or figuratively [morally]). So essentially, the 'world' is not only referring to this flesh earth age, where we live in flesh bodies, but also the *crooked* ways the governments, and individual people, live on this earth (while we're in a flesh body) ... which are *all* contrary to 'the ways' of our Heavenly Father (which is revealed to us through His Written Word, the Bible), which is the *only* thing that brings *eternal* life. All you have to do to understand this is to study God's Word and compare His Laws to the laws of mankind *and* the ways that people live their own personal lives. Most people only live for the 'moment' because all they can do is think about 'now'. They don't

think long term, let alone what'll happen to them when they die. Paul summed it up rather well, in Rom 8:6, when he wrote: *to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace*. So, being 'worldly' is being *carnally* minded, where all you think about is *living live for the pleasures of the flesh*, instead of 'crucifying' those lusts (Gal 5:24) and living your life to fulfill (obey) God's Will instead of carnal inclinations (as Peter told us to in 1 Pt 4:1-2).

So, John warns us that we cannot love the world (evil) and think we're pleasing to God. This is what Israel did so often; and truly, many Christians do today too. For, far too often Christians become very 'worldly' by allowing themselves to care more about money, prestige and other things (hobbies, lusts, entertainment, etc.) that *take their heart and mind away from* loving and serving the Lord (YHVH) and Jesus Christ (our Savior and King). And, as John points out, the things of this world *won't last forever*, nor will the lusts of the flesh body. And that's because, when Jesus Christ returns, this flesh age is *going to be destroyed* and *none* of those things people lusted (or coveted after, Col 3:5) *will even exist anymore*. So, if you sell out your faith in God's Word (and Jesus Christ) to get 'things of this world' (such as money, prestige, fulfilling lusts for sex, hobbies, entertainment, etc.) then *you'll have absolutely no rewards coming* when you die, or when Jesus Christ returns (whichever comes first). You can learn more about 'the world' in the following studies...

Spiritual and Material Dimensions <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/263>

3 World Ages <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/489>

1 Corinthians Chapter 15 https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Corinthians/33

So again, here in Psalm 81:15, God is testifying to Israel (and truly to us today) that He would have caused Israel's enemies (who not only hated Israel but also their God) to be subjugated to them, but He also says *but their time should have endured for ever*. In other words, our Heavenly Father would have allowed Israel to be a nation forever (if they only obeyed Him) instead of allowing their enemies to invade, loot and plunder and then carry them out of the Promise Land, as slaves. And thus, if they remained obedient to Him (therefore allowing them to stay in the Promise Land), their enemies would have forever been subjugated by Israel. Truly, our Heavenly Father *really* wished Israel had been faithfully obedient to Him *because* He had wanted to use them to subjugate those who hated Him (i.e. the heathen nations). He even called Israel His 'battle axe' and 'weapons of war' which He would use to break the nations into pieces and destroy kingdoms (Jer 51:20). As the history of the Bible reveals (and even secular history too) God uses nations to punish other nations. And He thus wanted Israel to be a righteous kingdom which He would use to 'correct' all the other nations - thus making them comply to His righteous Laws instead of all the bloodshed, hurting innocent people and terrible perversions that went on in the world. But instead of obeying God, so He *could* use them to punish the heathen nations, Israel eventually became *as corrupt as* the heathen nations themselves (worse in the days of Manasseh, 2 Chron 33:9). So, God *had* to allow them to be punished by heathen nations. But,

thankfully, God will get His desire to see *all* the heathen punished. And this *will* be done by His faithful Son, Jesus Christ, who will rule the world (forever), with a rod of iron, when He returns (Rev 19:15). As it is written, Jesus Christ *shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more* (Isa 2:5). But, that time won't come before God's 'cup of wrath' [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/484>] is poured out upon the nations when Jesus Christ returns.

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.

This is now the last 'testimony' that God gives Israel in this great Psalm. And He promised that, **if** they had only *continued* to obey Him (generation after generation) then He would have given them the finest of wheat and 'honey out of the rock' to satisfy them. The word '**finest**' here means ***the richest*** or ***choice part*** (#2459) and wheat has long been considered the best grain to sustain people. Usually, only the rich people could afford it, but God promised all of Israel would have access to it. And then He makes what seems like a rather odd comment about 'honey out of the rock'. While '**honey**' does actually mean ***honey*** (#1706) the word '**rock**' means ***a cliff*** (or sharp rock, as compressed) and can also mean ***a rock*** or ***boulder***; figuratively, it's also used to refer to a *refuge*; also an *edge* (as precipitous) (#6697). So, why would God say this? Because truly, honey doesn't come from a rock, it comes from bees. Well, this same statement is found in the 'Song of Moses', where God said (speaking of what He would do for Israel in blessing the nation): *He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock* (Deut 32:13). And here in the 'song of Moses', God says something else that seems unusual: *oil out of the flinty rock*. What this means is that, the Lord (YHVH) is simply promising that even the most barren places in their country would yield an abundance of aromatic flowers, from which the bees could collect pollen and thus make honey in abundance. And apparently, He promised their beehives would be so numerous they'd even be in, or upon, the rocks – perhaps making it easier to harvest than normal methods. Further, He also promised that, even the tops of the rocks would be able to support olive trees, from which they got olive *oil*, which (along with honey and wine) were *precious* commodities in those days - and truly still is yet today!

And then He promised He would have 'satisfied' all of Israel (not just the rich folks) with these precious commodities, which can only be done if they are in an *abundant* supply. The word '**satisfaction**' here in Ps 81:16 means ***to state***, i.e. ***to fill to satisfaction*** (#7646). So, at the time of this Psalm was written, God promised Israel that ***IF*** they had changed their way (as Ps 80 asked for help doing), ***then*** they would have experienced the kind of great *prosperity* that He promised clear back when they departed from Egypt. And truly, Israel did have great prosperity

during the days of David and Solomon. So, they should have known He was ‘good for His Word’. So, even though God warned of consequences for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15), He also offered great benefits if Israel would obey (Deuteronomy 28:2–14). Yet, even after falling into sin, God was willing to restore the nation (2 Chronicles 7:14) *if they would come back to Him in faith*. That would mean safety from their many enemies as well as prosperity in the Promised Land. Of course, they didn’t listen. While some generations tried, overall, Israel was truly a very ‘wild vine’ (i.e. poison berries), as Isaiah 5 declared. And *that’s why* God had to *continue* to chastise them until they were *so obstinate* that no amount of chastising would fix their governments; and that’s why He finally allowed them to be taken away captive, first to the Asriyan’s (the northern ten tribes and much of Benjamin and Judah) and then later to the Babylonians (the rest of the southern kingdom of Judah). And, as Paul so clearly told us in 1 Cor 10:11-12: *Now, all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*

So, we *should* learn from the historical examples of the Bible. And we should also learn from the great Psalms, such as this 81st chapter, where God Himself promises **if** we simply turn away from our wicked ways **and obey Him** (from the heart) that He’ll pour out amazing blessings to us. As He said in 2 Chron 7:14: ***If** my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and **turn from their wicked ways**; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.* He promises the same thing in Deut 4:26-31, but there points out that He would even do this for those who had been cast out of the Promise Land. And, in the latter verses of this, He brings out a critical point...

29 But **if** from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, **if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul**.

30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, **even in the latter days**, **if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice**;

31 (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) **he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them**.

Deut 7:29-31

The critical point not to miss here is that we *must* seek God with **all** our heart and **all** our soul *and then* be obedient to Him. And *then*, He *will* help us (and not forsake us). And this still applies to us, who really are living in the ‘latter days’. And this then is why Jesus said that, even when the ‘great tribulation’ is happening – which is when Satan himself is cast out of heaven to earth (with his fallen angels) to seduce the world into worshiping him and accepting his ‘beast’ governing system (Rev 12-13, 2 Thess 2) – the Gospel of Jesus Christ must *first* be preached (published) to **all** nations (for a witness) *before* He will return (Matt 24:14, Mark 13:10). So, even when the ‘great tribulation’ (Mth 24:21) is happening, it’s still God’s will for the Gospel of

Jesus Christ to be taught (to the *entire* world) to witness to them that the true Jesus Christ is about to return *and they should repent*. And this witnessing will not only be done by the two witnesses of Rev 11, but also many others, as Mth 10:18-22, Mk 13:9-13, Lk 21:12-19 tell us [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/373>]. And, perhaps this is why Rev 7 tells us that *a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues* which will have *come out of great tribulation*, *and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. And they'll even be *before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them* (Rev 7:9, 14-15). So, just because people don't listen to you very often, when you plant verbal seeds of truth to them, don't worry about it. Continue to do so as the Holy Spirit guides you, when the opportunities arise (Eph 5:15-16, Col 4:5-6) and learn to **Turn Problems in Life into an Opportunity** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/356>] instead of moping about them. As our brother Paul so aptly reminds us...

*5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.***

*6 So that we may boldly say, **The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.***

Heb 13:5-6

AMEN!