

Tehilim Perek 81

Welcome to NachDaily, covering the entire TANACH one perek at a time. I'm Rabbi Shaya Sussman, and today we'll be discussing Tehilim, Chapter 81.

In this perek, Asaph expresses gratitude and praise to Hashem for taking us out of Egypt.

The Gemarah in Rosh Hashana 11A explains that even though we were taken out of Mitzrayim on the 15th of Nissan, we had actually been freed from slavery six months prior, on the 1st of Tishrei, Rosh Hashana. This perek therefore also mentions the blowing of the Shofar on Rosh Hashana.

The perek was also said at the Beis Hamikdash on Rosh Hashana, and is also said weekly as the Shir Shel Yom every Thursday at the end of Schacharis.

The Meforshim also point out that this chapter can be understood as a prayer for the final redemption. God will blow His shofar on that great day when there will be no more war on His Holy mountain in Yerushalyim.

The chapter opens with Asaph urging everyone to sing and play music to Hashem and to blow the Shofar at the time of the new moon. This is understood as referring to Rosh Hashana, when the moon is primarily hidden.

The perek now switches to Hashem talking:

You called out to Me and I freed you. I lifted the burden of exile from you. Now heed this: do not serve any 'god' other than Me. I am Your God who took you out of Egypt. Open your mouth and I'll fill it.

Unfortunately, Yisrael has stopped listening to Me. If only they would listen to Me, following My ways and keeping the Torah, I would bring them total freedom. I would get rid of all their enemies for them. However, at the end of the day, I will still take care of My people, Am Yisrael.

Verse 2 says:

הַרְנִינוּ לֵאלֹהִים עֲזָזְנוּ הַרְיֵעוּ לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב:

Sing joyously to God, our strength; raise a shout to the God of Yaakov.

Why is this psalm said on Rosh Hashana, the Day of Judgment? On the Day of Judgment shouldn't we be more somber? Shouldn't we only sing after we have been assured of redemption?

The Friyadiker Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz, gives us both psychological and spiritual insight on this--he would say that when soldiers go out to war, they sing a victory march. This seems out of place. Shouldn't they sing the victory march after they win the war?

In many situations in life, in order to win and be successful, you need to be convinced that you actually will prevail. When you go out to meet challenges one hundred percent sure that you're going to meet with success, that positive attitude and energy actually helps with your struggles.

The same applies to our spiritual lives. We are placed here with the mission of bringing God's light into this world by keeping His Torah. We need to be convinced from the beginning of our mission that we'll be successful in fulfilling it. This attitude of positivity will yield great results.

We say this chapter on Rosh Hashana, during the time of Judgment, because when we celebrate our victories before they transpire, they are more likely to happen!

May we merit being confident in the battles of our lives, to know that Hashem is with us and wants us to succeed.

Thank you for listening and have a wonderful day.