



[Psalm 81:1-4](#)

(1)

For the director of music. According to gittith. Of Asaph.

Sing for joy to God our strength;

shout aloud to the God of Jacob! (2) Begin the music, strike the tambourine, play the melodious harp and lyre. (3) Sound the ram's horn at the New Moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our Feast; (4) this is a decree for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.

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We need to be aware of a danger inherent in festival times: that our pursuit of [joy](#) does not obscure more important elements. Psalm 81 is a festival psalm, and these verses bid us to enjoy God's feasts fully.

[God](#) commands us to rejoice in His feasts ([Deuteronomy 14:26](#)), but [Psalm 81:8-10](#) cautions us to remember certain things so that their real purpose is not lost in an unthinking keeping of that command:

Hear, O My people, and I will admonish you! O Israel, if you will listen to Me! There shall be no [foreign god](#) among you; nor shall you worship any foreign 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.

God knows that even among His people, human frailty can misuse festival occasions, for they seem to beckon us to play. Relaxation and merriment tend to become the sole interest. Yet the greater the gaiety, the more obscure God's intent for the feasts become, and their spiritual value diminishes. God reminds us of the meaning of our songs of praise lest our joy becomes gaiety, gaiety becomes hilarity, hilarity becomes revelry, and revelry becomes debauchery. Our God-produced joy is lost.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Psalm 81:1-4 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

"Listen to Me while you rejoice," God says. "Stay completely clear of [idolatry](#) and remember I am the God who freed you from your bondage. Open your mouth and I will feed you!" When we follow God's prescription, He will feed us so that we experience real joy and satisfaction. God removes the burdens that make true rejoicing a reality. He continues, "I would feed you with the finest of wheat, and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you" (verse 16). He makes it plain that real joy lies in the quality of our relationship with Him!

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Fruit of the Spirit: Joy](#)

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