

Questions on Ps 81

1. Outline the structure of this psalm, based on *selah*, shifts in the speaker, and shifts in the subject matter.
2. What kind of trumpet is in view in v. 3? (Use the Strong's numbers.) Accordingly, what feast is in view?
3. What does this feast commemorate, according to vv. 4-5? (Compare Gen 41:41-45; the Hebrew phrase “he went out through the land of Egypt” in v. 5 uses the same Hebrew construction as the last sentence in Gen 41:45.)
4. Whose voice did Israel hear without understanding in v. 5? (Where does the verb “to hear” appear elsewhere in the Psalm? You may have to use Strong's numbers to confirm. Compare those uses with this one.)
5. What relation between vv. 6-7 and v.5 does the answer to the previous question suggest?
6. What three acts of God are in view in v.7, and how does each of them reflect Israel's lack of understanding?
7. How do repetitions of a key word and shifts in meaning set off vv. 8-10, 11-12, and 13-16?
8. What logical progression is there from each of these divisions to the next?
9. How does Strong's number for “submit” in v. 15 elucidate the deeper meaning of the word? Compare the use of the same word in Ps 18:44; 66:3.
10. What two interpretations can you come up with for the second half of v. 15?
11. How can you explain the unexpected shifts in speaker in vv. 5c, 16a?
12. Why is it Asaph (rather, say, than David) who wrote this psalm?