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PSALM 81:3

THE SCRIPTURE CONCERNED

> Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, IN THE TIME APPOINTED, on our solemn feast day. (Psalm 81:3 AV)

THE MEANING PEOPLE DRAW FROM THIS TRANSLATION

People in the churches of God have tended to assume that this verse is speaking about the Holy Day of Trumpets. But that is not correct.

THE MISTRANSLATION

The expression "in the time appointed" is a translation of the Hebrew word "kece". And it is well-known that this should really be translated as "IN THE FULL MOON". And thus MANY different translations refer to "the full moon" in this verse, including the following ones: ASV, JPS, Rotherham, RSV, NAS, NIV, NRSV, and even NKJV.

The word "FEAST (day)" in this verse is a translation of the Hebrew word "chag", and this Hebrew word identifies the THREE annual Feasts: Unleavened Bread, Pentecost and Tabernacles. This word "chag" does NOT identify "Holy Days", which in the Hebrew text are identified by the word "mow'ed". Specifically, this word "chag" does NOT apply to the Day of Trumpets.

So this verse does NOT single out any one specific day in the year on which the "trumpet" (here "shofar", meaning "ram's horn") was to be blown. Rather, this verse highlights TWO CATEGORIES of days on which the trumpet was to be blown, new moon days and full moon days.

In Numbers 10:10 God spelled out some of the occasions on which trumpets were to be blown. Notice:

> Also in the day of your gladness, and IN YOUR SOLEMN DAYS, and IN THE BEGINNINGS OF YOUR MONTHS, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I *am* the LORD your God. (Numbers 10:10 AV)

The expression "in your solemn days" comes from the Hebrew word "mow'ed", and this refers to all seven of the annual Holy Days, two of which happen to be on full moon days, and one of which happens to be a new moon day. The expression "in the beginnings of your months" refers to the new moon days, with which every month was to start.

Every month in the year began on "a new moon day", and TWO full moon days in the year were also Holy Days, or "mow'ed days"; being the First Day of the FEAST of Unleavened Bread, and also the First Day of the FEAST of Tabernacles.

So Psalm 81:3 applies to FOURTEEN DAYS IN THE YEAR (or 15 in a year with 13 months). These 14

days are: the first day of EVERY month (only one of which happens to be a Holy Day, though certainly NOT "a Feast Day", that being the Day of Trumpets, the First Day of the Seventh Month), and TWO full moon days (the First Day of Unleavened Bread and the First Day of Tabernacles).

Psalm 81:3 certainly INCLUDES the Day of Trumpets and the First Day of Tabernacles. But it also INCLUDES the First Day of Unleavened Bread and also 11 (or 12) other "new moon days" in the year. This verse can apply equally well to the Feast of Unleavened Bread as it can to the Feast of Tabernacles. It is the context of the rest of this Psalm, with references to Egypt, that tends to make it even more applicable to the Feast of Unleavened Bread than to the Feast of Tabernacles. But the statements in this verse are certainly equally applicable to the Seventh Month, with the Day of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles qualifying for the description given in Psalm 81:3.

THE SOURCE OF THIS WRONG TRANSLATION

The KJV translators here simply followed Jerome's Latin Vulgate Translation, rather than translating the Hebrew text of this verse. The Vulgate reads (it is Psalm 80:4 in the Vulgate):

> (80-4) bucinate in neomenia tuba IN INSIGNI DIE SOLLEMNITATIS NOSTRAE (Psalm 81:3 VULGATE)

The Latin expression "in insigni die" means "IN THE DISTINGUISHED DAYS", and this is Jerome's translation of the Hebrew expression with the word "kece" (full moon) in it. The Latin words "sollemnitatis nostrae" mean "our solemn", or "our uncommon". Putting the whole phrase together, we get: "on our distinguished solemn days". Jerome used the expression "solemn days" to refer to both, biblical Feasts and Holy Days.

The KJV translators' use of the expression "on our solemn feast day" in their translation shows that they were sticking with Jerome's Latin translation of this verse. In this instance they did not rely on the actual Hebrew text, thus the error in the KJV. It was originally really Jerome's error.

THE CORRECT TRANSLATION

> Blow up the trumpet in the new moon AND in the full moon, on our feast day. (Psalm 81:3)

THE MEANING OF THIS CORRECT TRANSLATION

By providing the implied word "and" (something that is done repeatedly in other passages of the Bible) it makes clear that MORE THAN ONE occasion for blowing the trumpet are being referred to in this verse. While it does not specifically focus on the Day of Trumpets to the exclusion of other days in the year, this verse certainly includes the Day of Trumpets.

IN SUMMARY

A correct translation of this verse eliminates the unjustified deduction that the Day of Trumpets must be "a FEAST Day", which it is not. The "FEAST day" referred to in this verse is the full moon day of Unleavened Bread and / or the full moon day of Tabernacles.

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