

# Psalm 81:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

## Analysis

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**The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him** (משׁתָּאֵי)—Yekachashu means 'to cringe, feign obedience' or 'submit in pretense.' If Israel had obeyed (vv. 13-14), even Yahweh's **haters** would have been forced into grudging submission before victorious Israel, whose God proved supreme. **But their time should have endured for ever**—Israel's prosperity and dominance would have been perpetual.

This counterfactual lament ('what might have been') appears throughout Scripture (Deuteronomy 32:29, Isaiah 48:18, Matthew 23:37). God's original design was for obedient Israel to be such a light to nations that even enemies would acknowledge Yahweh's supremacy (Deuteronomy 4:6-8). Instead, disobedience led to Israel's subjugation. Yet the promise finds ultimate fulfillment in Christ, before whom every knee will bow (Philippians 2:10-11).

## Historical Context

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Solomon's reign briefly realized this vision: 'All the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart' (1 Kings 10:24). Foreign kings brought tribute, acknowledging Yahweh's blessing. But Solomon's idolatry (1 Kings 11) shattered this witness, leading to division and decline. The true 'greater than Solomon' (Matthew 12:42) will establish eternal dominion.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does Israel's failure to be a 'light to the nations' through obedience challenge Christian witness in a watching world?
2. What does this 'counterfactual lament' teach about God's genuine desire for His people's blessing, not merely their punishment?
3. How will Christ's second coming fulfill the vision of all enemies submitting, willingly or unwillingly, to God's authority?

## Interlinear Text

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יְהָיָה לֵז מְשֻׁתָּא ! הָתָה יְצַחְשָׁו !

**The haters of the LORD should have submitted** H0 H1961

H8130

H3068

H3584

לְעִזָּם :

**themselves unto him but their time should have endured for ever**

H6256

H5769

## Additional Cross-References

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**Romans 1:30** (Parallel theme): Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

**Deuteronomy 7:10** (Parallel theme): And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.