

Psalm 68 Continued

Psalm 68:16 "Why leap ye, ye high hills? [this is] the hill [which] God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell [in it] for ever."

Meaning the kingdoms of this world that lift up themselves above, and look with contempt upon the interest, kingdom, and church of Christ. Lie in wait for it, leap upon it, insult over it, and endeavor to crush and extirpate it; but all in vain. His church is built on a rock, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. The little stone cut out of the mountain without hands will become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth, and break in pieces and consume the kingdoms of it. The word in, the Arabic language, signifies "to lie in wait", as Jarchi from R. Moses Hadarsan observes.

"This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in" (as in Psalm 132:13). The Word of the Lord, as the Targum; the essential Word, the Messiah. His desire was towards his church and people, in eternity, in time, and now is. He has chosen and desired them for his habitation, and in the midst of them he delights to be (Rev. 1:13).

"Yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever": He dwells in his church now by his gracious presence. He will dwell in the New Jerusalem church state personally for the space of a thousand years. And after that he will dwell with and among his people to all eternity (see Psalm 132:14).

This will be called the holy mountain of God. This mountain is Zion. God has chosen this mountain to dwell in. Moriah and Zion are the same mountain. Zion symbolizes the church. Zion is sometimes speaking of Jerusalem. No one knows for sure why God chose this mountain for His dwelling place. We do know that God has chosen to dwell in spiritual Zion (the Christians). Let's look at an Old Testament Scripture and a New Testament Scripture that tells us just that.

Ezekiel 37:27 "My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Revelation 21:3 "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, [and be] their God."

Psalm 68:17 "The chariots of God [are] twenty thousand, [even] thousands of angels: the Lord [is] among them, [as in] Sinai, in the holy [place]."

"Sinai ... holy place": God's presence had been with the armies in the same way it had been on Mt. Sinai at the giving of the law (compare Exodus chapter 19).

Tens of thousands of angels and chariots of fire are available to God to use; at any time He wishes. Even Pharaoh had sent 500 chariots out to battle, and that was thought to be a large army with chariots. The difference is not just in the number either. Earthly chariots are no comparison

to the chariots of fire that belong to God. We know that God's chariots are of fire, because one of them came to escort Elijah to heaven.

2 Kings 2:11 "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, [there appeared] a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

The Lord is among them, could be speaking of Jesus when He comes back to the earth with His mighty hosts.

Psalm 68:18 "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, [for] the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell [among them]."

This verse is quoted somewhat enigmatically in (Ephesians 4:8-11), to describe how the exalted Christ distributed gifts to believers after His ascension (however, see the reference to God's act of giving to His people in 68:35). Here the focus is on God the conqueror, while Paul emphasizes the benefits of Christ's victory for God's people (Acts 2:33; 1 Cor. 12:4-11).

"Ascended on high": Paul quotes this text in (Eph. 4:8), where he applies it to Christ's ascending to the heavens in triumph.

This is not only speaking of the Ark of the Covenant being carried to the holy mountain, but this is speaking of the Lord Jesus rising into heaven itself. He had been into hell, and preached, and brought captivity captive out with Him.

1 Peter 3:18-19 "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;"

Ephesians 4:8-12 "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." "(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)" "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;" "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

Psalm 68:19 "Blessed [be] the Lord, [who] daily loadeth us [with benefits, even] the God of our salvation. Selah."

With all spiritual blessings, with an abundance of grace, as well as with temporal mercies, for which he is, and ought to be, praised day by day. So Aben Ezra and Kimchi supply the text, and suppose the word "blessings" or "goodness" to be wanting; though the words may be rendered, "blessed be the Lord day by day, he will hear us", or "carry us". As a father his child, or a shepherd his lambs; and so he does from the womb, even to hoary hairs. And therefore blessing and praise should be ascribed to him (see Isa. 46:3). Or "he will put a burden upon us"; meaning

the burden of afflictions. These are of the Lord's laying upon his people; and he will lay no more upon them than he will enable them to bear. And will, in his own time and way, deliver them from them, and be the author of salvation to them, as follows. And therefore his name is to be praised (1 Cor. 10:13). The Targum interprets it of the burdensomeness of the law; "blessed be the Lord every day, he burdens us, adding precepts unto precepts."

"Even the God of our salvation": The author of temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation, as Christ is.

Not only were David and the people shouting, Blessed be the Lord, as they took the Ark up to the mountain, but this is the cry of all who truly love God. Just as the manna fell everyday (except Sabbath), in the journey to the Promise Land, God takes care of the needs of His people now. I think one of the most beautiful things in the Bible, is how God sent the raven twice a day to feed Elijah.

1 Kings 17:4 "And it shall be, [that] thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."

1 Kings 17:6 "And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook."

The God of our salvation is Jesus Christ.

Psalm 68:20 "[He that is] our God [is] the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord [belong] the issues from death."

God daily and fully supplies us. The issues or escapes from death are under His control, who is the God that saves us, and destroys His and our enemies.

This of course, is speaking of Jesus. Notice in the two following Scriptures, that Jesus has defeated death for himself and us.

Romans 8:11 "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Colossians 2:12 "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with [him] through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

God the Lord controls death and life.

Psalm 68:21 "But God shall wound the head of his enemies, [and] the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses."

More properly, "God shall crush the head," etc. The idea is that of complete destruction, as, if the head is crushed, life becomes extinct (see Gen. 3:15; compare Psalm 110:6).

"And the hairy scalp": And he speaks of the heads or hairy scalps not of one, but of all his enemies. The singular number being put for the plural, than which nothing is more frequent. The hairy scalp, i.e. his fiercest and terrible enemies. For in ancient times many people used to wear long and shaggy hair, that their looks might be more terrible to their enemies.

"Of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses": Of those who persist in their enmity and rebellion against him. Whereby he opens a door of hope and mercy to his very enemies, if they return and submit themselves to him.

This is a very hard saying. Notice the difference in God's enemies and those who continue in their trespasses. We know that those who are God's enemies, are friends of Satan. We also know of the promise in Genesis made to Eve about what God would do to those who reject Jesus.

Genesis 3:15 "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Notice, the wound is on the enemy's head. The last half of verse 21 above indicates to me, that these are potentially God's people. It seems to me, that they may profess Christianity, but not live it. They are still caught up in bad habits that they have not given up. The call of the world is too great, and they will go the way of the serpent's seed.

Verses 22-28: The victories with which God blessed David over the enemies of Israel, are types of Christ's victory, for himself and for all believers. Those who take him for theirs, may see him acting as their God, as their King, for their good, and in answer to their prayers. Especially in and by his word and ordinances. The kingdom of the Messiah shall be submitted to by all the rulers and learned in the world. The people seem to address the king (verse 28). But the words are applicable to the Redeemer, to his church, and every true believer. We pray, that thou, O God the Son, wilt complete thine undertaking for us, by finishing thy good work in us.

Psalm 68:22 "The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring [my people] again from the depths of the sea:"

"Bashan ... sea": Whether the enemy tries to escape by land (Bashan), or by sea, God will bring them back to be destroyed by His people (compare Amos 9:2-4).

Whether it be the tallest mountain, or the depths of the sea, God is there and knows all that is going on. This could also, be a prophetic Scripture about the Jews coming back into Jerusalem. The sea many times, is speaking of large groups of people. The Jews were scattered all over the world, but God will bring them back to Jerusalem.

Psalm 68:23 "That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of [thine] enemies, [and] the tongue of thy dogs in the same."

And as it was at the Red Sea and at Bashan before, so yet again thine enemies shall be slain in such great numbers, that thou may wade in their blood, and “thy dogs” lick it up in the field.

The enemy is defeated, if their blood is under foot. The dog's tongue being in the blood, just shows that much blood was shed in the battle.

Psalm 68:24 "They have seen thy goings, O God; [even] the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary."

“Goings ... sanctuary”: A description of the celebration when the Ark of the Covenant, a symbol of God’s presence, was brought to Mt. Zion (compare 15:16-28).

It was no secret when God was in the sanctuary. Either the fire was there, or the smoke from the fire was visible. When God was ready for them to move, the smoke and fire moved first. Notice, here, the personal relation David has with God. He calls Him my God.

Psalm 68:25 "The singers went before, the players on instruments [followed] after; among [them were] the damsels playing with timbrels."

He describes the order of the people, when they went to the temple to give thanks for the victory. Of which see (2 Sam. 6:15; 1 Chron. 13:8). Playing with timbrels, according to the usage of those times (see Exodus chapter 15).

"Amongst them were the damsels playing with timbrels": Or "in the midst of the virgins playing with timbrels"; or "beating on tabrets"; as women used to do when they met their kings returning from the conquest of their enemies (see 1 Sam. 18:6). These may be the pure and primitive churches of Christ, and the members thereof, rejoicing at the preaching of the Gospel, and praising God for the blessings of grace in it. In the midst of which the ministers of the word sung the new song of Gospel truths. And who may be compared to damsels or virgins for their beauty and comeliness through Christ. For their relation to him, being betrothed unto him. And for their strong and chaste affection for him. For their incorruptness in doctrine and worship, and their uprightness in their lives and conversation (Rev. 14:4).

This is speaking of the triumphant entry of the Ark. David danced before the Ark at this time, as well as the music and the timbrels being played. This was a joyous time. The presence of their God had dwelt over the Ark.

Psalm 68:26 "Bless ye God in the congregations, [even] the Lord, from the fountain of Israel."

In the assemblages of the people; not only as individuals, but in solemn processions. In triumphal marches; when the people are assembled together. In this public manner acknowledge God as the true God, and render him praise.

"Even the Lord, from the fountain of Israel": Margin, "Ye that are of;" that is, of “the fountain of Israel." The margin has undoubtedly expressed the correct idea. The appeal is to the Hebrew

people represented as descending from a common stock or ancestor, Jacob or Israel, as a stream or river flows from a fountain. Compare the (notes at Isa. 48:1; see also Isa. 51:1; Deut. 33:28). All the descendants of Jacob or Israel are thus called on to unite in solemnly praising the Lord their God.

The water in heaven flows from the throne of God.

Revelation 22:1 "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

The law of God came from the fountain of Israel. Jesus came through this race as well. Jesus was the Son of God, but His mother was an Israelite. We should never stop praising God.

Psalm 68:27 "There [is] little Benjamin [with] their ruler, the princes of Judah [and] their council, the princes of Zebulun, [and] the princes of Naphtali."

"Benjamin ... Naphtali": Representative tribes of Israel, two from the south (Benjamin and Judah) and two from the north (Zebulun and Naphtali).

Joseph and Benjamin were the favorite sons of Israel. Benjamin was allotted Zion as his portion. Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Psalm 68:28 "Thy God hath commanded thy strength: strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us."

Has ordered thy strength to appear, or to be manifested. This is addressed, evidently, to the people of the land. And the idea is, that, on this occasion, God had called forth a full representation of the strength of the nation. Or, as we should say, there had been a full "turn out." It was an impressive sight, showing the real strength of the people.

"Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us": Which, if understood of the apostles, princes, and rulers, refers to the work of preaching the Gospel, and the success of it, desiring it might be more and more confirmed. And to the settlement of Christianity in the Pagan world, and also to the work of the reformation from Popery in later times (compare with this Rev. 3:2). If of the churches, and the members thereof, it may respect the carrying on and finishing the work of grace in them. It is rendered "in us" by the Septuagint and others (see Isa. 26:12). For this work sometimes seems to be very low and weak, and needs strengthening. And it is God only that can do it, and he will do it (1 Peter 5:10). And this shows that the grace of God is not only necessary at first conversion, but to be continued for the performing of the work of grace until the day of Christ.

In our weakness, He is strong.

1 Corinthians 1:25 "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

2 Corinthians 12:9 "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Verses 29-31: A powerful invitation is given to those that are without, to join the church. Some shall submit from fear; overcome by their consciences, and the checks of Providence, they are brought to make peace with the church. Others will submit willingly (verse 29, 31). There is that beauty and benefit in the service of God, and in the gospel of Christ which went forth from Jerusalem, which is enough to invite sinners out of all nations.

Psalm 68:29 "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee."

"Kings ... presents": This section of praise (verses 28-35), looks forward to the Messiah's reign when the world will universally worship God in the temple in Jerusalem (compare Isa. 2:2-4; 18:7; 45:14; 60:3-7; Ezek. Chapters 40-48; Haggai 2:7; Zech. 2:11-13; 6:15; 8:21-22; 14:16-19).

The temple at Jerusalem, that Solomon built for God, was truly the most magnificent building anywhere. The queen of Sheba heard of it and brought gifts to Solomon.

1 Kings 10:1 "And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions."

1 Kings 10:10 "And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon."

Psalm 68:30 "Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, [till every one] submit himself with pieces of silver: scatter thou the people [that] delight in war."

"Pieces of silver": Tribute money, signifying subservience to God.

Looking at this from the spiritual point of view, we would see that regardless of how powerful they were, or how many offerings of bulls or calves they made, it was not enough. Silver means redemption. Notice the words, (submit himself). A man must repent and be redeemed. Looking at this with the physical eye, we see that they are powerful and are trying to win by force. Solomon was a man of peace, and that is why God allowed him to build the temple.

Psalm 68:31 "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."

He names only these, as the great and ancient enemies of God, and of his people, and as a most wicked, and idolatrous, and incorrigible sort of men (see Jer. 13:23; Amos 9:7). He prophecies

that the Gentiles will come to the true knowledge and worship of God. But by them he understands all other nations and people of like character.

"Egypt, Ethiopia": He names only these, as the great and ancient enemies of God, and of his people, and as a most wicked, and idolatrous, and incorrigible sort of men (see Jer. 13:23; Amos 9:7).

"Stretch out her hands unto God": Either in way of humble supplication and submission, begging mercy of him; or to offer up the presents expressed (Psalm 68:29). But this prophecy, as also the next verse, evidently belongs to the times of the Messiah, when the Gentiles were to be brought in to the knowledge and worship of the true God. With the thoughts and hopes whereof David oft comforted himself in that confined and afflicted state of the church in his time.

People did come from far and wide and brought gifts, such as we mentioned about the queen of Sheba. Egypt has always symbolized the world. Looking at this spiritually, we see heathen people from all over the world coming to the Lord.

Verses 32-35: God is to be admired and adored with reverence and godly fear, by all that attend in his holy places. The God of Israel gives strength and power unto his people. Through Christ strengthening us we can do all things, not otherwise; therefore, he must have the glory of all we do, with our humble thanks for enabling us to do it, and for accepting the work of his hands in us.

Psalm 68:32 "Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:"

Not only the Egyptian and Ethiopian kingdoms, but all the kingdoms of the world. Which will now be converted to Christ, and become his, even all the Papal, Pagan, and Mohammedan kingdoms (see Rev. 11:15). These are called upon to sing songs and hymns of praise to Christ, who is God, for redemption by him, and salvation in him. And for their deliverance from all the darkness and delusions under which they formerly were.

"O sing praises unto the Lord": The Lord of all, the Lord of lords, the Head of the church, and Savior of the body. And whom those converted nations will acknowledge to be their Lord and King; and make their homage, and bring their tribute of praise to him. For breaking the antichristian yokes that were upon them, and freeing them from the tyranny and bondage with which they were oppressed. This will be fulfilled in the latter day (see Rev. 11:1).

"Selah": On this word (see note on Psalm 3:2).

This just shows how salvation is offered to all peoples of the world. We have much to sing about. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Think on these things.

Psalm 68:33 "To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens, [which were] of old; lo, he doth send out his voice, [and that] a mighty voice."

The first, second, and third heavens, which were created from the beginning of time by Christ himself (Psalm 102:25 compared with Heb. 1:10). These he rode upon when he ascended on high, even far above all heavens, as the apostle says (Eph. 4:10). And so above the heaven of heavens, when he was made higher than they. And both Lord and Christ; and placed his throne in them, and from thence exercises his government over the whole world. And it may be observed, that it was from Mount Olivet, which was to the east of Jerusalem, that Christ ascended, and so to the eastern part of the heavens (Acts 1:12; see Rev. 7:2).

"Lo, he doth send out his voice": Which is his Gospel, for that is the voice of Christ. Which he utters by his ministers, and which his sheep, his people, hearken unto, and can distinguish from the voice of a stranger (John chapter 10). This is a voice of love, grace, and mercy; it speaks of righteousness, peace, pardon, and salvation by him, and is very joyful and comfortable to hear. This he sent out by his apostles into all the earth, after his ascension to heaven. And which he has been, more or less, sending out in one place or another, by his ministers, ever since. And in the latter day will send it out more clearly, fully, and largely, by a set of ministers he will raise up for that purpose.

"And that a mighty voice": Or, "a voice of strength"; a strong and powerful voice, such as the Gospel is, when accompanied with the power and Spirit of God. It is a soul shaking and awakening voice; it is a heart melting and a heartbreaking one. It is a quickening and an enlightening voice. It quickens dead sinners, gives life unto them, and the entrance of it gives light to dark minds. It is a soul charming and alluring one. It draws to Christ, engages the affections to him, and fills with unspeakable delight and pleasure. The Targum interprets this of the voice of the spirit of prophecy.

We know that the mighty voice that the children of Israel heard was so frightening, that they asked Moses to talk to God for them. Jesus rode a cloud into heaven, when He left the earth. Read about it (in Acts chapter 1). The heavens were created by Him, so He could ride one of the clouds, if He wanted to.

2 Chronicles 6:18 "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!"

This Scripture is just showing the magnitude of God's reign.

Psalm 68:34 "Ascribe ye strength unto God: his excellency [is] over Israel, and his strength [is] in the clouds."

Acknowledge that he is mighty and able to do whatsoever he pleaseth for his people, or against his and their enemies.

"His excellency": His excellent power and goodness.

"Is over Israel": Dwells among them, and is employed for them, as occasion requires. He is indeed the universal Lord of the whole heaven and earth, but in a special and excellent manner he is the God of Israel.

"In the clouds": Or, in the heavens. He hath two dwellings and thrones, the one in his church and people, and the other in heaven (see Isa. 57:15).

Ascribe means to give. God's power is everywhere. He is ruler over everything in heaven, as well as everything in the earth. In the sense ascribe is used above, it would mean recognize the strength of God.

Psalm 68:35 "O God, [thou art] terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel [is] he that giveth strength and power unto [his] people. Blessed [be] God."

In his judgments and acts of vengeance, on antichrist and the antichristian states. Being the Lion of the tribe of Judah, that will break them to pieces as a potter's vessel. Or "reverend"; to be feared and worshipped by his saints.

"Out of thy holy places": Both out of heaven, the habitation of his holiness, by angels and glorified saints there. And out of all his churches, the several assemblies of them, among whom he is greatly to be feared and adored. The Targum interprets it of the house of the sanctuary.

"The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people": His peculiar covenant people, and His Israel he is the God of. These are weak, and encompassed about with infirmities. He has strength in himself for them. He has promised it to them, and he gives it to them as a pure gift and unmerited favor of his. It may be understood of the great degree of strength that will be given them in the latter day. When a small one shall be a strong nation, and the feeble shall be as David, and David as God, as the Angel of the Lord (Isa. 60:21). And of the dominion and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven; which will be given to the saints of the most High (Dan. 7:27).

"Blessed be God": The psalm is concluded with an ascription of blessing to the Messiah, who is God blessed for evermore. And who, as Mediator, is the promised seed, in whom all nations were to be blessed, and now will be (see Rev. 5:12).

All strength and power belong to God. The wonderful thing is, that all believers in Christ have been given permission to use the name of Jesus. The 14th chapter of John, beginning with the 12th verse tells us just how much authority there is in the name of Jesus. The one thing that we must keep in mind is, that this is Jesus' power, not ours. The power is in the name of Jesus. Let me share just two verses with you here.

John 14:12-13 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

When you look these Scriptures up, notice the Words were spoken by Jesus. BLESSED BE GOD.

Psalm 68 Continued Questions

1. What mountain is verse 16 speaking of?
2. What is another name for this mountain?
3. What does Zion symbolize?
4. What does Ezekiel 37:27 and Revelation 21:3 have in common?
5. Verse 17 says the chariots of God are how many?
6. How many chariots did Pharaoh send after the Israelites?
7. What are God's chariots made of?
8. Where do we find the Scripture that tells us that?
9. What does [the Lord is among them] possibly mean?
10. Besides the Ark being carried into Jerusalem, what does verse 18 mean?
11. Jesus was put to death in the _____, but quickened by the _____.
12. When He ascended upon high, He led _____.
13. Who did He give for the perfecting of the saints?
14. What does the author believe to be one of the most beautiful examples in the Bible of God providing for His own?
15. In the last half of verse 21, who are these people?
16. What are the 2 meanings of verse 22?
17. The enemy is _____, if their blood is under foot.
18. What does the dog's tongue being in the blood show?
19. How did the people know when God was in the sanctuary?
20. Where does the water in heaven flow from?
21. Where did the law of God come from?

22. Who were the favorite sons of Israel?
23. What queen heard of the magnificence of the temple Solomon built and came and brought gifts to him?
24. What does ascribe mean?
25. What wonderful provision has been given to the believers in Christ?
26. Blessed be _____.