

Israel's Hymnal  
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 Dr. David L. Cooper

### PSALM SIXTY-EIGHT

[Pss 68:1] Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered; Let them also that hate him flee before him.

[Pss 68:2] As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: As wax melteth before the fire, So let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

[Pss 68:3] But let the righteous be glad; let them exult before God: Yea, let them rejoice with gladness.

[Pss 68:4] Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: Cast up a highway for him that rideth through the deserts; His name is Jehovah; and exult ye before him.

[Pss 68:5] A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, Is God in his holy habitation.

[Pss 68:6] God setteth the solitary in families: He bringeth out the prisoners into prosperity; But the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

[Pss 68:7] O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, When thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah

[Pss 68:8] The earth trembled, The heavens also dropped (rain) at the presence of God: Yon Sinai (trembled) at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

[Pss 68:9] Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, Thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.

[Pss 68:10] Thy congregation dwelt therein: Thou, O God, didst prepare of thy goodness for the poor.

[Pss 68:11] The Lord giveth the word: The women that publish the tidings are a great host.

[Pss 68:12] Kings of armies flee, they flee; And she that tarrieth at home divideth the spoil.

[Pss 68:13] When ye lie among the sheepfolds, (It is as) the wings of a dove covered with silver, And her pinions with yellow gold.

[Pss 68:14] When the Almighty scattered kings therein, (It was as when) it snoweth in Zalmon.

[Pss 68:15] A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan; A high mountain is the mountain of Bashan.

[Pss 68:16] Why look ye askance, ye high mountains, At the mountain which God hath desired for his abode? Yea, Jehovah will dwell (in it) for ever.

[Pss 68:17] The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands upon thousands; The Lord is among them, (as in) Sinai, in the sanctuary.

[Pss 68:18] Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led away captives; Thou hast received gifts among men, Yea, (among) the rebellious also, that Jehovah God might dwell (with them).

[Pss 68:19] Blessed be the Lord, who daily beareth our burden, Even the God who is our salvation. Selah

[Pss 68:20] God is unto us a God of deliverances; And unto Jehovah the Lord belongeth escape from death.

[Pss 68:21] But God will smite through the head of his enemies, The hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his guiltiness.

[Pss 68:22] The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring (them) again from the depths of the sea;

[Pss 68:23] That thou mayest crush (them), (dipping) thy foot in blood, That the tongue of thy dogs may have its portion from (thine) enemies.

[Pss 68:24] They have seen thy goings, O God, Even the goings of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.

[Pss 68:25] The singers went before, the minstrels followed after, In the midst of the damsels playing with timbrels.

[Pss 68:26] Bless ye God in the congregations, Even the Lord, (ye that are) of the fountain of Israel.

[Pss 68:27] There is little Benjamin their ruler, The princes of Judah (and) their council, The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.

[Pss 68:28] Thy God hath commanded thy strength: Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

[Pss 68:29] Because of thy temple at Jerusalem Kings shall bring presents unto thee.

[Pss 68:30] Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds, The multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the peoples, Trampling under foot the pieces of silver: He hath scattered the peoples that delight in war.

[Pss 68:31] Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall haste to stretch out her hands unto God.

[Pss 68:32] Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; Oh sing praises unto the Lord; Selah

[Pss 68:33] To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which are of old; Lo, he uttereth his voice, a mighty voice.

[Pss 68:34] Ascribe ye strength unto God: His excellency is over Israel, And his strength is in the skies.

[Pss 68:35] O God, (thou art) terrible out of thy holy places: The God of Israel, he giveth strength and power unto (his) people. Blessed be God.

#### THE GLORIES OF MESSIAH'S REIGN

I. Israel's plea for divine intervention (vss. 1-6).

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Psalm 68 is one of the most realistic and magnificent of the prophetic psalms, setting the coming of Messiah and His establishment of a reign of righteousness upon the earth.

#### I. Israel's plea for divine intervention

"Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered;

Let them also that hate him flee before him.

As smoke is driven away, so drive them away:

As wax melteth before the fire,

So let the wicked perish at the presence of God.

But let the righteous be glad; let them exult before God:

Yea, let them rejoice with gladness.

Sing unto God, sing praises to his name:

Cast up a highway for him that rideth through the deserts;

His name is Jehovah; and exult ye before him.  
 A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows,  
 Is God in his holy habitation.  
 God setteth the solitary in families:  
 He bringeth out the prisoners into prosperity;  
 But the rebellious dwell in a parched land (vss. 1-6).

The beginning of this psalm reminds one of the language that was used when Israel on her march through the wilderness, pulled camp and started to march forward: "And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, O Jehovah, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee" (Num. 10:35). This petition for divine intervention and assistance also reminds one of the petition which Israel will yet make in the future as recorded in Psalm 44:23-26.

We may be certain, in the light of this passage and others, that the nation of Israel will be brought to the point that she will utter the prayer that is set forth in Psalm 68:1-6. Truly, Israel will learn the lesson that man's extremity is God's opportunity. Being laid prostrate by the terrific judgments of the Tribulation and by the persecutions of the forces of evil, the Jewish nation will look up to their Messiah in glory and plead for Him to have mercy upon her and to come to her deliverance. Of course, as we learn from various passages of Scripture Israel will have been taught her national sin and will be convinced that her sin in the rejection of Messiah has been the cause of all the suffering of the Jewish people during these nineteen hundred years. Penitent, prostrate Israel will thus make the confession of the national sin as set forth in Isaiah 53:1-9 and will plead for the Messiah to leave His place seated above the cherubim (Ps. 80:1-3) and to come to assistance. She will pray that God's enemies may be scattered and that they, together with all the wicked, may melt away from all human activity, thus ceasing to be a hindrance to the onward going of the kingdom of God.

In verse 3 we see that they will pray that the righteous may be made glad and that they may exult in the God of their deliverance. In the fourth verse Israel is urged to sing unto God and to praise Him for the deliverance for which she will at that time be praying.

The exhortation "Cast up a highway for him that rideth through the deserts," is echoed in Isaiah 62:10. In ancient times when one king visited another in his capital, the host monarch had a special road prepared for his regal guest in order that he might come in royal estate to pay his visit to him. Thinking in terms of such a visit, Isaiah the prophet urged that a highway be thrown up, and that all the stones be cast out, in order that Israel's long rejected King might come to her. That this is true may be seen from the context of Isaiah 62:10; for in the next verse we read this sentence: "Behold, Jehovah hath proclaimed unto the end of the earth, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and recompense before him (Isa. 62:11). The same imagery of Messiah's return to Israel is set forth in Isaiah 40:3-5. In the light that comes from these passages, it is clear that the exhortation in Psalm 68:4 regarding the casting up of a highway is an appeal that the proper preparation might be made for the return of Israel's Messiah. The nation of Israel must exult in Him and enthrone Him in her praises before He will return.

The Messiah is "the father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows" at the present time. He overrules providentially and brings justice to pass--when things are committed to Him for His solution in

righteousness. But when He returns, mounts the throne of David, and is seated in His holy habitation, He will champion the cause of the fatherless and the widow in fulfillment of verse 5 of this psalm.

At that time He will set the solitary in families, will bring forth the prisoners from their incarceration, and give them prosperity. Of course the psalmist is speaking about the righteous ones. During the Tribulation and at its end Messiah will destroy all the rebellious from the earth in fulfillment of the promise of verse 6.

## II. A retrospect

"O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people,  
 When thou didst march through the wilderness; [Selah]  
 The earth trembled,  
 The heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God:  
 Yon Sinai *trembled* at the presence of God, the God of Israel.  
 Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain,  
 Thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.  
 Thy congregation dwelt therein:  
 Thou, O God, didst prepare of thy goodness for the poor.  
 The Lord giveth the word:  
 The women that publish the tidings are a great host.  
 Kings of armies flee, they flee;  
 And she that tarrieth at home divideth the spoil.  
 When ye lie among the sheepfolds,  
*It is as the wings of a dove covered with silver,*  
 And her pinions with yellow gold.  
 When the Almighty scattered kings therein,  
*It was as when it snoweth in Zalmon.* (vss. 7-14).

Frequently when a person prays for the solution of a problem, his mind reverts to some former experience through which he has past. Often when I meditate upon some situation in which I find myself and am praying to God to deliver me and bring about His solution of my position, my mind goes back to some time when I was at my wits' end, and when God answered my prayer. The thought of this past deliverance brings courage and hope and always strengthens the faith. I therefore can pray with more assurance. The human mind is the same, regardless of color or race. The prophets, following this natural inclination, were led by the Spirit of God very frequently to refer to some former difficulties out of which they had been delivered. Having thus mentioned them, they would go forward in prayer concerning their present deliverance. Thus King David, in his thinking, went back to Israel's slavery in Egypt and by the Spirit of God spoke of the time when she under the leadership of Moses came forth out of Egypt. God is represented as having been at the head of the host of Israel and having led them forth out of slavery through the Red Sea and down into the Sinaitic Peninsula. At that time the earth trembled. Doubtless this refers to the time when Jehovah himself descended on Mount Sinai and delivered the law to Israel. In verse 8 the psalmist, in his thinking, sees Israel after she had left Sinai. He looks back to it and speaks of the time when that holy mountain trembled at the presence of the God of Israel.

According to verses 9 and 10 God sent a bountiful rain and in this manner confirmed the inheritance of His people and thus encouraged them. They of course had become weary from the trials in the wilderness. From their desert wanderings the Lord led His people into the Promise Land, in which they tasted His goodness by His constantly showering blessings upon them.

In verse 11 and 12 we get a glimpse of some of the victories which the hosts of Israel won and the reports concerning such conquests that were given by the women. Deborah's victory over Sisera was reported by women; so was the victory of David over Goliath thus reported. When these ancient worthies of God conquered their foes, the latter fled in complete rout and disorder. Then those at home took the spoils.

When a war was fought and won, the people dwelt in their own homes, every man under his own vine and fig tree. The quietude, peace, and prosperity of Israel is set forth in verse 13. In verse 14, however, the psalmist was led to think of another conflict that arose in which the Almighty scattered kings and gave victory.

Thus in verses 7-14 King David was led to survey Israel's history from the deliverance out of Egypt up to his own time. He saw the invisible hand of God behind the human stage, directing the affairs of the nation and protecting it. In times of war and trouble He delivered; in times of peace and prosperity He blessed the nation.

### III. A vision of the future

"A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan;  
 A high mountain is the mountain of Bashan;  
 Why look ye askance, ye high mountains,  
 At the mountain which God hath desired for his abode?  
 Yea, Jehovah will dwell *in it* for ever.  
 The chariots of God are twenty thousand,  
 even thousands upon thousands:  
 The Lord is among them, *as in Sinai*, in the sanctuary.  
 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led away captives;  
 Thou hast received gifts among men,  
 Yea, *among* the rebellious also, that Jehovah God might dwell *with them* (vss. 15-18).

In verse 15 the prophet speaks of "the mountain of Bashan," and of its being a "mountain of God." Bashan is the territory that is east of the Sea of Galilee. As anyone stands on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee or on the heights above, he can look across the sea and beyond the Jordan Valley and see the mountains of Bashan and those of Gilead. By some interpreters it is thought that these mountains just east are the ones here referred to. There are some commentators, however, who think that "the mountain of Bashan" here referred to is the Anti-Lebanon Range the highest peak of which is snow-capped Mount Hermon. The psalmist recognizes these mountains as belonging to Jehovah. From these he turns and looks "at the mountain at which God hath desired for his abode." This mountain can be none other than Mount Zion at Jerusalem. The Lord spoke through Moses to Israel and said that He would select a

place after she had come into the Land of Promise in which He would place His name and there He would abide. In the days of David this place was chosen, which was Jerusalem, the capital of Melchizedek, of whom we read in Genesis, chapter 14, and Psalm 110. God declares that He has chosen Mount Zion for His abode forever.

"For Jehovah hath chosen Zion;  
He hath desired it for his habitation.  
This is my resting-place for ever:  
Here will I dwell; for I have desired it (Ps. 132:13-14).

Though the Shekinah of glory, the symbol of the divine presence, departed from Zion in the days of Ezekiel, the Lord has never forsaken that place and given up His plan of making it His permanent abode here upon earth. He will yet choose Zion and dwell in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is surrounded by hills higher than itself. This is especially true with reference to the east, south, and west. On the north, however, the land gradually rises, but not so precipitously as it does on the other three sides. Jerusalem is thus surrounded by hills and is in a valley. In the light of the topography of its environs Jerusalem seems rather insignificant.

But it will not always remain this way. There will take place great topographical changes in the Holy Land at the time of our Lord's return. This may be seen by a careful study of Ezekiel chapters 47 and 48. From these chapters we learn that the Holy Land will be divided into twelve equal parts. Seven of these portions will be north of what is known as "the oblation," the mountain of the height of Israel, and five south of it. Thus this holy mountain of the height of Israel will be a little south of the central position of the land. Ezekiel informs us that it will be 25,000 reeds from east to west and from north to south. According to the best calculations obtainable 500 reeds make one English mile. Thus this hill will be fifty miles from north to south and 50 from east to west. Its summit will have 2500 square miles. It will be in three sections, the separating lines running from east to west. The northern section will be a plot of land 50 miles from east to west and 20 miles deep. In the central portion of this section will be one square mile on which the Temple of Jehovah, the house of prayer for all the nations, will be located. In this northern portion the priests will live.

The central section will be of the same size, namely, fifty miles from east to west, and twenty miles deep. This will be the place for the Levites who will attend and assist in the worship of God.

The third and southern section will be fifty miles wide and ten miles deep. In the central part of it Jerusalem, with its half-mile wide suburbs, will be located, a city ten miles by ten miles. It will therefore cover one hundred square miles.

According to Psalms 48 and 50 Jerusalem and this mountain of Jehovah's house will be the beauty spot of all the earth. It will be the place where pilgrims will go from all quarters of the globe to worship Jehovah of hosts, the Great King.

King David in Psalm 68, in a vision saw this mountain of the height of Israel as it will be in the great Kingdom Age. In his thinking, he personified it and likewise the mountain range of Bashan. Thinking of these

inanimate objects as if they were persons, he addressed the mountain of Bashan and asked, "Why look ye askance," or, with a jealous eye, "At the mountain [Mount Zion] which God hath desired for his abode?"—the mountain which God hath chosen for His perpetual habitation. This language carries the inference that this "mountain of Jehovah's house" will be the prominent one and its position will provoke the jealousy of others.

"Jehovah will dwell *in it* for ever" —as long as the sun, moon, and stars endure (Ps. 89:34-37). When Jehovah, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, returns to earth and mounts the throne of David, He will remain there as earth's King, until the conclusion of the Millennial Age, at which time the heavens and the earth will pass away (Matt. 24:35). That He will reign in Jerusalem—cleansed, purged, purified, and glorified Jerusalem—in the land of Palestine, is confirmed by such passages as Isaiah 33:17-22 and Zephaniah 3:14-17.

In Psalm 68:17 we are told that "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands upon thousands." He will be Supreme Sovereign of the earth at that time. He, the Lord, will be there in person and in His sanctuary as He was in Mount Sinai when He delivered the law to Moses for Israel at the time of the Exodus.

From the many descriptions of millennial Jerusalem, we are impressed with the glory that will be manifest there, when our Lord reigns as King. In fact, the descriptions are so very glowing that it is impossible for us at the present time to have any adequate idea of its magnificence and grandeur.

In verse 18 King David, still speaking to King Messiah who will thus reign in glorified Jerusalem during the Millennium, addresses Him and tells Him that He has already ascended on high and has led away captives. What is the significance of this language? Briefly stated it is this: The cross, with all of its ramifications--antecedents and consequences--had to come before the crown. In other words, He who endured the cross, purchased man's redemption and opened up the new and the living way, is worthy to occupy the highest position of authority and glory in the great Millennial age.

The force of this statement regarding Messiah's having ascended on high and having led away captives becomes more apparent to us when we look at it in the light of Ephesians 4:8-10: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)" Obviously Paul was here quoting Psalm 68:18. He refers to the ascension of our Lord after His resurrection. In commenting upon this verse, the Apostle, having mentioned the fact that He ascended, asked "... what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? In other words, Paul affirmed that, although the psalmist did not say that Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth prior to His ascension to heaven, that thought was implied in the statement that Messiah, in ascending on high, "led captivity captive." "Leading captivity captive" is a military term. He who ascended (our Lord) is also the one who descended into the lower parts of the earth and liberated certain captives who had been incarcerated there. These captives are the righteous dead, who upon their departure from this earth, went down into that apartment of Sheol where Abraham and all the saved were. Thus when our Lord died in behalf of us, in the spirit He went down to Sheol, made an announcement to the spirits "that aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." He also seized the keys of death and Hades, opened up that apartment of it where the righteous dead were, led them forth, and came back to life. Certain of these whom He led

forth received their resurrection bodies (Matt. 27:51-53). But all the liberated ones the Lord Jesus led back to glory, when He ascended on high after His resurrection.

During His personal ministry certain men gave themselves to the Lord Jesus and he saved them. He in turn conferred upon them certain gifts and appointed them to official positions in this spiritual kingdom into which we have been translated from the kingdom of darkness. The gospel has been preached in all the world. Myriads of men have come and brought themselves as gifts to the Lord Jesus. Many of them have likewise given all their talents over to Him. When anyone thus believes and surrenders to Him, the Lord calls him into some type of service--one into full time service, and another into part time, to accomplish whatever they can in forwarding the plan of God among men. David was speaking of the ascended Christ's receiving gifts from men who accept Him, believing upon Him. In the Epistle to the Ephesians Paul spoke of Christ's conferring gifts and endowments upon certain individuals whom He calls into full time service.

Christ who won the victory for us and ascended on high accepts the gifts of all who come to Him by faith. This order has continued throughout the Christian Dispensation and will continue until our Lord returns.

He will return at the end of the Tribulation, when Israel accepts Him and pleads for Him to do so. Then He will come and dwell here upon this earth among men who have previously been rebellious.

For nineteen hundred years the ascended, glorified Christ has been extending His grace to men and has been receiving all who will come unto God by Him. He has thus been leading various ones into His service. In His carrying out this program, He has a great plan which will culminate at the conclusion of this age with the return of the Lord Jesus to earth to lift the curse and to set up His kingdom of righteousness among men. Christ, having thus won man's redemption and having extended His favor to men for these nineteen hundred years, is worthy to mount the throne of David and to reign in splendor from sea to sea and from river to the ends of the earth.

#### IV. The lord a God of deliverances

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily beareth our burden,  
 Even the God who is our salvation. [Selah]  
 God is unto us a God of deliverances;  
 And unto Jehovah the Lord belongeth escape from death.  
 But God will smite through the head of his enemies,  
 The hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his guiltiness.  
 The Lord said, I will bring again from Bashan,  
 I will bring *them* again from the depths of the sea;  
 That thou mayest crush *them*, dipping thy foot in blood,  
 That the tongue of thy dogs may have its portion from *thine* enemies (vss. 19-23).

Let us remember that David, the inspired author, wrote this psalm for his brethren in order to enlighten them and to comfort them concerning their great future. According to verse 19 the Lord is the one who bears the burdens of His people. An examination of the history of Israel shows that this is true. The period of the Exodus in the wilderness wanderings for forty years reveal the force of this statement in a most



marvelous way. The Lord wanted to continue to bear Israel's burden throughout all her history, but He has been limited by her unbelief and her sins.

Not only is He the God who bears the burdens of His people, but He is the God of their salvation. Salvation here is used in the broad sense of *deliverance*—deliverance from any difficult situation in which they might find themselves, if they will but turn to Him and trust Him for a solution of their problems.

Not only is the Lord the one who bears daily the burden of Israel, but He is the one who bears daily the burdens of His people, who are now children of Abraham by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone who knows the Scriptures and who trusts the Lord can testify to this great and glorious truth. Moreover, He is the God of their salvation. His grace planned the scheme of redemption. We by faith have accepted it and have entered into the joys of spiritual life. He on innumerable occasions grants to us salvation—from difficult situations in which we find ourselves—when we look to Him in faith, doubting nothing.

From verse 20 we see that He is the one who delivers His people on all occasions. He likewise, according to this verse, delivers them from death. This means, doubtless, physical death. Throughout David's checkered history he had many experiences when he was brought to his extremity and when death seemed inevitable. Nevertheless, God intervened and brought him safely out of the danger. He could thus declare in this psalm that "... unto Jehovah the Lord belongeth escape from death."

Having thought of the marvelous deliverances which God has wrought in his behalf on many occasions, King David now looked out into the future and saw the time when Israel will be in the greatest danger through which she has ever passed. The Hebrew nation went down into her Gethsemane in Europe during World War II, when six million Jews perished at the hands of Nazi Germany. But according to the Prophets she is yet to go down into a deeper, darker valley. This experience is called by Jeremiah the "time of Jacob's trouble." At that time the Antichrist will launch a persecution against the Chosen People such as has never been brought against them. He will be the arch-anti-Semite. This iniquitous personage David describes in verse 21. In his vision, however, he sees that this God of deliverances will "smite ... The hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his guiltiness." At the proper and psychological moment Jehovah, the God of Israel, will intervene and will bring the longed-for deliverance.

Verses 22 and 23 are most difficult for us to understand. Nevertheless, a careful study of them and a comparison of them with related passages will make them plain. The mention of this arch-enemy of Israel in verse 21 naturally brought before the prophet's mind the titanic effort which this one will make against Israel. From various passages of Scripture such as Zechariah 14, we know that the Antichrist will gather the armies of the world against Jerusalem to battle. As the world forces battle against the Holy City, they will make wonderful strides and will capture one-half of it. The slaughter will be terrific. Innumerable forces will be engaged in this greatest of all battles. (See Joel 3:14-17). At the most critical moment when it will seem as if the Holy City will fall with a terrific crash and all Israel will be annihilated, the Lord Jehovah will appear on the scene and His feet will stand in that day on the Mount of Olives. By His mighty power He will vanquish His own enemies and those of Israel. Those who are not smitten down instantly will flee to Bashan and also into the recesses around the Dead Sea. (The Dead Sea is spoken of in other places as "the sea" as we see it mentioned in verse 22.) But Jehovah will bring them back from their flight and will enter into judgment with them. There will be no place to which they can flee, and from which they cannot be brought back. A study of Amos 9:1-4 will throw light upon these verses. The God of Israel will be equal to the occasion and will bring them forth, regardless of the place of safety to which they might flee. When they are thus brought back, Israel, empowered by her Redeemer who in answer to her plea for aid

comes and brings the much needed deliverance, will "crush *them*, dipping thy foot in blood." As in the case of Jezebel, when she was thrown down from a window of the upper story of the house in which she was, her blood was spilled and the dogs licked the same, thus it will be with the enemies of Israel. They will be slain and dogs will drink their blood. But how can just a handful of Jews meet such determined opposition and such numerically superior forces as will be arrayed against her? The answer to this question is found in Zechariah 12:1-9, which tells that God will empower those heroic Jewish defenders of the Holy City who put their trust in Him. Even the least of them will be as David, and their great strong ones will be as "the angel of Jehovah." They will thus be empowered by the God to whom they turn, and from whom they expect the needed deliverance. Thus verses 22 and 23 from Psalm 68 constitute a poetical version of such messages of the prophets as those of Zechariah, chapters 12 and 14.

#### V. The triumphal procession

"They have seen thy goings,  
 O God, Even the goings of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.  
 The singers went before, the minstrels followed after,  
 In the midst of the damsels playing with timbrels.  
 Bless ye God in the congregations,  
 Even the Lord, *ye that are* of the fountain of Israel.  
 There is little Benjamin their ruler,  
 The princes of Judah *and* their council,  
 The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali (vss. 24-27).

With verse 23 the last war that will ever be fought upon this earth is brought to a close. In verses 24-27 we see a triumphal procession, going to the sanctuary to return praise and thanks to God for the deliverance which He works in behalf of the nation and the world. The din of the battle has quieted; the smoke has rolled away; the skies are clear; the curse is lifted; and Jerusalem is a city set upon the glorious holy mountain. King Messiah, Israel's Deliver, is attended by enthusiastic followers as He goes forth into the sanctuary where the proper services will be held. Thus in verse 24 King David declared "They have seen thy goings, O God, Even the goings of my God, my King, into the sanctuary." In this verse the prophet sees the procession on its way, doubtless from the ivory palaces of King Messiah mentioned in Psalm 45:8, as it goes to the sanctuary in which the divine services will be held. The ones referred to by the pronoun "they" doubtless are the peoples of the earth. There can be little doubt that such a marvelous exhibition of praise, glory, and thanksgiving will be broadcast and sent forth by television to the entire world. Thus the psalmist declared that they, the people of the world, will see with their own eyes this marvelous demonstration of gratitude and praise. Before King Messiah there march forth the singers, whereas the minstrels follow after. But in the middle of the procession, surrounding King Messiah, are the virgins who are playing with their timbrels. I have seen mighty and wonderful parades. So has everyone of my readers. But there never has been held such a procession as this one will be. This will be the climax of all such occasions. Everyone in this procession will be a born-again, redeemed person. Purity and serenity, together with majesty, will fill the air.

In verse 26 King David calls upon those who will be in the congregation to bless God, who is the Lord. There have been and are many great international gatherings for various purposes. Many of them are for religious purposes and others for secular. The gatherings that are mentioned in verse 26 are purely religious and those who are exhorted to praise God and to enter into this worship are "of the fountain of Israel." This language is familiar to the Bible student. In Isaiah 48:1 as well as in Deuteronomy 33:28 this same figure appears. Jacob, the great progenitor of the Hebrew race, is thought of in terms of a fountain or spring from which flows a stream of crystal water. Thus the descendants of Jacob are compared to this stream. They are therefore urged to come and join in this great service of worship to the God of Israel, her Messiah and Savior.

According to verse 27 two of the tribes of Israel from the southern part of the country are leading the procession, whereas two in the north are seen as following up the company. There is "little Benjamin," their ruler and leader. Along with him is the powerful tribe of Judah and the princes of Judah. The tribe of Judah was of course the royal one. David, the great progenitor of the dynasty which flowed from him, was of this tribe. The Lord Jesus Christ likewise is of this tribe, being a descendant of David. The mention of the two southern tribes and the two northern ones as being in this procession implies that all of the tribes will be there. The Bible reader is familiar with the expression, "from Dan to Beersheba." Dan was in the extreme north and Beersheba in the very south of the land. Thus all between those extreme points are included in such an expression. The mention of the most southern and the most northern tribes likewise implies that the other tribes will be represented in that glorious triumphal procession.

#### VI. A vision of the Kingdom

"Thy God hath commanded thy strength:  
 Strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.  
 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem Kings shall bring presents unto thee.  
 Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds,  
 The multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the peoples,  
 Trampling under foot the pieces of silver:  
 He hath scattered the peoples that delight in war.  
 Princes shall come out of Egypt;  
 Ethiopia shall hasten to stretch out her hands unto God (vss. 28-31).

After David gave a vision of this great triumphal procession and the worship that will be conducted in Jerusalem when King Messiah returns and establishes His reign upon the earth, King David spoke to his nation, making the revelation that, "thy God hath commanded thy strength." God has never abandoned Israel and never will. He has commanded, given orders, that Israel shall be strengthened. She can receive this divine strength and support whenever she turns to Him with all her heart and requests it. Upon the basis of this revelation, the king prayed: "Strengthen O God, that which thou hast wrought for us." Another rendering of this passage is: "Be strong, O God, thou that hast wrought for us." Both of these translations are grammatically correct. The translators of the American Revised Version preferred the former one, thinking that it fits into the flow of thought of the context. Though we may not be able to decide which is the exact one that was intended, both are true. Since God has given the command that Israel shall be

strengthened, David prayed that the Lord would strengthen Israel and her case. It is He who has wrought for her.

It is God who has wrought for us. The Lord Jesus Christ left glory, laying aside His riches with the Father and became poor in order that we through His poverty might become rich. He championed our cause, won the victory, and offers salvation full and free to all who will accept. All one has to do is to accept Him as the champion of His liberty by faith. Whenever one thus penitently trusts the Lord, the Holy Spirit regenerates the heart, comes into the soul in order to give strength to such a saved one. Truly, the born-again Christian can say as Israel will yet declare, "Thou hast wrought for us."

Jerusalem is yet to be the joy spot of the world. This is seen in Psalm 48:1,2; 50:1,2. On the mountain of the height of Israel (Ezek. 20:40) will be the city of Jerusalem in the southern portion, whereas the Temple will be in the northern section. For proof of this position see Ezekiel chapters 47 and 48. According to Psalm 72 the kings of the world will yet, during the great millennial reign of our Lord, come to Jerusalem and will bring their gifts. This is also set forth in Psalm 132. Thus we see the same prophecy found in verse 2 of Psalm 68, the present subject of our study. This prediction will of course be fulfilled when the Lord Jesus returns to earth.

In verse 30 the psalmist prayed that the Lord would rebuke the wild beast of the reeds, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the peoples. It is clear from the language that the writer is not speaking of literal animals but is using them symbolically. Because the reed was one of the native plants of Egypt, it is thought by some interpreters that the wild beast of the reeds is none other than Egypt. Egypt was a great and a mighty power in the ancient Orient. She was a menace to the people of Israel at various times. She always was this when she assumed a hostile attitude toward the Jews. The multitude of the bulls, together with the calves of the peoples, could refer to nothing other than that of the nations of the world, all of whom are represented as being hostile toward Israel. According to our psalmist God will thus deal with the nations of the world and bring them to the point that they will in penitence come, acknowledging the divine authority.

The phrase, "Trampling under foot the pieces of silver," is a rather difficult one. There are a number of obscure elements in connection with this special phrase. When all the facts, however, are taken into consideration, it is quite likely that the thought is this: *O Lord, crush the pride of these hostile nations and bring them to the point that they will come in genuine submission, bringing their wealth (the bars of silver) as offerings to thee. They will have in pride used their wealth for their own purposes and desires; but Lord, in mercy deal with them to the extent that they will be humbled and will come thus in true worship to Thee.* Such seems to be the thought conveyed by this passage.

In the last clause of 68:30 "He hath scattered the peoples that delight in war," the psalmist saw his prayer answered. The nations will be conquered, as we have already seen, and will have their power broken to the extent that they can never again attempt any war against Israel or against anyone else. It is God who, according to Psalm 46, brings wars to an end. It is the Lord who in this verse does the same thing. Thus the warless world will be brought into existence by the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, who will cause the nations to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, neither shall they learn war anymore (Isa. 2:1-4).

At that time, according to 68:31, princes will come out of Egypt to worship God. At the same time the Ethiopians will hasten to God with outstretched arms in accepting the Messiah and His salvation. This

statement should be read in connection with the prophecy concerning Ethiopia and her ultimate conversion, as is seen in Isaiah 18:7.

#### VII. A call to worship

"Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth;  
 O sing praises unto the Lord; [Selah]  
 To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which are of old;  
 Lo, he uttereth his voice, a mighty voice.  
 Ascribe ye strength unto to God:  
 His excellency is over Israel,  
 And his strength is in the skies.  
 O God, *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places:  
 The God of Israel, he giveth strength and power unto *his* people.  
 Blessed be God, (vss. 32-35).

In the last section, verses 28-31, we saw predictions that the nations of the world will submit to and accept Jehovah and His salvation. In the present section the psalmist, in view of what will certainly transpire in the future, calls upon the nations of earth to render praise and homage to God. Thus in verse 32 the kingdoms of the world are urged to sing to God. Men praise their fellow men for what they do. But God is the one who does everything for us. It is proper and fitting, therefore, that men should praise God. The exhortation to sing praises to God is followed by these words: "To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which are of old ..." In other words the phrase, "him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens" is in apposition with the word "Lord" in verse 32. These verses should be studied in the light of Deuteronomy 33:26:

"There is none like unto God, O Jeshurun,  
 Who rideth upon the heavens for thy help,  
 And in his excellency on the skies."

One should study them in the light of Psalm 18:10-19. In both of these passages the Lord is represented as riding upon the heavens and upon a cherub and coming for the deliverance of Israel. Thus in Psalm 18 we see a theophany described. When we study the entire context we know that this has never been fulfilled but must be yet carried out in the future. When all the facts are studied, one comes to the conclusion that the theophany of Psalm 18 is a prediction of the second coming of our Lord when He, in answer to Israel's plea for assistance, will come and fight against her enemies and bring the longed-for deliverance. When He thus comes as a champion of Israel's cause, "Lo, he uttereth his voice, a mighty voice." This is the same uttering of His voice which we see in Joel 3:16: "And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel." Amos also spoke of the same thing (Amos 1:2).

In verse 34 of our psalm the people of Israel are urged to ascribe unto God great strength. The one of whom the psalmist is speaking is doubtless the Messiah, the God of Israel, who will thus come for the relief of His people. His excellency, His glory, will be over His people, and His strength will extend to the skies. In other words, this one who is Israel's Redeemer is omnipotent.

When this future was presented in panoramic form to King David and he saw the terrible acts of King Messiah and the glories that will follow, He was led to exclaim, "O God, *thou art* terrible out of thy holy places: The God of Israel, he giveth strength and power unto *his* people." When the Lord comes, as we learn in Psalm 45, He will perform terrible acts against His enemies. He will go into the earthly sanctuary at Jerusalem and in His holy palaces, as we see from this last verse of Psalm 68. In His performing terrible acts against His enemies, He will at that time give strength and power to His people Israel and deliver them.

The psalm concludes with a familiar petition: "Blessed be God." The psalmist wishes all people of the world to pronounce God's name as blessed. This will be accomplished when the prayer which our Lord taught His disciples to pray is fulfilled: "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name ..."