

Message Twelve

**Christ as the Center of God's Move on the Earth  
from His Incarnation through His Ascension  
to His Second Coming**

Scripture Reading: Num. 10:33-36; Psa. 68

- I. **God's guidance to His people in a general way was by the cloud and the two silver trumpets (Num. 9:15—10:10), whereas His leading of His people in a particular way was through the Ark (vv. 33-36), a type of the crucified and resurrected Christ in His ascension:**
  - A. Hence, the unique Leader of God's people is not any man (cf. vv. 29-32) but is the crucified and resurrected Christ (Matt. 23:10).
  - B. He is the Leader, and He leads us to the proper place of rest on the long and rugged journey of the Christian life—Heb. 4:8-9 and footnotes.
  - C. The leading of the Ark of the Covenant indicates that the leading of Christ is faithful, according to a covenant:
    1. God made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants to bring them into the good land—Gen. 17:1-8; cf. Exo. 23:20.
    2. Eventually, God's covenant was placed in the Ark; thus, the Ark was called the Ark of the Covenant.
    3. Hence, the Christ who leads us into a resting place is the Christ of the covenant, the Christ of God's faithfulness—cf. 2 Cor. 1:19-20.
- II. **Numbers 10:35 and 36 say, "When the Ark set out, Moses said, Rise up, O Jehovah, and let Your enemies be scattered; / And let those who hate You flee before You. And when it came to rest, he said, Return, O Jehovah, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel":**
  - A. Numbers 10:35 is quoted in Psalm 68:1; in Ephesians 4:8-10 Paul applied the word in Psalm 68 to the ascension of Christ; hence, the rising up in this verse refers to Christ's rising up to the heavens in His ascension.
  - B. Since the rising up in Numbers 10:35 refers to Christ's rising up to the heavens in His ascension, the word *return* spoken by Moses in verse 36 must refer to the second coming of Christ.
  - C. Moses' word in verses 35 and 36 portrays a full view of God's economy from Christ's incarnation to be the Ark, the

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embodiment of the Triune God, through His ascension to His second coming.

**III. Psalm 68 as an exposition of Numbers 10:35 and 36 reveals Christ as the center of God's move on the earth:**

- A. God's move began after the rearing up of the tabernacle with the Ark, signifying Christ incarnated to be the dwelling place of God on the earth with Himself as the center for God's move in His economy—Psa. 68:1; John 1:14a; Num. 9:15a.
- B. God's move in the tabernacle with the Ark from Mount Sinai (Psa. 68:8b, 17b) through the wilderness (vv. 4b, 7b) to Mount Zion (v. 16) is a type of His move in Christ from the incarnation to the ascension—John 1:17; Eph. 4:8-10.
- C. God is still moving on this earth in and through the church, and He is moving with Christ as the center of the church—John 5:17; Acts 28:31; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Psa. 68:4, 7.
- D. God's move in man is to deify man, making man the same as He is in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.

**IV. Psalm 68 reveals God's victory in Christ as the center, typified by the Ark:**

- A. "Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered; / And let those who hate Him flee before Him"—wherever the Ark, a type of Christ, went, the victory was won—v. 1; Num. 10:35.
- B. "The kings of the armies flee. / They flee!"—these kings, who were defeated and scattered, typify Satan and the rulers, the rebellious angels—Psa. 68:12a, 14; Eph. 6:12.
- C. "The Lord gives the command; / The women who bear the glad tidings are a great host"—these women of Israel signify the weak ones who publish the gospel—Psa. 68:11.
- D. "She who abides at home / Divides the spoil"—the spoil signifies all the gains of the accomplishment, consummation, attainment, and obtainment of Christ as the reapings of the victory of His death, resurrection, and ascension—v. 12b.
- E. "Though you lie among the sheepfolds"—lying among the sheepfolds signifies resting in God's provision and care for His elect—v. 13a.

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- F. “There are dove wings covered with silver, / And its pinions, with greenish-yellow gold”—this verse reveals four items among the spoil—v. 13b:
1. The dove wings signify the moving power of the Spirit.
  2. Silver signifies Christ in His redemption for our justification, which is indicated by the color white, the color of approval.
  3. Pinions (the feathers at the end of a bird’s wings giving it the strength to fly and soar) signify the flying and soaring power of the Spirit—cf. Isa. 40:31.
  4. The greenish-yellow, glittering gold with which the pinions are covered signifies God’s nature glittering in the divine life and glory—2 Pet. 1:4; cf. John 4:24; 1 John 4:8; 1:5.
  5. The contents of the above four items, as Christ’s spoil in His victory for the enjoyment of God’s elect, are actually the Triune God with all the items of His complete, full, and all-inclusive salvation—cf. Rom. 5:10, 17, 21.
  6. God’s elect enjoy all the above items as their portion in Christ and announce them to others as the glad tidings—Psa. 68:11.

**V. Psalm 68 reveals Christ’s ascension:**

- A. “You have ascended on high”—this refers to the highest peak in the universe—v. 18; Eph. 4:8a; cf. Isa. 14:13.
- B. “You have led captive those taken captive”—Psa. 68:18:
  1. *Those taken captive* refers to the redeemed saints, who were taken captive by Satan and imprisoned before being saved by Christ’s death and resurrection.
  2. Christ defeated Satan and captured his captives (including us); then like a general leading his captives, Christ in His ascension to the heavens led us to the Father—cf. 2 Cor. 2:12-14.
  3. The Amplified New Testament renders *He led captive those taken captive* in Ephesians 4:8 as “He led a train of vanquished foes”; in Christ’s ascension there was a procession of these vanquished foes, led as captives from a war, for the celebration of Christ’s victory.

**VI. Psalm 68 reveals Christ’s receiving the gifts:**

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- A. “You have received gifts among men, / Even the rebellious ones also”—we have been captured by Christ, presented by Christ to the Father, and then given to Christ by the Father as gifts—v. 18.
- B. The gifts received by Christ have become the gifted believers, whom He gave to His Body for its building up—Eph. 4:7-12.

#### **VII. Psalm 68 reveals the building up of the dwelling place of God:**

- A. “That Jehovah God may dwell among them”—the gifts as the gifted persons, the believers in Christ, are built together to be the dwelling place for God; this dwelling place signifies the church, the Body of Christ—v. 18; Eph. 4:11-12.
- B. “A Father to the orphans and a Judge for the widows / Is God in His holy habitation. / God causes the solitary to dwell in a household; / He brings the prisoners forth into prosperity”—God’s dwelling place is also the habitation of the believers (the needy, the solitary, and the bound ones)—Psa. 68:5-6a; Eph. 2:22.
- C. The “mountain on which God desires to dwell” (Psa. 68:16) is Mount Zion, the highest peak in the universe—cf. Rev. 14:1.

#### **VIII. Psalm 68 reveals the enjoyment of God in His house:**

- A. The enjoyment of God in His house comes after the building up of His dwelling place, the church—v. 18.
- B. “Blessed be the Lord, who day by day loads us with good; / God is our salvation. Selah”—the good here is the Triune God—the dove wings covered with silver and its pinions covered with greenish-yellow, glittering gold—vv. 19, 13; Rom. 8:28; Matt. 19:17; Phil. 1:19-21a.
- C. “God is to us / A God of deliverance, / And with Jehovah the Lord / Are the goings forth even from death”—when we enjoy God as our saving life, we escape death—Psa. 68:20; Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; 4:16.
- D. In God’s house we also enjoy His victory over the enemies—Psa. 68:21-23; Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:20.

#### **IX. Psalm 68 reveals the praising of God according to His New Testament economy:**

- A. “They have seen Your goings, O God, / The goings of my God,

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my King, in the sanctuary”—*they* refers to the enemies, *goings* refers to God’s activities, and *the sanctuary* signifies the church—v. 24.

- B. “Singers go before; players after; / In the midst of virgins sounding the tambourines”—*virgins* signifies the believers—v. 25; 2 Cor. 11:2; Phil. 4:4.
- C. “Bless God in the congregations, / Even Jehovah, O you who are of the fountain of Israel. / There are little Benjamin, who rules them, / And the princes of Judah in their company, / The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali. / Your God has commanded your strength; / Strengthen, O God, that which You have done for us”—Psa. 68:26-28.
- D. In the praise rendered to God by His elect, there is portrayed a scenery in typology concerning God’s New Testament economy in the accomplishment of God’s redemption for His salvation by Christ and in the spreading of the glad tidings of Christ’s accomplishment with the beautiful words of the gospel:
  - 1. Psalm 68:27 speaks of “little Benjamin”:
    - a. As the son of sorrows, Ben-oni, Benjamin typifies Christ, who, as the man of sorrows in His incarnation and human life on earth, accomplished God’s eternal redemption for His full salvation—Gen. 35:18a; Isa. 53:3.
    - b. As the son of the right hand, Benjamin typifies Christ, who, as the Son of the right hand of God in His resurrection, victory, and ascension, ministers in the heavens to carry out the application of God’s redemption for His salvation—Gen. 35:18b; Heb. 1:3; 5:5-10; 7:25; 8:2.
  - 2. Psalm 68:27 speaks of “the princes of Judah”:
    - a. Judah typifies Christ as the victory for God’s people (the lion with the power and the scepter) and the peace (Shiloh) to God’s people—Rev. 5:5a; Gen. 49:8-12.
    - b. Judah reveals the victory of Christ (vv. 8-9), the kingdom of Christ (v. 10), and the enjoyment and rest in Christ (vv. 11-12).
    - c. Judah, as the kingly tribe, was accompanied always by Benjamin, as a warrior tribe, for God’s kingdom on the earth—Psa. 68:27; Rom. 5:17.
  - 3. Psalm 68:27 speaks of “the princes of Zebulun”:

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- a. Dwelling at the shore of the sea (Galilee) and being a shore for ships (Gen. 49:13), Zebulun typifies Christ as the “shore” of the evangelists for the transportation and spreading in the preaching of God’s gospel.
- b. On the day of Pentecost, at least one hundred twenty gospel “ships,” all of whom were Galileans, set out to spread the gospel—Acts 1:8, 11; 2:2-4.
4. Psalm 68:27 speaks of “the princes of Naphtali”:
  - a. Naphtali typifies Christ as the One who is released from death in resurrection, signified by the “hind let loose” (Gen. 49:21; Psa. 22, title; 18:33; S. S. 2:8-9), and gives beautiful words for the preaching of His gospel (Matt. 28:18-20).
  - b. People of both Zebulun and Naphtali were men of Galilee (4:12-17; Acts 1:11), from whom the gospel of Christ has been spread, preached, and propagated.
  - c. In typology Zebulun and Naphtali form a group for the spreading and the propagating of the glad tidings of Christ’s redemption for God’s salvation.

**X. Psalm 68 reveals the spreading from the temple into the city of God:**

- A. “Strengthen, O God, that which You have done for us. / Because of Your temple at Jerusalem”—following God’s strengthening of what He has done for His elect, the influence of the enjoyment of God in His house spreads to the entire city of Jerusalem—vv. 28b-29a; cf. Eph. 3:16-17a; John 16:13; Rev. 4:5; 5:6.
- B. The house of God signifies the local church, and the city of Jerusalem signifies the kingdom, the strengthening and safeguard of the church.

**XI. Psalm 68 reveals the gaining of the earth for God:**

- A. The influence of the enjoyment of God will gain the whole earth for God—vv. 29b-31; Matt. 19:28; Isa. 2:2-3; Zech. 14:16-17; Rev. 21:24.
- B. The kingdoms of the earth are charged to praise God—Psa. 68:32-34.
- C. The psalmist concludes by praising and blessing God—v. 35.