

HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF NUMBERS, Book 2, Week 12

Christ as the Centre 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

- Num. 10:33 - So they set out from the mountain of Jehovah three days' journey, with the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah setting out before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting place for them.
- Num. 10:34 - And the cloud of Jehovah was over them by day when they set out from the camp.
- Num. 10:35 - **And 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.**
- Num. 10:36 - **And when it came to rest, he said, Return, O Jehovah, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel.**

Victory in Incarnation

- Psa. 68:1 - **Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered; / And let those who hate Him flee before Him.**
- Psa. 68:2 - As smoke is driven away, You will drive them away; / As wax melts before fire, / The wicked will perish before God.
- Psa. 68:3 - But the righteous will rejoice; they will exult before God / And be glad with rejoicing.
- Psa. 68:4 - Sing to God; sing psalms to His name; / Triumph in Him who rides through the deserts— / For Jah is His name—and exult before Him.
- Psa. 68:5 - **A Father to the orphans and a Judge for the widows / Is God in His holy habitation.**
- Psa. 68:6 - **God causes the solitary to dwell in a household; / He brings the prisoners forth into prosperity; / But the rebellious dwell in a parched land.**
- Psa. 68:7 - O God, when You went forth before Your people, / When You marched through the desert, Selah
- Psa. 68:8 - The earth trembled, the heavens also dripped, / At the presence of God; / Sinai there quaked / At the presence of God, the God of Israel.
- Psa. 68:9 - You shed forth bountiful rain, O God; / You confirmed Your inheritance when it languished.
- Psa. 68:10 - Your living flock dwelt in the land; / In Your goodness You provided for the poor, O God.
- Psa. 68:11 - **The Lord gives the command; / The women who bear the glad tidings are a great host.**
- Psa. 68:12 - **The kings of the armies flee. / They flee! / And she who abides at home / Divides the spoil.**
- Psa. 68:13 - **Though you lie among the sheepfolds, / There are dove wings covered with silver, / And its pinions, with greenish-yellow gold.**
- Psa. 68:14 - When the Almighty scattered / The kings in the land, / It snowed on Zalmon.
- Psa. 68:15 - O mighty mountain, O mountain of Bashan, / O many-peaked mountain, O mountain of Bashan:
- Psa. 68:16 - Why do you look with envy, O many-peaked mountains, / At the mountain on which God desires to dwell? / Indeed Jehovah will dwell there forever.
- Psa. 68:17 - The chariots of God are twenty thousand, / Thousands upon thousands; / The Lord is among them, / As at Sinai, in the sanctuary.

Victory in Ascension

- Psa. 68:18 - **You have ascended on high; You have led captive those taken captive; / You have received gifts among men, / Even the rebellious ones also, / That Jehovah God may dwell among them.**
- Psa. 68:19 - Blessed be the Lord, who day by day loads us with good; / God is our salvation. Selah
- Psa. 68:20 - **God is to us / A God of deliverance, / And with Jehovah the Lord / Are the goings forth even from death.**
- Psa. 68:21 - Indeed God will smash / The head of His enemies, / The hairy crown / Of him who goes about in his guiltiness.
- Psa. 68:22 - The Lord said, I will bring them again from Bashan; / I will bring them again from the depths of the sea,
- Psa. 68:23 - That you may bathe your foot in blood, / That the tongue of your dogs may have their portion from the enemies.
- Psa. 68:24 - **They have seen Your goings, O God, / The goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary:**
- Psa. 68:25 - Singers go before; players after; / In the midst of **virgins** sounding the tambourines.
- Psa. 68:26 - Bless God in the congregations, / Even Jehovah, O you who are of the fountain of Israel.
- Psa. 68:27 - There are **little Benjamin**, who rules them, / And the **princes of Judah** in their company, / The **princes of Zebulun**, the **princes of Naphtali**.

Victory in His Second Coming

- Psa. 68:28 - Your God has commanded your strength; / Strengthen, O God, that which You have done for us.
- Psa. 68:29 - Because of Your temple at Jerusalem, / Kings will bring a gift to You.
- Psa. 68:30 - Rebuke the animals of the reeds, / The herd of the bulls among the calves of the peoples, / Trampling on those who lust after silver; / Scatter the peoples who take delight in war.
- Psa. 68:31 - Nobles will come out of Egypt; / Cush will quickly stretch out its hands to God.
- Psa. 68:32 - **O kingdoms of the earth**, / Sing to God, / Sing psalms to the Lord, Selah
- Psa. 68:33 - To Him who rides upon the ancient heaven of heavens. / Behold, He utters His voice, a mighty voice.
- Psa. 68:34 - Ascribe strength to God; / His excellence is over Israel, / And His strength is in the skies.
- Psa. 68:35 - **You are awesome, O God, from Your sanctuaries.** / The God of Israel, He gives strength and power to the people. / Blessed be God!

DAY 1

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

DAY 2

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.

DAY 3

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.
- 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.

DAY 4

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:

- 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.

DAY 5

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.

After I was saved, I heard many messages and read many books which told how to be a victorious Christian. These messages and books indicated that I had many enemies: the world is my enemy; my self is my enemy; my temper, my hatred, and all my problems are my enemies. Then these messages and books indicated many wonderful ways to overcome these enemies. Some said that I must pray much; others said that I must pray with fasting; still others exhorted me to pray with fasting and without sleep. But none of these ways worked. Then I was told that Christ was crucified on the cross, and all the enemies including myself were crucified there too; now I must reckon upon this. I tell you, I tried to reckon for a long time, but I never succeeded. I filled many notebooks with these ways and methods of being an overcoming Christian. One day I threw them all away. There were so many good instructions, concepts, teachings, and suggestions, and I greatly appreciated them. But one day I began to realize that by coming into the local church and staying in the local church, every problem is solved and every enemy is overcome. It was so wonderful; I cannot tell you how wonderful it was! When I stayed in the local church, the world was gone, my temper was gone, and my problems disappeared. I am speaking from actual experience; I have been learning this for over thirty years. I have tried many methods and ways. I searched the Bible to find the will of God. Eventually, that did not work, and I found nothing. But when I came into the local church and stayed there, the will of God was spontaneously made clear. I tried to solve my problems as an individual again and again but could never overcome. When I stayed in the local church, however, all the enemies fled. I had no intention of defeating them; they all fled. From my experience I can boldly testify and declare that the best way to solve your problems, to overcome your enemies, to know the Lord's will, and to obtain the Lord's blessing is simply to stay in the local church and praise the Lord. Just do it. Just try it. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1969, vol. 3, pp. 96*)

- 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.

Are you sorrowful? Then what should you do? Yes, come to the church meetings. Do not attempt to encourage yourself and overcome your problems. Bring all your sorrows to the local church, and tell the enemy Satan to go with you to the meeting. If your wife is angry, just tell her, "Dear, let us go to the church." Do not try to solve your problems in your home and then come to the church. You will be frustrated. Tell all the enemies and all the problems, "Come with me to the meeting." I have had many experiences like this. As soon as I have come into the entrance of the meeting hall, the enemies and problems have fled. They followed me to the meeting, but when I entered the meeting, they turned and left. I have learned how to save much time in reading books. Coming to one meeting is better than reading ten books. Hallelujah! (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1969, vol. 3, pp. 98*)

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, 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, Benoni, 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.

DAY 6

3. Psalm 68:27 speaks of "the princes of Zebulun":
 - 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.c
- 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.

I am sharing this because I had an experience of this. When I was brand-new in the church life, I read this portion in Christ and the Church Revealed and Typified in the Psalms. I thought that it was wonderful that we could just come to the meetings and praise the Lord. Sometime later, I was having a really difficult day. I thought that I could not come to the meeting in my condition. All of a sudden the phone rang. I picked up the phone, and the brother on the other end of the line said, "We are going to the meeting. I will see you in a few minutes," and he hung up the phone. I could not call him back to tell him that I could not go. Then I remembered what I had read: "Do not try to solve your problems in your home and then come to the church." On the way to the meeting, this brother was praying, and I followed him to pray. However, I still felt that the enemy was bothering me. Before we went into the meeting hall, I said to the brother, "Before I go to the meeting, I need to do something. You go in first." Then I went to the side of the meeting hall, and I said, "Satan, I will make you go in with me to this meeting and sit with me on the front row. Praise the Lord!" I went into the meeting, I sat on the front row, all my problems were solved, and I gave a testimony that evening. Therefore, I can testify that what Brother Lee says is true. We should not try to solve our problems at home and then come to the meetings. We should bring our problems with us to the meetings. Of course, if we need to confess to the Lord, we should do so. However, if we still cannot get through, we should not try to solve our problems at home. Rather, we should come to the meetings and praise the Lord. (*Ministry Magazine. Crystallization-study of Numbers, spoken message. Brother Ed Marks*)