

Father to the Fatherless and Vindicator of the Oppressed: Psalm 68:1-7

Text: Psalm 68:1-7 "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 rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice 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 those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land. O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah..."

Introduction:

- **Father's Day can be a complicated day for many.**
- **It may be painful or a day we feel the weight of our failures.**
- **I want today to be a day that we glory in our perfect Father.**
- **He has redeemed us to Himself and will never abandon us.**
- **Psalm 68 is one of the greatest passages celebrating the beauty, power, and tender mercies of our heavenly Father.**
- **It does this in three distinct ways:**
 - **First: It looks back to the Exodus:**
 - **Psalm 68:1** "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him..."
 - **Numbers 10:35** "It came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee..."
 - **Second: It looks forward to the cross:**
 - **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..."
 - **Ephesians 4:7-8** "Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men..."
 - **Third: It looks into the future in God's eternal Kingdom:**
 - **Psalm 68:31-32** "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord..."

- **Revelation 21:24-27** "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it...And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life..."

Proposition: As we examine these verses, let's glory in our gracious heavenly Father who has redeemed us and will never abandon us.

Question: How can we do this?

Part 1: Ponder the beauty of this moment: 68:1 "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him..."

- **First: Its connection to Moses at Sinai:**
 - These words allude to **Numbers 10:35**
 - God had established His covenant at Sinai.
 - There, Moses was able to reconnect with his father-in-law Jethro and his brother-in-law Hobab.
 - He wanted them to join the people on their journey to Canaan.
 - They refused, which disappointed Moses.
 - These words reminded us that the journey and conquest are God's.
 - Moses' own family refused to embrace this great opportunity.
 - It was their loss but had no effect on what God would do.
- **Second: Its connection to God's presence:**
 - **The ark represented the physical location where God would meet with His people.**
 - **It had not rested in the Tabernacle for close to 70 years:**
 - From the death of Eli's sons
 - Through the 40 years of Saul's reign
 - Through the first 7 years of David's reign
- **Third: Its connection to David 440 years later:**
 - **Psalm 68 was probably penned during the events recorded in 2 Samuel 6:12** "So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness..."
 - David wanted the Ark to rest in its proper location.
 - He tried to bring it into Jerusalem, but Uzzah tragically died because it was not properly transported.
 - **Psalm 68** celebrates David's second attempt to bring the Ark into Jerusalem.
- **Fourth: It connects three distinct redemptive moments:**
 - **The Exodus: 68:1** Deliverance from Egyptian enslavement.

- **The Cross: 68:18** Deliverance from the curse of sin.
- **The New Jerusalem: 68:31-32** Final deliverance from this broken world.

Part 2: Ponder the beauty of this Redeemer: 68:2-7

- **He is the LORD of Hosts: 68:2-3** "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..."
 - **Like wind driven smoke**
 - **Like melting wax before a fire**
- **He is the Covenant keeping God: 68:4** "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him..."
 - **"He rideth upon the Heavens:"** There is none higher
 - **"Yahweh:"** He has a covenant name
- **He is the Father to the Fatherless: 68:5** "A father of the fatherless..."
 - When fathers die
 - When fathers fail
 - When fathers disappoint
 - He is there as our Father
- **He is the defender of the defenseless: 68:5** "A judge of the widows..."
 - A judge in this context must vindicate or rule on behalf of the vulnerable.
 - God looks out for and defends the vulnerable.
- **He is the restorer of life to the broken: 68:6** "God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains..."
 - **The abandoned:** "Solitary"
 - **Psalm 27:10** "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up..."
 - **Matthew 19:29** "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life..."
 - **The enslaved:** "Bound with chains"
- **He is the God who is near: 68:7** "Thou wentest forth before thy people...thou didst march through the wilderness..."
 - **Psalm 77:19-20** "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron..."

Part 3: Ponder the comfort of His redemption:

- **Comfort in the Exodus: 68:1** "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him..."
 - **When the people suffered, God heard their cries: Exodus 2:24-25** "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them..."
 - **When the Pharaoh hardened his heart, God would make Himself known: Exodus 7:4-5** "Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt...And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD..."
 - **When Pharaoh pursued, God eliminated their foe: Exodus 14:27-28** "And the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them..."
- **Comfort in the cross: 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.
 - **The price for our redemption was paid in full: Romans 3:24-26** We are "Justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood...that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus..."
 - **The curse of our sin has been removed as it rested on Him: Galatians 3:13** "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us..."
 - **The accusations of Satan have been silenced by His sacrifice: Revelation 12:10-11** "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb..."
 - **His enemies have been rescued and made to participate in the spoils of His triumph: Colossians 2:13-15** "You, being dead in your sins...hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us...nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it..."
- **Comfort in the New Jerusalem: 68:31-32** "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord..."

- **"Egypt:"** People from the land that oppressed God's people will gather as a redeemed people in the new Jerusalem.
- **"Ethiopia:"** People from a land even further removed will gather as a redeemed people in the new Jerusalem.
- **"Kingdoms of the Earth:" Revelation 21:24-27** "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life..."

Application: Let's glory in our gracious heavenly Father who has redeemed us and will never abandon us.

- **In this world we will need comfort:**
 - When people let us down, He never changes.
 - When our loved ones finish their race before us, He is still there.
 - When we feel the weight of our failures, He is there to lift us up.
 - He is the same God who had compassion on His people in Egypt.
- **All comfort should point us to greater comfort:**
 - Our daily struggles are not our greatest problems.
 - Our sin stands between us and God and must be addressed.
 - Our greatest comfort is rooted in the cross and what God has done for us.
 - Christ took our sin on Himself, shed His blood for us, and paid in full the debt we owe God.
 - All who come to Him will receive His forgiveness and new life.
- **That comfort points us to our eternal comfort:**
 - Salvation is more than salvation from sin.
 - It is salvation to God.
 - It is more than salvation from this present evil world.
 - It is salvation to a new heaven and a new earth where the former things are passed away.
- **Let's never forget the character of our great God:**
 - There is no one greater.
 - He is faithful to His covenant promises.
 - He is Father to the Fatherless
 - He defends the defenseless
 - He restores life to the oppressed.
 - He is always near.