



# ShalomAZ Ministries

*In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption*

## **"From Parched Places to Promised Lands"**

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### **Devotion and Discussion Questions**

#### **Key Texts: Psalm 68; Num. 10:35; Eph. 4:8; 1 Cor. 5:20**

We all know what it's like to walk through a "desert" season. You feel stuck. Maybe it's because of personal hardship, a spiritual drought, a broken relationship, or opposition that just won't seem to end. Psalm 68 paints a vivid picture of God as the Deliverer who not only rides into the desert but leads His people *through it* into a place of promise. It begins by looking back at the Exodus—God leading His people out of Egypt through the wilderness—and ends with Him reigning as King in the land. From start to finish, we see that God's heart hasn't changed. He still moves to scatter oppression, defend the weak, and bring His people from parched places to promised lands.

But the journey isn't always quick, and it isn't always easy. There's a tension between His mercy—giving even the oppressor time to repent—and our longing for Him to bring justice right now. Psalm 68 reminds us of the big picture: God *will* act, He *will* deliver, and His purpose is to lead His people into the fullness of His promises.

#### **1. GOD RISES TO BRING YOU OUT**

Psalm 68 opens with a bold declaration: *"Let God arise! Let His enemies be scattered!"* (v. 2 TLV). This isn't just poetic language—it's a battle cry. It's the same thing Moses declared whenever the ark set out during the wilderness journey (Numbers 10:35). The moment God rises, everything shifts. For those in bondage, His rising means hope and freedom; for those who oppose Him, it's a warning of certain defeat.

When God rises, the forces that seem immovable to you have no choice but to move. The oppressor's strength doesn't intimidate Him. The desert may feel endless to you, but God is not there to simply keep you company in your dryness—He's there to lead you out of it. Just as He rose in Egypt to confront Pharaoh and break the chains of slavery, He can rise in your life to confront whatever has been holding you captive.

But here's the key: You have to move when He moves. The Israelites had to follow the pillar of cloud and fire. If they had stayed put, they would have stayed in the desert. God's rising is an invitation to step forward into the journey He's leading—trusting that His path leads out of the parched place.

#### **2 THE DELIVERER'S HEART IS FOR THE WEAK**

Why does God rise? Verses 5–7 answer that: *"A father of orphans, defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling. God settles the lonely in a home; He leads prisoners out to prosperity."* This is the heartbeat of the Deliverer. His dwelling here is His "den" – it's His favorite place to be. ADONAI is most at home among the vulnerable—the orphan, the widow, the lonely, the prisoner. He doesn't come to prop up the powerful; He comes to lift up the powerless.

The desert in Scripture represents places of slavery, exile, and struggle. But when God rides into the desert, He's not doing a victory lap—He's coming for the weak and

wounded. Those who are stubborn and rebellious will remain in scorched places, but those who humble themselves and follow Him will be led into abundance.

Think about this: God's goal isn't just to rescue you from your trouble—it's to transform your situation into something that reflects His goodness. He doesn't just bring you out; He brings you *in*—into a place of wholeness, stability, and fruitfulness. Just as He settled Israel in the Promised Land, He wants to settle your heart in a place where His peace and provision define your life.

### **3. HIS VICTORY PREPARES YOU FOR THE PROMISE**

God's deliverance is not only about *escape from somewhere* terrible—it's about preparation for a deliverance *to somewhere wonderful*. Psalm 68 describes women proclaiming the good news and even those who once stayed at home dividing the spoils of victory. The point? God's victories don't just rescue you—they equip you for what's next.

The Promised Land wasn't just a place to relax; it was a place to live out God's covenant purposes. In the same way, when God brings you out of a parched place, He's preparing you to step fully into what He's called you to do. That may mean proclaiming His goodness, serving others, or using your testimony to encourage someone else. And here's the hope: The God who rides into your desert doesn't just disappear once the battle's over. Verses 35–36 remind us that His strength continues to empower His people. He's not a one-time rescuer; He's a lifelong Leader. When He brings you out, He stays with you, making sure you have what you need to flourish in the promise.

### **CONCLUSION**

So where are you today? Are you in a parched place—tired, discouraged, wondering if things will ever change? The Deliverer is here. He's not just coming to comfort you where you are; He's here to lead you out. Or maybe you've been resisting His leading, afraid of what's ahead. Today, you can surrender, trust His heart for you, and take that step toward the promise.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What does it mean for you personally that God is the defender of the vulnerable?
2. Why do you think God sometimes allows us to walk through a desert before bringing us to the promise?
3. How has God used past "desert seasons" to prepare you for what you're doing now?
4. Who in your life might still be in a parched place, and how can you help lead them toward God's promise?
5. Where do you see "parched places" in our community or world today, and how might God be calling us to join Him in leading people toward His promises?

### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

Abba, we thank You that You are the Deliverer who rides into our deserts. Thank You for being the Father to the fatherless, the Defender of the vulnerable, and the One who leads prisoners into freedom. Forgive us for the times we've resisted Your leading or doubted Your goodness. Today, we choose to follow You—out of parched places and into the promised lands You've prepared for us. Empower us to trust You in the journey and to help others find Your hope and life. In Yeshua's name, amen.