

The Onward March of God

I. Slide1 **Announce:**

A. Slide2 VBS volunteers.

II. Slide3 **Intro:** *The Onward March of God*

A. Psalm 68 contains various themes, suggesting it is a collection of songs brought together, so a *medley* of songs & hymns.

B. Psalm 68 describes *the onward march of God through history to His final triumph.*

1. The 3-fold reference to His *sanctuary*, suggests it was written to celebrate bringing back of the Ark of the Cov to Jerusalem. 2 Sam.6

a) David was bringing the ark of cov to Jer (on new cart). En route Uzzah touched it/died, so David parked it at Obed-Edom's house for 3 months. God blessed him, so David tried 2nd attempt to get it. The bearers of the ark made 6 scary steps. David danced. Mical rebuked him. *I will be even more undignified than this.*

III. Slide4 **A PARADE OF PRAISE (1-6) READ**

A. David is sure about *God's presence* (symbolized by the Ark of the Cov). Think military campaign, would take Ark w/them.

1. Whatever enemy you are dealing with today ... **Do you believe God's presence is with you? Do you believe this then for your life?** (enemy scattered)

B. Slide5a David tips us off to the context by quoting (Numb.10:35,36) - *And whenever the ark set out, Moses said, "Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you." 36 And when it rested, he said, "Return, O Lord, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel."*

1. Slide5b When God arises/or appears look at the effect that it has on ... **His enemies (1,2) & to the righteous (3,4) & for those in need (5,6).**

C. (2) **Whose afraid of a little smoke, or of a melting candle?** *Picture your enemy that way*

D. (5) **God protects the most vulnerable!** Which reveals both His **compassion & justice**.

1. **Fatherless - orphans**, children in **foster-care** hoping to find *a forever family*. This touches single moms. Widows. I think we can add any who are **vulnerable today**: Kids on the streets. Homeless. Runaways. HT.

E. (6) **God settles the solitary in a home** - or, *the lonely in families* (maybe church family?)

IV. Slide6a **THE MARCH OF GOD (7-10) READ**

A. Now **God is praised** directly. We watch as **one scene** moves to **another**, starting with **the Exodus march**(7). **To** the theophany at Sinai (8) **and also** the mighty rainstorm which defeated Sisera (Judges 5:4). **Then** finally to the gentler blessings of *the rain*, year by year, which points to **God's goodness**. *Derek Kidner, pg.239,240.*

V. Slide6b **THE CRUSHING OF KINGS (11-14) READ**

A. **The ladies** were getting the job done, **the guys** asleep. **The song of Deborah** still echoing in these verses.

VI. Slide6c **THE MOUNT OF GLORY (15-18) READ**

A. (15) **Bashan** (Golan Heights area today) - was also known as *the gateway to the underworld and its sinister inhabitants*.

B. **Bashan vs Zion** - like Mount Hermon *compared to* the little hill Zion.

1. **This is the kind of paradox God loves!** God often chooses the underdog to show His own glory. **God chose Zion for His abode** (16b). **Just like** He chose young **David** from amongst his brothers. **Or** lil **Bethlehem**.

C. (18) **You ascended on high** - victorious king returns to his throne. **Paul quotes this in Ephesians** to describe *Christ's victory over the powers of darkness*. (Eph.4:8)

VII. Slide7a **GOD OUR BURDEN-BEARER (19-20) READ**

A. (19) **What a burden**. I hope you are **overloaded** with this **burden!** **Do you know God's blessing** like this?

B. Blessed be the Lord, who daily *bears us up* - our mistake is that we don't realize that God is bearing our burdens.

1. We often think we must deal with our burdens. So we let ourselves worry as though we were *the loneliest, most deserted, most pitiable beings* in existence, when all the while God is ready to bear our burdens.
2. The burden of our sins. The burden of our anxieties about ourselves, and about others. The burden of our frailties and infirmities. The burden of the responsibility of *keeping us*. The burden of the pressure of our daily needs. Saints, all these rest daily on our God.
 - a) Slide7b *"Tis enough that He should care, why should we the burden bear!"*
3. Ps.55:22 *Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.*
 - a) Cast your burden - Hebrew word for *burden* means literally, *what He has giving you*. The thought seems to be, *take back to God, and cast upon him the burden He has laid upon you, and He will sustain you under it. For he is giving it to you to bring you to Himself.*¹
4. Slide7c So, Jesus is willing to be fully responsible for the things we are anxious/worried/burden about.
 - a) When the heart is lightened of its load, it will soar. *Give its this day our daily blessings!*

VIII.Slide8a GOD'S DESTRUCTION OF HIS ENEMY (21-23) READ

- A. God shows how He will one day completely destroy His enemies (22,23).
1. He will *not merely scatter them* (1,14), but He will diligently search for them from the heights of the mountains to the depths of the sea to destroy them (see Amos 9:2,3).
 2. Slide8b The extent of God's destruction of His enemies reveals His power to save and protect His people.

¹ Search the Scriptures, Alan Stibbs, pg.240.

B. Vs. 23 reeks of blood, but not blood lust. Not killing for the sake of killing ... *This is judgment, not imperialism.*

IX. Slide8c **GOD'S VICTORIOUS PROCESSION (24-27) READ**

A. A Victorious Procession follows God's victory.

1. The psalmist describes the *singers, musicians, and young girls* who take part in the celebration.
2. **Benjamin & Judah** represent the southern kingdom (Judah).
Zebulun & Naphtali represent the northern kingdom (Israel).

X. Slide9 **GOD USE YOUR STRENGTH TO DESTROY THE ENEMIES (28-31) READ**

A. The psalmist calls on God to use His strength to destroy the enemies of His people.

1. He refers to God's past acts of salvation, encouraging God to display His power to save again.
2. He compares their enemies to animals and describes them as loving war.
3. He asserts that Egypt and Cush (Ethiopia) will be defeated & bring tribute.

XI. Slide10a **ANOTHER PARADE OF PRAISE (32-35) READ**

A. We started with a Parade of Praise *from Israel alone*, and now end with a Parade of Praise that is **Universal** (*O kingdoms of the earth*).

B. Rather than being *destroyed* by God, all nations should **praise Him** as the sovereign, victorious King.

C. Is your life more like ... Marching like *a conqueror* in a **Victory Celebration** or like *a mourner* in a funeral procession?

1. **Slide10b** This climaxes with *an almost uncontrollable enthusiasm* towards our God!
2. Don't you want to Praise Him? *Let's!*

D. Keywords: judgement, joy, justice, God, goodness.