

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 21st August 2021

Preacher Rev Philip Knowles, Praise Ps 40:1-5 T Ballerma, Hymns 624, 172.

Read: Psalm 68:1-11 Text Psalm 68:9 A Plentiful Rain.

The opening words of Psalm 68 records a summary regarding the history of the children of Israel, when God brought them out from Egyptian bondage and into the land of Canaan, a land that God had promised them through faith in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, when the children of Israel, would enter that land of Israel, they were in fact claiming their inheritance, all the blessings of the everlasting covenant of grace in Christ.

Remember Caleb said in **Joshua 14:12** give me this mountain. The mountain at Hebron was given to him for his inheritance by the Lord.

God has redeemed a people to bring them into pastures green, blesses them with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, purchased by the shedding of His precious blood, such as Regeneration, Justification, Election, Redemption, Adoption, Sanctification, right through to Glorification, these great gospel themes, and truths centre upon Christ for the believer's enjoyment, enrichment, encouragement and edification, in their walk as children of the LORD.

When believers claim their spiritual blessings, it means they learn why these blessings were bought and how they apply to their lives in time and for all eternity.

One way in Scripture God has chosen to illustrate or symbolise His blessings and favour, is by sending rain.

Look at the words of **verse 9** ***Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.***

The reference to and meaning of rain is both literal rain but also at the same time spiritual in application.

The pouring down of rain symbolises God's blessing, presence and power in mighty visitation.

The word **plentiful** means ***abundance or great.***

This is God sending a mighty downpour, a time of refreshing. A mighty visitation of God fulfilling His word.

This is our prayer today, as **thou O God, didst send a plentiful rain...** so do it again in our day, in lifetime, in this land of England, in this city of London, in this place of Walthamstow, send a plentiful rain, may London hear and know the sound of abundance of rain.

I FIRST, THE RECOGNITION OF A PLENTIFUL RAIN.

David recognises that "***thou O God, didst send a plentiful rain...***" The word **send** in this **verse 9** is a wonderful word.

If you have a margin in your Bible, the Hebrew reading means **to shake**. The word also translates as ***to strike, perfume, to wave, wield, or sprinkle.***

It was used as **wave** in **Exodus 29** when the people gave the first fruits of their harvest offering to the Priest, who then waved the offering to symbolise, the offering was accepted on their behalf.

The offering waved represented the rest of harvest.

It testified a harvest will follow and be gathered. Paul said of Christ in **1 Cor 15:20** "***But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.***"

The Lord was directing their minds by faith to consider the promised Saviour, in His offering for sin accepted on their behalf and a glorious harvest guaranteed and gathered from His death and resurrection.

It is used as **perfume** in **Prov 7:17** "***I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.*** When spray perfume or anything with a scent is spreads out over a wide area and falls and rests upon that area leaving it's mark it's smell.

You know someone has sprayed something or themselves. It effective in fact it is lasting for a period of time.

It is interesting to note that the same word is translated as **strike** by Naaman in **2 Kings 5:11**, Naaman was afflicted with leprosy, which is a picture of sin, with its rotting effects on the body.

Naaman was wrath, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

Naaman believed that by one strike from God, his leprosy would be gone. The point I make, a strike is very fast, only takes a second.

Off course we know the story, that Eli-sha gave Naaman a word from God to obey, go down to the river Jordan and wash seven times and he would he healed from leprosy.

Only when Naaman obeyed and believed the word of God, was he cleansed from leprosy.

When the Lord saves sinners, He does so by one strike according to His word, delivering from darkness into the light and liberty of the gospel.

Therefore, David recognises in the History of the nation the times when God alone sent a plentiful rain to His inheritance, ***it was like one strike, one touch, like the perfume when it falls on the bed, there is impact, there is evidence.***

Thou didst.

We too can look back at the history of this nation to when God sent a plentiful rain, spiritually speaking, rain, showers of blessing, that was sprinkled over the land, rain coming down as perfume, rain like the welding of the sword with purpose, making impact.

There are many monuments dedicated to gospel preachers, places of worship, over the land from the days of the reformers, the puritans, and more faithful servants, bearing testimony, ***“thou O God, didst send a plentiful rain...”***

I tell you all it takes is one strike, one wave, one downpour from God’s almighty hand upon our life, this ministry, and land to know healing and the blessing of God, and recognise once again ***“thou O God, didst send a plentiful rain...”***

God spoke and the world was created, believer one touch from God, and there is revival. Sinner one touch from God and there is forgiveness. It’s no secret what God can do.

Men do not create the moving of God. It is God alone, who visits His inheritance.

He said in **Ezekiel 34:26** ***“I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.*** Only God can send, a Plentiful rain, only God can send revival blessing, do again great and mighty things.

Oh Lord in my life, in our church, in our city of London, in our country of England, yeah through United Kingdom, let it come O Lord we pray thee, let the showers of blessing fall.

II SECOND, THE RECIPIENTS OF A PLENTIFUL RAIN.

Notice the psalmist in referring to God speaks of “**thine inheritance**”. The word **inheritance** means **ones possession or portion**.

The Psalm and throughout scripture makes it clear that the Lord’s **inheritance or possession** both includes **the land, which is Israel** and **the people, His redeemed**.

They are connected, Christ promised to redeem and revive a people but also renew, restore the land.

He has given the land to His people, and He has given His people to enjoy the land, but both make up the Lord’s possession, they belong to the Lord.

Psalm 68 deals with God’s blessing, favour, provision and goodness upon His inheritance.

Remember God covenanted or promised Abraham and his seed a land. **Gen 12:1-2** “**Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:**”

Deuteronomy 8:10 “**...thou shalt bless the LORD for the good land which He hath given thee.**”

Deuteronomy 32:9 “**For the LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.**

About 430 Years later God brought Abraham seed out of bondage in Egypt, Moses prayed in **Exodus 34:9** “**...pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.**

(God in mercy and grace pardoned and did as **Psalm 28:9** prayed, “**Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever. Deuteronomy 8:7& 10.**”)

(Deuteronomy 11:10-12 For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: ¹¹ But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: ¹² A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.”)

That is amazing, God who is the eternal, almighty, self-sufficient and infinite, the possessor of heaven and earth should possess an inheritance when all belongs to Him and were created by Him and for Him.

Therefore, we must always view God’s inheritance within the boundary of redemption, as an eternal kingdom, and reward given to Jesus Christ having obeyed the terms of the everlasting covenant of grace.

God has given a people, and the land, yeah the whole earth, to Jesus Christ as His inheritance, His kingdom, to redeem, restore and reign over, then in the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, to receive eternal praise.

Due to our oneness with Christ, **Eph 1:11** states “**In whom also we have obtained an inheritance...**”

we share in His blessings, we shall rule and reign with Him, and rest in Him.

All that belongs to Christ, belongs to His people.

Christ Himself is the believer's inheritance, all the benefits of His life, death, resurrection, and return will be enjoyed throughout eternity because of Him and with Him.

Rev 21:3 declares, "He will dwell with them and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

Therefore, believer you are truly blessed.

Notice **verse 19** "***Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah.***

The word **selah** means ***to stop, to pause, reflect, think upon what has just been said.***

If you were to count your blessings, it would surprise you what the Lord hath done. We are blessed, we are the Lord's inheritance.

Even with all our failure, and wonderings, **Psalm 94:12** "***For the LORD will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance.***

III THIRD, THE REQUISITE FOR THE PLENTIFUL RAIN.

verse 9 ***Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.***

The plentiful rain was needed because God's inheritance, as both His own people and land were ***weary***.

The word **weary** means **tired, tried, exhausted.**

The scene is one of barrenness, emptiness, dryness, in the lives of the people and in the landscape.

Why had God's inheritance become weary, tired looking?

The land and people are dry and thirsty. The hot sun has left hardness on the ground, the land has become fallow or hard.

Throughout scripture we learn, that due to sin and continual backsliding, God in chastisement withheld the rain literally and spiritually in the land.

Both the people and the land were affected by the consequences of unconfessed and continual sin.

Remember God through Moses said in **Deuteronomy 11:13-15**, follow God and there will be rain, literal rain and but also showers of blessing, but also **verse 16-17** ***Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;***

v17 And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and He shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you. Similar words prayed by King Solomon in **2 Chronicles 6**.

In the times of Elijah the rain was withheld as stated by **James 5:17** ***“it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months,”*** not only literally but spiritually.

There was no seeking after God, lack of prayer, God dishonoured, God's people fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.

Such a condition, such weariness resulted in wasted lives and empty land, barriers and hinderances. Neglect in spiritual matters. It seemed the people or land, would remain in such weariness.

Solomon prayed when there would be a time that due to the sin of God's people, that God would remember His covenant promises concerning His inheritance, and prayed in **2 Chronicles 7:14** ***“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways;*** this is God's inheritance in view.

then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

This is where we are now in our lives and as a nation. God's people filled with pride, neglecting fellowship with God, unconfessed sin, a hardness of heart, a barrenness of prayer, starvation from not reading God's word.

Therefore, listen to God's counsel in **Hosea 10:12** "...***break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till He come and rain righteousness upon you.***

Here is what we must do, break up hardness by labouring in scripture and prayer until God visits us.

We need a great rain sent from above, rain that will give refreshing, softening.

Believer seek the Lord, confess sin and God will send ***a plentiful rain***, He will cause our lives to bear fruit for Him, He will cause the gospel to flourish in the land once again.

In **1 Kings 18**, God sent rain again, only when the people by faith learned God's wrath against sin was turned away from sinners who trust in Him through the sinless life and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ.

Only when sin was confessed and cleansed by faith in the blood of Christ, did Elijah in **James 5:18** ***And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. 1 Kings 18:45*** "***there was a great rain.*** The people and land evidenced God did send a plentiful rain.

Are you thirsty today, are you weary, has your Bible reading and prayer life dried up? when you come to God house, is there a barrenness, a hardness in your life?

You are weary and in need of revival, refreshing? here is a word for you, **Isa 44:13** ***“For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:***

He will visit you, that you will sing of His love once again in testimony ***“thou O God, didst send a plentiful rain whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.***

IV FOURTH, THE REASON FOR THE PLENTIFUL RAIN.

Why did ***send a plentiful rain to his weary inheritance.*** The answer is given, ***whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance....***

The word **confirm** means ***to establish, to settle to strengthen.*** All for the purpose to bear fruit.

God sent His weary inheritance ***a plentiful rain,*** to do a new thing among them.

God gave the rain when His inheritance was weary, when it seemed all was hopeless, to teach, He alone sends showers of blessing from above in His own season.

Therefore, at such a times as these, of weariness, God according to His own good pleasure, and power sends ***a plentiful rain, an abundance or great rain.***

Rain that is freely given as it is needed, to refresh, revive, restore once again, to give hope again.

He delights to bless His people. He saves sinners that they might have abundant life, and that their joy may be full or as the word means overflowing.

Oh believer, He restores, revives you to rejoice in Him, as **Psalms 68:20** states ***“He that is our God, is the God of our salvation...”*** He will ***send a plentiful rain.***

Surely it is time for thee work O Lord, Oh! Lord send the Old time power, that saints be revived, sinners be regenerated and thy name glorified.