

February 27th and 28th, 2024

Triumphant Tuesday and Wisdom Wednesday

Bible Study (Psalm 128)

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Prelude

David, praises God for his deliverance from his troubles in **Psalms 34**, this was during the time he was running from Saul; he found himself in the town of Gath. Gath was the hometown of Goliath, the giant whom David had killed a couple of years earlier, David was recognized and taken to the king, David could not run away and he could not fight his way out, so he pretended to be crazy. The king stated he had enough crazy people in his government, so they threw David out (**1 Samuel 21:10-15**). David ran off to a cave and wrote **Psalm 34** praising God for deliverance and then the Psalm took a turn to instruct his people to learn the proper fear (reverence) of the Lord, in verses **8-14**. David affirms that the Lord is a tender, watchful caretaker of those who take refuge in him; the verses read:

“O taste and see that the Lord (our God) is good; How blessed (fortunate, prosperous, and favored by God) is the man who takes refuge in Him. O (reverently) fear the Lord, you His saints (believers, holy ones); For to those who fear Him there is no want. The young lions lack (food) and grow hungry, But they who seek the Lord will not lack any good thing. Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you to fear the Lord (with

*awe inspired reverence and worship Him with obedience).
Who is the man who desires life, And loves many days, that he
may see good? Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from
speaking deceit. Turn away from evil and do good; Seek peace
and pursue it. (Psalms 34:8-14 AMP)*

Introduction of Psalms 128

We are looking at **Psalms 128** this evening; **Psalm 127** and **128** has focus on God's work in and through the family. The two psalm is among those listed as Song of Ascent; the psalms that were song by the travelers on their way to Jerusalem, usually for one of the three yearly feasts (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles).

Psalm 128 is a wisdom psalm about the blessings God gives to those who fear the Lord; **Psalm 128** focuses on home and the family. When reading **Psalms 128** it paints a picture of an ideal home in which it should consist of an ideal husband(man) (**Psalm 1:1-3**), an ideal wife(woman) (**Proverbs chapter 31:10-31**) and ideal love as described in **1 Corinthians chapter 13**.

After reading those passages of scripture we might say, **“that’s not the way life is.”** But in reading these passages of scripture, they tell us, it is the way life can be; they are to inspire us to greater possibilities.

I believe that **Psalm 128** was written to believers to know the joy that only God can give. Happiness is not determined by our physical or financial condition but by our spiritual condition-not

by where we work but by where and how we worship. Happiness is not determined by external circumstances but by internal contentment; Paul states in ***Philippians 4:11 AMP, Not that I speak from (any personal) need, for I have learned to be content (and self-sufficient through Christ, satisfied to the point where I am not disturbed or uneasy) regardless of my circumstances.*** Paul goes on and say, ***“I can do all things through Christ who strengthen me.”*** The key is not finances but faith in God. Jesus Christ is the source of eternal joy and happiness.

Let us remember that Israel failed to fear the Lord, they were in captivity for 70 years due to disobedience, Jeremiah explained, saying ***“I have spoken to you over and over again, but you have not listened. The Lord has persistently sent to you all His servants the prophets, you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear, turn now from your evil way and evil actions, that you may not forfeit the right to live in the land that the Lord has giving to you and your forefathers (Jeremiah 25-3-5)***

The Israelites finally know the importance of fearing (reverencing) the Lord; as they journey too Jerusalem, ascending the mountains surrounding the city, they were inspired to sing **Psalm 128**, as David was inspired to instruct the people of the proper fear (reverence) of the Lord in **Psalm 34:8-14**. They are reminded of the blessedness of fearing the Lord. It was stated that the author of **Psalm 128** is unknown, I believe it

to be David, due to his authorship of **Psalms 34**; his instructions to the people to learn the proper fear of the Lord.

We are human, ordinary people; what makes people of God different from the rest of the ordinaries?... the Holy Ghost, dwelling inside of us. Do you know what makes people of God extraordinary (very unusual)?... following the leading of the Holy Ghost; obeying the voice of our Father in heaven.

Psalms 128 consist of **6 verses**

1 Blessed (happy and sheltered by God's favor) is everyone who fears the Lord (and worships Him with obedience), who walks in His ways and lives according to His commandments.

2 For you shall eat the fruit of (the labor of) your hands, you will be happy and blessed and it will be well with you.

3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within the innermost part of your house; your children will be like olive plants around your table.

4 Behold, for so shall the man be blessed and divinely favored who fears the Lord (and worships Him with obedience).

5 May the Lord bless you from Zion (His holy mountain), and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life;

6 Indeed, may you see your (family perpetuated in your) children's children.

Peace be upon Israel!

Out lined as follows:

The Basics of Fearing the Lord – verse 1

The Blessings of Fearing the Lord– verses 2-4

Prayer of continued Blessings – verses 5-6

The Basics of Fearing the Lord – verse 1

1 Blessed (happy and sheltered by God's favor) is everyone who fears the Lord (and worships Him with obedience), who walks in His ways and lives according to His commandments.

“And this is what he says to all humanity: ‘The fear of the Lord is true wisdom; to forsake evil is real understanding’” Job 28:28, NLT. To walk in His ways, is a life of obedience. Psalms 86:11, AMP, states “Teach me Your way, O Lord, I will walk and live in Your truth; Direct my heart to fear Your name (with awe-inspired reverence and submissive wonder).

*Trust Him and recognize that God's way is superior to ours. Fearing God isn't about crouching down in fear, as though there's danger, No! It's about acknowledging God's absolute **authority** and **righteousness**.*

Authority is the freedom to decide or a right to act without hindrance. **Romans 13:1 AMP** states, ***“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God (granted by His permission and sanction), and those which exist have been put in place by God.***

God has the right to mold the clay as he wishes (**Romans 9:21**) and to set times and dates (**Acts 1:7**). Almighty God, has authority over **ALL**.

Righteousness is living in a way that is aligned with God's will and character. Being righteous isn't a journey that can be achieve through our own efforts. Being righteous before God, there must be repentance of sin and trusting in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. This isn't an overnight process; it's a life journey of growing in godly character and behavior. It's about transformation of character and actions, empowered by the Holy Ghost. Some refer to this as the "**Great Exchange**" God takes our sins, put them on Jesus, and gives us His righteousness. "**We are the righteousness of God in Christ**" (**2 Corinthians 5:21**) Jesus paid the price for our sin, we could not begin to pay. We cannot clean ourselves up, but God can, and by His grace, He does.

The fear of the Lord is true devotion and reverence for God; there is no walking in the ways of the Lord, until fear is established in the heart. God joins himself to those who walk in his ways as companion and leader as stated in **2 Chronicles 17:3-4 AMP**, "**The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father (ancestor) David. He did not seek (to follow) the Baals (the false gods), but sought the God of his father, and walked in (obeyed) His commandments, and did not act as Israel did.**"

Fearing God is taking God seriously, to reverence him and honor him; live in daily obedience to the word of God. Fearing the Lord and walking in God's ways means loving the Lord Jesus because He made the ultimate sacrifice upon the cross; He died that we might live. He redeemed us. He paid for our sins upon the cross. He qualified us to have access to God.

Let me say again, having fear of the Lord, isn't about crouching down in fear, it's about spiritual fear that combines awe, trust and joy. It's worshipping God as Creator, Ruler, Redeemer, Sustainer and Judge of us all.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 AMP states it this way, "When all has been heard, the end of the matter is: fear God (worship Him with awe-filled reverence, knowing that He is almighty God) and keep His commandments, for this applies to every person.

The Blessings of Fearing the Lord— verses 2-4

2 For you shall eat the fruit of (the labor of) your hands, you will be happy and blessed and it will be well with you.

Ecclesiastes 5:18 AMP states, "Behold, here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat and drink, and to find enjoyment in all the labor in which he labors under the sun during the few days of his life which God gives him – for this is his (allotted) reward." Remember **2 Thessalonians 3:10** states, ***"If you don't work, you don't eat."***

Are there possibly some weeds of laziness growing in our spiritual garden; is there a lack of effort and a disengagement in developing the skills God has giving us. Thinking on this portion of scripture, **if you don't work, you don't eat**; laziness is a sin and sin separates us from God. We are created in His image, we are created to praise God and to work in His garden; being a true witness for the kingdom of God, volunteering our services and being a servant to others in times of need. When we sit idle, we shrink from His presence. He wants to do more than we can imagine or ask for through us, but we need to be willing to work. To paraphrase **Romans 12:11**, "Do not slack in your faithfulness and hard work. Let your spirit be on fire, bubbling up and boiling over, as you serve the Lord."

For out of His fullness (the superabundance of His grace and truth) we have all received grace upon grace (spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing, favor upon favor, and gift heaped upon gift) John 1:16 AMP

God blesses us even though we don't deserve it; **Jeremiah 32:41** states that ***God enjoys blessing us***. We as parents can relate to this, when we gift our children with something that they've been hinting at or just out right asking for, how it makes us feel to see the joy on their faces. God blesses us as a witness to others, He wants us to tell others of His blessings. God blesses us to be a blessing to others, don't let greed cause you to develop a hoarder disorder.

Those who blesses others is abundantly blessed, those who help others are helped; you will be happy and blessed and it will be well with you.

3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within the innermost part of your house; your children will be like olive plants around your table.

The only part of God's creation declared to be "not good" was the fact that man (Adam) was alone (**Genesis 2:18 KJV**); God created Eve as a "help meet" - a helper, suitable for him. Suitable in what respect – spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically, not saying that the couple are the same in everything, only that they bring harmony and not discord to each other. Eve was designed to be his mirror opposite, possessing the other half of the qualities, responsibilities, and attributes which he lacked.

Verse three begin with '**Your wife**' this isn't an indication that a man or woman needs a wife or husband to be in the will of God. Paul states in **I Corinthians 7:7-9 AMP**, ***"I wish that all the people were as I am; but each person has his own gift from God, one of this kind and one of that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows, (that a practical matter) it is good if they remain (single and entirely devoted to the Lord) as I am. But if they do not have (sufficient) self-control, they should marry; for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.***

Some people have genuinely feared the LORD, but haven't enjoyed all of the specific blessings described in verses **2-3**. The blessings listed are not the only blessings of life, we can't begin to fathom the vast ways that God can bless those who fear Him.

The commentator thoughts on verses two and three were that these were desired blessings and general descriptions of those who feared the Lord in ancient Israel and not universal promises to the people of God. It has been stated that the duty of an Israelite is to marry as early in life as possible. Eighteen years is the age set by the Rabbis; and any one remaining unmarried after his twentieth year is accounted as one that live in sin. (not sure if the age limit was to both male and female).

Finding a suitable companion is a difficult task that requires the help of the Lord. If both individuals are rooted in their relationship with God, there's great opportunity for abundant blessings and prosperity. The couple should be to each other: encouragers not discouragers, frugal not wasteful, faithful not unfaithful, nurturing and kind – No abuse of any kind, such as physical, sexual, psychological, nor financial.

When we reverence God, our hearts are aligned with His desires, enabling us to make wise choices and pursue paths that lead to success and prosperity.

To say that, ***"Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine"*** true statement, because, she is managing, household (keeping house clean), domestic (relationship with husband and

children), church (being engaged in activities within), possible outside job. A godly companion do not have time to be lazy. Prayers are answered when the husband and wife share in household duties; and as the children gets older, they share in duties as assigned.

Your children will be like **olive plants** around your table.



DNA from the olive trees found they were all derived from the same parent plant; this was probably an effort to preserve the lineage of the trees. Experts say this was likely a deliberate attempt to preserve the heritage of these trees for future generations; meaning that if they are not the same trees that were present in the garden during the time of Christ, they are at least directly descended from them.

Like the parent plant of the olive tree; we are the parents of our future generations and it is pleasing to God that we set an example of living our daily lives in accordance to His will, not ours. Live the lifestyle that it would be found in our DNA that our descendants are those who was true devoted believers of Jesus Christ; those who are stable, steadfast, and endured, which are qualities that's necessary for a strong and resilient faith.

Olive trees takes time to grow to maturity; they are patiently cultivated and become a symbol of longevity and productivity; so are children within the household of faith. It is possible that this is why the author of **Psalms 128** compares our children to little olive plants.

Proverb 22:6 AMP reads, “Train up a child in the way he should go (teaching him to seek God’s wisdom and will for his abilities and talents), even when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

Our children require nurture, care, and patience; a tree don't bear fruit overnight; it takes a lot of tender loving care, protection, weeding, watering, and feeding and prayer,

before there is fruit. When it comes to our teen agers, we can add grace to the nurture, care, and patience.

I, myself have two sons, and my youngest is the rebel of the two; he got into some serious trouble a few years ago and I remember walking around the house talking to God about it, because I was one who worked two jobs and overtime on my regular job. No, their Father was not available for comment, but God was, I was one who didn't seek God for guidance in every area of my life. I asked God for forgiveness, **1 John 1:9** states, ***"If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."***

*To paraphrase **Psalms 9:10**, "God never forsake any man or woman who places his or her trust in him. He may allow them to experience some very difficult circumstances, but he will never abandon them. When everyone else flees, God stays." --*

--Ephesians 4:21-24 NLT, "Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God-truly righteous and holy. --"

Let us be like the olive tree, planted firmly in faith and rooted in the teachings of God.

4 Behold, for so shall the man be blessed and divinely favored who fears the Lord (and worships Him with obedience).

Verse 4 adds, behold, we are blessed and divinely favored.

The psalmist reiterates verse 1 in verse 4, behold (notice, observe, witness) that we are divinely blessed, the blessings are inspired by Almighty God.

“So, my dear friends, don’t get thrown off course. Every desirable and beneficial gift comes out of heaven. The gifts are rivers of light cascading down from the Father of Light. There is nothing deceitful in God, nothing two-faced, nothing fickle. He brought us to life using the true Word, showing us off as the crown of all his creatures” James 1:17 MSG

Prayer of continued Blessings – verses 5-6

5 May the Lord bless you from Zion (His holy mountain), and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life;

6 Indeed, may you see your (family perpetuated in your) children’s children.

Peace be upon Israel!

Prayer, requesting continued blessings from Zion – Zion is the heavenly sanctuary where God dwells; when we think about the connection of blessing with Jerusalem:

- >the teaching and ministry Jesus did was in Jerusalem
- >Jesus died as a sacrifice and a substitute for our sins in Jerusalem
- >Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven from Jerusalem
- >the gospel was first preached out of Jerusalem and the church was birthed there

We are truly blessed out of Zion!

And many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house (temple) of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go out from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:3 AMP)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3 KJV)

Numerous descendants, is the crown and glory in our winter stage of life (in our old age). It is a rich blessing when we acknowledge Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior in our lifetime; so that we can share our faith with our children, grand and great grandchildren; as we hope and pray that they follow in the footsteps of having steadfast faith in God.

The prayer progresses from individual, to family, and to the wider community. We are to be concerned for all God's people, not just our own family or for ourselves.

In my conclusion: ***Pray for Jerusalem's peace! Prosperity to all you Jerusalem-lovers! Friendly insiders, get along! Hostile outsiders, keep your distance! For the sake of my family and friends, I say it again: live in peace! For the sake of the house of our God, God, I'll do my very best for you. (Psalm 122:6 MSG)***

The word of the Lord.

Resources:

Enduringword.com

Bible – AMP, NLT, KJV, MSG

Believer's Bible Commentary

Zondervan Study Bible

Psalms – Volume four – David Guzik

Discover the books of the Bible

Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology

Smart Guide to the Bible

Blueprint for a Satisfying Home

Ancient Olive Trees in the Garden of Gethsemane

Winning the Battles of the Mind, Joyce Meyers