



FAMILY CHALLENGE

DAY 5: A Satisfying Home is Based Upon the Fear of the Lord

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 128

- 1 How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord,
Who walks in His ways.*
- 2 When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands,
You will be happy and it will be well with you.*
- 3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
Within your house,

Your children like olive plants
Around your table.*
- 4 Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed
Who fears the Lord.*
- 5 The Lord bless you from Zion,
And may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.*
- 6 Indeed, may you see your children's children.
Peace be upon Israel!*

DEVOTIONAL

Psalm 128 shows us an ideal, but we don't live in an ideal world. If your family is far from this ideal, don't despair. It doesn't mean that God won't bless your family. But God's blueprint for the family remains in our broken world. God wants us to fear Him and walk in His ways.

Like throwing a pebble in a placid lake, Psalm 128 begins with a godly man as the head of the home (verse 3, "your wife"), ripples out to his wife, then to the children and finally shows the impact of this godly home on the nation. Let's follow the progression.

A satisfying home begins with a godly man who fears the Lord. He has respect and reverence for God that results in obedience. He teaches his children to grow up in the fear of the Lord by his words and example.

God blesses this man, beginning with his wife, the heart of his home. She is planted in the home next to her loving husband where she flourishes like a fruitful vine. A fruitful vine in the hot Mid-Eastern climate produces something that is refreshing and nourishing for others. She labors to provide a satisfying and nourishing home life for her family (Proverbs 31:10-31).

The children in this home are described as "young olive plants" around the table. They have potential to grow into fruitful trees, but they are not there yet. They need time to develop and mature in the nourishing soil of this God-fearing home. This takes a lot of tender loving care, protection, weeding, watering, feeding and prayer.

This happy family is not an island. The psalmist prays, "May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life." (Psalm 128:5) At the heart of this family's happiness is their participation in the church, the larger family of God. Together with fellow believers they are engaged to see the purposes of God advance and the global Church expand.

Growing, fruitful children will carry on the godly legacy of the home. God's plan for children is that they will one day replace their parents, the mature trees, and continue the legacy of fruit bearing for the Him after they are gone.

What is the result of a home where God is feared? The God-fearing man who led his family to fear Him is an old man in Psalm 128:6 who enjoys God's blessing as he watches his grandchildren follow the Lord.

And finally, the blessing spreads to the city and the nation. The family is the building block of the nation. Could it be that much turmoil in our nation today can be traced to turmoil in our homes?

God wants your home to be a fruitful garden for Him and not a barren desert. Trust God and His plan for your family!

REFLECT AND RESPOND

- How is your family growing together in respect and reverence for God that results in obedience in His ways?
- What are you doing to provide nourishing soil for your young olive plants so that they can grow into fruitful trees?

- How is your family participating with your church to see God's purposes advance?

PRAYER

Father, we long for this life of blessing that belongs to families who fear You ... a father who fears You and trusts You to make his home into a fruitful garden, a mother who flourishes, and children who are being nurtured in the greenhouse of a God-fearing home so that one day they will be become mature and fruitful for You.

"Blueprint for a Satisfying Home,"

by Steve Cole, retired pastor, used by permission, Flagstaff Christian Fellowship, Flagstaff, AZ