

## “Dad: ‘The Man, The Myth, The Legend!’” (Psalm 128:1–6)

Mama told me that there would be days like last Thursday. After an exhausting few weeks, I took a day off to spend some much-needed time with my family. I began my day by lifting weights with the Joshua. Halfway through our workout, I dropped a twenty-five pound Olympic plate on my lower shin. I broke my skin, bloodied my leg, and experienced severe pain. In the afternoon, I played basketball with Justin. But he decided to use a tiny plastic soccer ball and lower the hoop from ten feet to seven feet so that he could dunk. As we were playing one-on-one, I threw down a monster tomahawk dunk on him and mangled my right middle finger on the rim. Instantaneously a blood blister formed under my fingernail. If my finger could have screamed it would have! I told Justin, “This is just not my day! I need to stop before I do any further damage to myself.” Later that afternoon, as I was reenacting how I earned my battle wounds with Lori, I slipped and fell down our stairs and reinjured my shin and finger. Talk about frustrating! And I’m not even a klutz. (Don’t verify this claim with my wife though.) Mama told me that there would be days like last Thursday.

As I was reflecting upon my comedy of errors, the Lord impressed upon me that my experience is common to men on a practical level. When a man hurts himself or others, he becomes afraid of further failure or injury. As men, we have a tendency to want to quit when things go poorly. Maybe you have lost your job and haven’t been able to provide for your family. Perhaps you have strayed from God. Maybe you have been unfaithful to your wife or your future wife. Perhaps you are recovering from a divorce. Maybe you have neglected your children. Today you may be feeling like you need to give in and give up. However, God would say, “It’s always too soon to quit.”

For Father’s Day my daughter, Jena, gave me a T-shirt that says: “Dad: The Man, the Myth, The Legend.” [Take off dress shirt and wear the t-shirt]. This T-shirt reminds me that God has high hopes and expectations for me, and so does my family. Regardless of how I feel about myself at times, I must recognize that my family and God are counting on me to be a faithful and godly man. I don’t want to disappoint them. But more importantly, I am motivated to please them. This Father’s Day will be devoted to a study of Psalm 128.<sup>1</sup> The words of the psalmist instruct us how to be godly men who impact our work, home, and nation.<sup>2</sup> My thesis is: *If Daddy’s happy, everybody’s happy!* Perhaps you are thinking, “Where did Keith get this idea?” I found it in the text where the key concept is happiness/blessing.<sup>3</sup>

**1. The Principle: Fear the Lord (128:1).** The title of this Psalm is: “**A Song of Ascents.**” The fifteen psalms from 120 to 134 are called “songs of ascents.” The word “ascent” comes from a Hebrew word which means “going up.” It seems that these particular songs were sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem to keep the annual feasts. No matter where they journeyed from, they had to go up because Jerusalem is 2,500 feet above sea level. There were three festivals each year and the Jews would sing the songs as they ascended to Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> The psalmist opens with the following general principle: “**How blessed is everyone who fears the LORD.**” The word “bless/happy” is used four times, but it’s the translation of two different Hebrew words. In 128:1–2 the emphasis is upon happiness (*esher*), and in 128:4–5 the stress is upon being “blessed of the Lord” (*barak*). The word translated “blessed” (*esher*) in 128:1 is written in the plural, denoting a sense of fullness.<sup>5</sup> Here, the word should be rendered “happy” (cf. 128:2; HCSB, NRSV). The psalmist declares, “How happy is everyone who fears the Lord.” But this type of happiness is only granted to the one who fears the Lord.<sup>6</sup> The expression “God-fearin’” used to be a familiar expression in America. To be called a “God fearin’” man or woman was a compliment. To have a “God fearin’” family used to be esteemed.<sup>7</sup> But this language is now utterly foreign to our culture. Oh, how we need to recapture the fear of God! How can we do this? The one who fears the Lord is the one “**who walks in His ways**” (128:1b; cf. 119:3). This entails obedience to God’s Word (cf. 1:1–3). When we are awed by God, take Him seriously, and then obey Him, we will discover true happiness. As men, we must lead the charge in fearing God for *if Daddy’s happy, everybody’s happy!*

But please beware. The world promises happiness and many things such as possessions, popularity, position, prestige, and promotions. Nevertheless, true contentment can only be found in enjoying God Himself. True happiness is not found in positive happenings, but in God. Hence, the key to having a fulfilled life is having a right relationship with God. Is your happiness found in God alone? If not, I can assure you that you will be frequently plagued with discontentment and restlessness. The only stability and security in life is found in Jesus Christ. If you have never trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior, I urge you to do so today.

[The psalmist could have stopped at 128:1, and we would have a valuable piece of biblical insight. But the rest of the psalm contains “for instances”—examples of the ways this blessing of happiness will be realized. The one who obeys the principle in 128:1 will experience the following results . . .]

**2. Your work will be blessed (128:2).** Israelites believed that if a man did not keep God’s commandments, he would sow in vain, or his enemies would eat his crop or natural disasters would ruin his work. The righteous, however, would know divine blessing.<sup>8</sup> The Psalmist writes, “**When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, you will be happy and it will be well with you.**” The Psalmist moves from the plural “everyone” (128:1) to the singular “you” (128:2). The results become intensely personal. The man who fears the Lord and walks in his ways will be happy with his work and it will be well with him. The word “well” (*tob*) indicates a sense of completion according to God’s purpose.<sup>9</sup> This same Hebrew word is translated “good” when God speaks of His creation in Gen 1.<sup>10</sup> What happens when you fear God? He will take care of your fortune: “you shall eat of the fruit of your hands” (128:2a). He will take care of your feelings: “You will be happy (128:2b). And He will take care of your future: “It will be well with you” (128:2c). What a guarantee!<sup>11</sup>

But maybe you’re thinking, “My work isn’t very satisfying, much less “happy.” I feel your pain. However, we must remember that biblical happiness is not dependent upon circumstances. If you fear the Lord and walk in His ways, you can experience joy and contentment despite your boss, your coworkers, your position, your salary, your hours, and your commute. But your happiness must be found in Christ. You must fear God and walk in His ways. Today, will you make a commitment that you will begin every workday by expressing to the Lord your desire to fear Him? Will you pray that the Lord will help you to see your workplace as a mission field? *If Daddy’s happy, everybody’s happy!*<sup>12</sup>

[As you fear the Lord appropriately your work be blessed. But there is another blessing that follows . . .]

**3. Your family will be blessed (128:3–4).** This psalm is called the “Marriage Prayer” because it is sung at Jewish weddings. Verse 3a explains why: a blessing of fearing God is “**Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house.**” The writer pictures the wife as a “fruitful vine.”<sup>13</sup> There are three characteristics you need to know about vines: (1) *A vine clings*. It will take hold of whatever it is attached to and cling to it. The atmosphere in a home should be such that a wife wraps her “branches” around her husband for stability, security, and love. (2) *Vines not only cling, but they climb*. A healthy vine will spread out and take over a whole wall of the house. In other words, when a husband provides the right kind of atmosphere, his wife can develop her strengths and abilities. She can grow, becoming a better woman than she ever was. If you have a stunted, non-growing wife, the problem could be that she doesn’t have what she needs to cling to. She may not be getting the spiritual nurturing and nourishment she needs. Your wife should be able to say, “When I cling to my husband, things start growing out of my life that I didn’t know were there.” (3) *Vines also produce clusters of grapes*. Grapes start budding out everywhere. Grapes are used to make wine. A person who drinks enough wine will start becoming intoxicated. He will act differently because the wine makes him feel good. Maybe you get the picture. If your wife is a clinging, climbing, and fruitful vine, you are going to become an intoxicated man! You are going to start feeling different. You are going to become a happy and fulfilled man because your wife will intoxicate you with her love. It will flow naturally. *If Daddy’s happy, everybody’s happy!*

But before these types of results can occur, a vine has to have the right atmosphere to grow. Don't expect a summer wife if you bring home stormy winter weather. Don't expect a vineyard to grow if it's snowing and hailing when you come home. You say, "How am I supposed to create this atmosphere for my wife?" I have one simple answer: you out-serve her. Put her needs, concerns, and desires ahead of your own. Instead of coming home and sitting down, expecting to be waited on like King Tut, get up and help her.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, you must also lavish her with unconditional love. Regardless of how she cooks, cleans, encourages, and loves, you are responsible to love her. It is also critical that you find ways to touch your wife in a nonsexual fashion. Most women appreciate physical touch with no strings attached. These are simple ways that you can express love to your wife. Remember, the greatest thing you can do for your children is to love their mother. If you're married, the greatest testimony you can have is a marriage that portray Christ's love for His bride—the church (Eph 5:25). Husband, the vine is a very valuable plant, but it's also a weak and tender and needs to be supported and cherished. This is where you come in.

The psalmist now transitions from marriage to family. In 128:3b he declares that biblical happiness is: **"Your children like olive plants around your table."**<sup>15</sup> When it comes to children, the psalmist changes the imagery from a vine to olive plants. Notice they are not trees yet, but plants. In the holy land, a person who owned olive plants and olive trees owned something of great value. They are a symbol of longevity and productivity,<sup>16</sup> but they take time to mature. In fact, olive plants may not bear fruit for forty years! Yet, when olive plants and trees have matured they can provide fruit and income for twenty to thirty generations. This is astounding! Dad, you must provide a nurturing environment for your children if they're going to grow up to be olive trees. You must set the pace spiritually and even emotionally in the home. When you fear of the Lord, you will perpetuate your life, your faith, and your legacy through all the generations that are to come. That's the picture of children raised in a nurturing environment.

So how can you nurture your children? (1) *Eat with your kids around your table.* Perhaps you're thinking, are you some conservative, right wing, old school, homeschooled southern gentleman? No! The text says that happiness occurs "around your table." Too many men find their greatest joys at work, in recreation, possessions, etc. In doing so, they miss the greatest joys God has to offer. They are at home, around the table.<sup>17</sup> Take the opportunity to talk to your children, pray, discuss God Word, laugh, and make memories. If this isn't a habit for your family, as the spiritual leader, make it a habit. (2) *Pray with your children daily.* Find the time that works best for you. I like to pray with each of my children at night before they go off to bed. (3) *Disciple your kids.* I'm frequently asked what I'm going to do now that I'm done with my doctoral studies. Often I will jokingly say that I'm going to learn how to cook. But for those who really want to know—I'm going to pour into my children and be even more diligent to intentionally disciple them. This means teaching them how to fear God and including them in every area of my life. (4) *Guard your children from various evils.* Never assume that your children will make right decisions. They typically won't without your watchful eye. Monitor what your children are doing on the Internet and make sure you know who their friends are. Always assume that someone else wants to influence your children, and make sure you are the primary influencer. (5) *Don't merely spend time with your children, invest it.* In your interaction with your kids, reflect the love of their heavenly Father. Model God as their Father by how you treat them. Be kind, tender, compassionate, and patient. Make sure that you speak words of affirmation and physically touch your children. Show them Father God!

I realize that many Christian parents have experienced the heartache of a child who has rebelled against spiritual things. But depending on that child's age, the final chapter is yet to be written, and with God all things are possible. However, we must remember that there are no absolute promises in Scripture regarding the salvation of children—not even Proverbs 22:6 is such a promise.<sup>18</sup> Scripture says that normally children follow in the faith of their parents. It's more a "promise" to parents which says, "If you want your children to know the Lord, you have to know the Lord and commit to training them that way. Without that, there is much less chance for them to hear the truth and come to the Lord."<sup>19</sup> Please remember though: You are not responsible for your kid's decisions, you are responsible to be faithful.

In 128:4 the psalmist now returns to his initial principle (cf. 128:1): **“Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD.”**<sup>20</sup> As was mentioned above, a different Hebrew word is used for “blessed” (*barak*); nevertheless, the point is blessing follows obedience. Admittedly, obedience is not easy; it is difficult and costly. But it’s always worth it. Today, you may need to reaffirm your obedience to the Lord. The Lord is counting on you and so is your family. The psalmist has already suggested that your work, your marriage, and your family will typically be blessed if you obey God’s Word. So fight to obey the Lord. Will you be attacked? Yes! Satan is after men. He knows that if he can get men out of the picture, he can destroy the work environment, the family, the church, and ultimately the culture. So count the costs of obedience and takes steps to become a God fearin’ man. For *if Daddy’s happy, everybody’s happy!*

[The blessing of the individual and the family also leads to a final blessing . . .]

**4. The nation will be blessed (128:5-6).** The peace and prosperity of any nation depends largely on the integrity and godliness of her men. The psalmist writes, **“The LORD bless you from Zion, and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life”** (128:5). This use of “Zion” refers to God’s earthly dwelling place (cf. 65:1).<sup>21</sup> It’s been said, “As the father goes, so goes the home. As the home goes, so goes the nation.”<sup>22</sup> America will never be what her founders intended until we restore the sanctity of the home and that cannot be done unless godly men do it. As Christians, many of us are actively trying to vote, picket, sign petitions, get involved in politics, listen to conservative talk radio etc. These things are fine, but we have put the cart before the horse. We need to stop worrying about politics and get our own affairs in order. We need to first prioritize the fear of God and obedience to His commands. This will lead to experiencing true happiness at work and at home. When this happens, our nation will begin to change. God wants to use a remnant of men who are serious about Him.<sup>23</sup> God wants men who will say with Joshua, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh 24:15). May we have a manly militant mentality to influence our homes and our world for Christ.

The psalm closes in 128:6 with these words: **“Indeed, may you see your children’s children. Peace be upon Israel!”** From bride and groom to grandparents in just six verses! How time flies! Three generations are represented in the psalm, and all of them walking with the Lord. Have you ever looked ahead to the future generations of your family and purposed to leave a godly heritage to bear fruit long after you are gone from this earth? Someone said that we don’t get graded on our job as parents until we’ve seen our grandchildren. In that regard I’m reminded of 2 Timothy 1 where Paul mentions the faith that came to Timothy through his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice. It may be further than our grandchildren by which our legacy is truly determined. We in this generation should purpose to build on what God can do through us for the sake of future generations.<sup>24</sup>

The closing phrase: **“Peace be upon Israel!”**<sup>25</sup> is still a relevant prayer today. As believers in Jesus Christ, we should pray for the peace of Jerusalem. We should have a burden for Israel to turn to Christ. For our purposes, by way of application, we ought to pray: “Peace be upon America!” In this context, the Hebrew term *shalom* refers to well-being in the community, because the family was right with God, right with each other, and with other believers. When you get all of that lined up properly, guess what happens? You see the prosperity of the community. You see peace take over. You see a nation recover to spiritual health.

We desperately need to see God work in our country. Some Americans won’t get to see their children’s children because there is no peace. There is violence, corruption, and corrosion. The psalmist says, “If you want to fix the culture, then start with the house you live in.” How are we as Christian men going to help influence the leaders of our society if we are not willing to lead in love and nurture our own wives and children? Nurturing starts with your walk with God, moves to your relationship to your family, then to your involvement in the church, and soon, your city, county, and country is not the same.<sup>26</sup>

Have you ever heard of Royal Peck? It's possible that you haven't. But you most likely have heard of Nate Saint and Jim Elliott. Royal was a classmate of Saint and Elliott at Wheaton in the mid to late 40s. Although Saint and Elliott are well known Christian legends, I believe Royal Peck is as well. Royal is a friend of mine and provides care for my ninety-five year-old great Aunt. He has shown tremendous love to our entire family. Royal and his wife Elizabeth have served as missionaries to Italy and Albania for close to sixty years. They have preached the gospel to thousands and have planted numerous churches. Despite physical challenges, they continue to serve the Lord and make trips abroad even in their early 80s. Each of Royal's children and grandchildren are serving the Lord in full-time Christian ministry.

In the most recent addition of Royal's newsletter ("Peck's Paragraph"), the following accounts were shared: (1) A generous donor from Washington state underwrites Albanian radio outreach by giving \$20,000. (2) Two of the Peck's grandkids raise their full missionary support for Africa. (3) Another grandson and granddaughter prepare to head to Indonesia to be appointed to aviation duty. (4) Royal and Elizabeth returned to Italy to minister. I have been an avid reader of their newsletter and these stories are typical of what God is doing in and through the Peck's.<sup>27</sup> Royal and Elizabeth have charged the world through their children and grandchildren, not to mention their very own lives. They are an inspiration to me and they challenge me to the core of my being. They are true heroes to Lori and me. I hope and pray that Lori and I can have a similar impact upon the world. But this will only happen as we fear the Lord and invest in future generations. Men, may we experience true happiness in the fear of the Lord and see Him use our lives as legacies to impact generations to come.

### **Scripture References**

Psalm 128:1–6

Psalm 127:1–5

Psalm 34:7, 9; 85:9; 102:15

Proverbs 10:27; 14:27; 22:4

Ephesians 6:1–3

1 Peter 3:7

1 Timothy 6:6

### **Study Questions**

1. What does it mean to “fear the Lord” (Ps 128:1)? Do I fear the Lord? If so, in what way(s) do I fear the Lord? What does it mean to “walk in His ways?” How do I “walk in His ways?” How does my life exude a commitment to the Lord?
2. How important is a good work ethic (Ps 128:2)? Why has God promised to bless our work abundantly? What satisfaction do I get from the fruit of my labors? How is my work a blessing or a testimony to those around me? How can I honor God further in my work?
3. In what way(s) have I sought to nurture my wife (Ps 128:3)? Am I teaching my children how to have a happy home—a lifelong marriage and success in life? Am I preparing the next generation to be a godly generation? What legacy am I leaving my church and community? What will my kids remember about me when I’ve left this life?
4. In what way(s) has the Lord tangibly blessed my family and me (Ps 128:5)? How has God blessed me with prosperity (e.g., physically mentally, emotionally, financially, spiritually)? Do I have an attitude of gratitude for all that He has done for me?
5. As a parent, am I conscious of impacting my grandchildren (Ps 128:6)? Do I have a heart to transfer truth to the next generation? How can I impact my children and future grandchildren with the decisions I make today? Am I maintaining sufficient contact with my extended family to properly invest in them?

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> “Psalms 112 and 128 are companion meditations on the person who is blessed by God. According to Psalm 112 the good life consists of producing successful descendants, possessing wealth and riches, having a righteousness that endures forever, inner security that does not panic in adversity, and stability that outlasts persecution and looks in triumph on one’s enemies. Psalm 128 paints a picture of the good life that includes the enjoyment of the rewards of one’s labor, happiness, a fruitful wife, a family of children around the table, natural prosperity during one’s lifetime and grandchildren.” Leland Ryken, Jim Wilhoit, Tremper Longman et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1998), 343.

<sup>2</sup> Ps 128 expands some of the topics in Psalms 127, which concluded with “blessed . . . man” (127:5).

<sup>3</sup> Lawson writes: “To be blessed with divine favor is the primary message of the entire Psalter (e.g., Pss 1:1; 94:12; 112:1; 119:1–2).” Steven Lawson, *Psalms 76–150* (Nashville: Holman, 2004), Electronic ed.

<sup>4</sup> R. T. Kendall, *Higher Ground: Insights from the Psalms of Ascent* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 1995), 9–10. For further background discussion see Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101–150*. Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word, 1983), 219–21.

<sup>5</sup> See also Donald M. Williams, *Psalms 73–150*. The Communicator’s Commentary (Dallas: Word, 1989), 430.

<sup>6</sup> Scripture associates “the fear of the LORD” with blessing (Pss 112:1; 115:13; 128:1, 4). In the wisdom literature of the OT we learn that “the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov 1:7), “the beginning of wisdom” (Ps 111:10), and even “wisdom” itself (Job 28:28). The fear of the LORD” includes trusting in the LORD (Ps 115:11), being forgiven by Him (Ps 130:4), delighting in His Word (Ps 112:1), keeping His Word (Ps 119:63; Eccl 12:13), hating evil (Prov 8:13), and hoping in His loyal love (Ps 147:11).

<sup>7</sup> Steve Farrar, *Gettin’ There* (Sisters: Multnomah, 2001), 143.

<sup>8</sup> A. A. Anderson, *Psalms 73–150*. The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1972), 870.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, *Psalms 73–150*, 431.

<sup>10</sup> See Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Tony Evans, *Are Christians Destroying America?* (Chicago: Moody, 1996), 151.

<sup>12</sup> Lawson proposes: “Psalm 128’s theme: *Troubled travelers who fear and follow God will have fruitful families.*” Steven Lawson, *Psalms 76–150* (Nashville: Holman, 2004), Electronic ed.

<sup>13</sup> Kidner writes, “The vine was a symbol of not only fruitfulness (here explicitly so) but of sexual charm (Ct. 7:8ff.) and festivity (Jdg. 9:13).” Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73–150*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove; Leicester: InterVarsity, 1975), 443.

<sup>14</sup> Evans, *Are Christians Destroying America?*, 151–52.

<sup>15</sup> This verse does not mean that everybody is going to have a family, let alone a big family. It *does* mean that you’ll be a blessing to your family.

<sup>16</sup> Tremper Longman III, *Psalms*. The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, rev. ed (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 916.

<sup>17</sup> Nearly half of American dads younger than forty–five this Father’s Day say they have at least one child who was born out of wedlock. And the share of fathers living apart from children is more than double what it was not so long ago.” Read more: [www.theolympian.com/2011/06/16/1688783/roles-of-us-dads-diverging.html#ixzz1PSBU5IWS](http://www.theolympian.com/2011/06/16/1688783/roles-of-us-dads-diverging.html#ixzz1PSBU5IWS) accessed 16 June 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Prov 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.” The NET study notes state: “The expected consequence of such training is that it will last throughout life. The sages were confident of the character-forming quality of their training. However, proverbs are not universal truths. One can anticipate positive results from careful child-training – but there may be an occasional exception.”

<sup>19</sup> David Jeremiah, *Home Improvement Study Guide* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 82.

<sup>20</sup> Goldingday writes, “The stress on wives and children is a stumbling block to ancient commentators for whom celibacy was a key value. Amusingly, it can also be a stumbling block to modern commentators for whom a wife is more than a womb and daughters count as much as sons. Once more, when Scripture is saying something that we do not like, we do well to pay attention. Having rightly deplored the sexist attitudes that people could derive from the psalm, we would be wise to reflect on the significance (for men and for women) of having children, particularly if we are people who are inclined to downplay it. The psalm also speaks to modern Western attitudes by inviting men and women to value what happens inside the house and not to think that value attaches only to what happens outside, in the community, business, society, and politics.” John Goldingday, *Psalms: Psalms 90–150*. Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 513.

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<sup>21</sup> Anderson, *Psalms 73–150*, 871.

<sup>22</sup> Anderson, *Psalms 73–150*, 871: “This suggests that the fortunes of the individual are bound together with the prosperity of the community. The opposite is equally true: the welfare of the nation rests upon the ‘health’ of the family.”

<sup>23</sup> Eaton writes, “Sometimes the promise has to be fulfilled in a life after death. The rewards that come from the fear of the Lord might not involve prosperity or success in this world. Abraham was promised the land of Israel but never got much of it in this life. The blessing was beyond the grave. Some go through the whole of this life in pain. Some of our requests for healing and ease have to be received beyond the grave. We get foretastes in this life but they are only foretaste. We desire a better country, a heavenly one, where the promises are fully enjoyed. God has prepared for us a city, a heavenly Jerusalem where we shall find our faith more fully rewarded. Meanwhile we get some foretastes of what is to come.” Michael Eaton, *Psalms 111–150*. Preaching Through the Bible (UK: Sovereign World), forthcoming writes: “Sometimes the promise has to be fulfilled in a life after death. The rewards that come from the fear of the Lord might not involve prosperity or success in this world. Abraham was promised the land of Israel but never got much of it in this life. The blessing was beyond the grave. Some go through the whole of this life in pain. Some of our requests for healing and ease have to be received beyond the grave. We get foretastes in this life but they are only foretaste. We desire a better country, a heavenly one, where the promises are fully enjoyed. God has prepared for us a city, a heavenly Jerusalem where we shall find our faith more fully rewarded. Meanwhile we get some foretastes of what is to come.”

<sup>24</sup> Jeremiah, *Home Improvement*, 84.

<sup>25</sup> Ps 128:6b repeats the closing prayer of Ps 125:5.

<sup>26</sup> Evans, *Are Christians Destroying America?*, 153.

<sup>27</sup> If you would like more information on Royal and Elizabeth Peck please contact him at [royal@SGRresources.org](mailto:royal@SGRresources.org).