

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXXIV

April 21, 2024

No. 16

The Rewarded Home

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For over fifty years the Publishers Clearing House has been rewarding cash prizes to families as they open their doors to substantial winnings. Receiving a check for \$10,000.00 produces grins and the big \$15,000,000.00 sweepstakes prize generates even bigger smiles on faces that believe their set for lifetime happiness.

What is your guarantee that the money will actually be fully paid? The Clearing House receives the reward money from advertisers. What if our economy suddenly collapses and there is no advertising money available? When you thought of happiness for a lifetime, did you think you could die before you cashed any check? Not that these scenarios are highly probable, but it should cause us to ponder that we are not in control of all variables that can occur in life. Depending on advertisers or our continued good health is not the solid rock to build our lives upon.

God is in control of all things. One of Solomon's songs is Psalm 127. In five verses of praise, the short Psalm exalts God as builder, rewarder, and protector of our homes. He begins with, “*Except Jehovah build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except Jehovah keep the*

city, the watchman waketh but in vain” (verse 1). Many a fine built home has flooded upon land that is in the 100-year flood plain. While it is only a 1% chance of flooding in any given year, you will be encouraged to buy flood insurance if not mandated by local authorities to protect mortgage lenders. Man can also keep watch over a city 24-hours a day, but if God has determined that the city be conquered or destroyed, no warning or army can keep it safe.

Solomon's praise for building and rewarding the house is connected with the children being born into the household. Solomon writes, “*Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is His reward* (v. 3).

The birth rate in the United States has been declining for decades. The birth rate in 1950 was a little over 24 births to 1,000 people, compared to 2024 when it is expected to be a little over 12 births per 1,000 people. Currently, the fertility rate in the United States is an average of 1.6 births per woman, while 2.1 births is the number for keeping our population sustainable.

Many do not see children as a reward, but a problem, even a burden. To have your “quiver

full” of children is certainly not the reward that many would think is welcoming. But as a population ages and births decline, there is the issue of who is going to help sustain the aged. When there are not enough workers paying taxes to sustain the aged who can no longer work, where is society's safety net going to rise?

Solomon places the reward or heritage of children in the context of “*protection*.” The strength of the numerous youth is indeed a blessing when “*they speak with their enemies in the gate*.” In such moments, “*As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them*” (v.4-5).

Make God the builder, rewarder, and protector of your household. Putting Him first in how godly husbands and godly wives should interact with one another is certainly essential in building on a solid rock. If God blesses the relationship with children, then do not be overwhelmed. “*Rising up early,*” “*taking rest late,*” or “*eating the bread of toil,*” is “*vain*.” It is God “*who gives unto His beloved, sleep*” (v.2). Sweet rest awaits parents who disregard societal noise, and focus instead on raising godly children in the Lord.