

Psalm 125: Those Who Trust In The LORD.

Righteous believers are secure in the Lord, who will not let them be tested to the point of being shaken from their integrity. However, those who turn aside in unbelief will be banished from His blessings along with the wicked.

1-3: Believers are secure and unshakable. He compared them to **Mount Zion, which endures forever.**

The LORD **surrounds His people**, protecting them on all sides.

***Psalm 1:3** - He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.*

There's always the pressure of wickedness against righteousness, often brutal. God will not permit the rule of the wicked upon the righteous. (Isaiah 48:22).

4: They prayed that the LORD would bless **those who are good and upright in heart.**

5: Those who did turn aside to crookedness at that time would suffer the same fate as the wicked (they would be banished). So God's people should be loyal in their faith and should continue to pray for **peace** for the nation.

Psalm 126: Out Of Captivity.

This pilgrim psalm seems to reflect the struggle of the returned exiles. The pilgrims were joyful because the Lord had restored them to their land, but he prayed for a full restoration of the captives. He found comfort in the principle of sowing and reaping.

1-3: Speaking for the returned exiles, recalled the joy that they experienced **when the LORD brought them back.** They were greatly comforted and filled **with laughter** and joy. Comfort is suggested by the words "men restored to health". Also **the nations** realized that the LORD had done marvelous **things** for His people. It was a time of jubilation after a time of great sadness.

4: He prayed that the LORD would complete the restoration. He compared the returning exiles to **streams in the Negev** (the desert south of Judah), which in the dry season have little or no water but which in the rainy season overflow their banks. Under God's "showers of blessings" the highways from the east would be full of returning captives.

5-6: The principle of sowing and reaping.

After the land had been neglected for so long, it was almost impossible to till it. The planting would be difficult, but persistence would doubtless bring a harvest. The sowing with tears would signify anything someone did to help advance God's rule (encouraging people to respond to the Lord and return to the land). The joyful harvesting (reap) would then refer to other people who returned to the land in faith.

The pilgrims were convinced that continued labor, no matter how agonizingly difficult and frustrating, would result in more people returning to the land of Israel.

Jesus spoke of sowing as spreading the message of the kingdom, and spoke of the harvest as people who received Him by faith (Matthew 13:1-8,18,23).

Hosea 10:12 - *Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD, till He comes and rains righteousness on you.*

Psalm 127-128: Unless The LORD Builds.

This records the blessing of the Lord in a family/home.

1-2: **Builders** work on **a house** in **vain** unless the LORD builds it, **watchmen... guard in vain unless the LORD watches**, and being anxious over one's labor **for food** and working long hours is in vain. The point is that work done independently of God will be futile. But a person who trusts in the Lord will find rest. Without the Lord, all domestic work is in vain.

3-5. Children are a **reward from** the LORD. Sons help defend the family **like weapons (arrows) in the hands** of a mighty man. Sons are capable of defending the family in civil cases (at **the gate** civil cases were discussed and decided).

Psalm 128

After declaring the blessedness of those who fear the Lord, the psalmist enumerated some of the blessings of the good life and voiced his prayer for greater blessings.

1: The heavenly bliss of people **who fear the LORD** and obey Him.

2: A righteous person will find **prosperity** as a result of his work. Laboring independent of God is vain, but working under God and in obedience to His ways is fruitful.

3-4: The happiness and fruitfulness of those who eat the labor of their hands. At the religious festivals whole families gathered in Jerusalem.

5-6: They prayed for further blessings from God on people who fear Him. Those blessings include seeing Jerusalem prosper and living long enough **to see** one's grandchildren. Then the psalmist prayed for **peace** on the nation.

- Family was instituted by God and Him alone can uphold and secure it.
- God gives children; they are a defense and continuation of His plans.
- A man labors for the welfare of his family and enjoys it.
- A wife is very instrumental as a mother and domestic manager in support of the man.
- Children are raised in the fear of the LORD...