

Psalm 128  
Holy Happiness!

**Tuesday, January 7, 2025 ▫ Read Psalm 128**

Questions from the Scripture text: What sort of song is this (superscript)? Who is blessed (v1a)? What does he do (v1b)? What does he eat (v2a)? What will his condition be like (v2b)? What will his wife be like (v3a-b)? What will his children be like (v3c-d)? How does v4 summarize this? Who will bless him from where (v5a)? With what blessing (v5b)? For how long (v5c)? With what personal result (v6a)? And what corporate result (v6b)?

**What happiness does the Lord give?** Psalm 128 looks forward to the opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these six verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the Lord, Who is our happiness, makes us happy in His blessing us in our work and families, and especially in His church.**

Happy! That's the first word in this Psalm (translated "blessed" in v1). This happiness comes by the fear of YHWH—living in wonder at Him and s worship unto Him. What does walking in His ways (v1b) look like?

It looks like diligent, fruitful labor (v2a).

Happy marriage, with a thriving wife (v3a), who is at the control center of the household (v3b).

Children who shoot up green and alive (v3c-d where "plants" is more "shoots") but with the promise of thousands of years of strength and productivity.

And biblical blessedness goes beyond the home to the church. The blessing comes both from Zion (v5a) and for the good of Zion (aka Jerusalem, v5b). The two are tied together. His hope and happiness is that his children's children (v6a) would be used of God in giving peace, shalom, to the church (v6b). O let us fear the Lord, so that we will not only define happiness according to His Word, but obtain that happiness by His grace!

How does your definition of earthly happiness compare to the happiness described in this Psalm? In particular, how does the corporate prosperity and peace of the church relate to it?

*Sample prayer: Lord, we have our happiness in knowing You and fearing You. You have made us happy in our work, our marriages, and our generations. And, particularly, You have made us happy in Your church, which is Your holy mountain and your holy city. Now, as we gather to You as Your Israel, give us to rejoice in You with her, we ask through Christ, AMEN!*

**Suggested Songs: ARP127 "Unless the LORD Build Up the House" or TPH127A "Unless the Lord the House Shall Build"**

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

Psalm 128. These are God's words, a song of a sense. Blessed is everyone who fears Yahweh, who walks in his ways? When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy and it should be well with you. Your wife shall be like a fruitful Vine in the very heart of your house.

Your children like olive plants, all around your table. Behold, thus shall the man. Be blessed who fears Yahweh. Yahweh bless you, out of Zion. And may you see the good of Jerusalem or the days of your life? Yes, may you see your children's children? Peace. Be Upon a trail.

Amanda sends this reading of God's inspired and inerrant word in which he teaches us to be happy. the word that's translated blessed. here. And The word happy in verse 3 and blessed in verse 4. Not, not the word of bless in verse 5. but the other ones, they're all from the Hebrew, root for the word, happy Maybe the rest of the congregation not spending a lot of time in Hebrew, like I do.

they don't get the same smile for the same reason that I see that I get when I see little Asher running around because his name means happy, that's the root word here. And God is teaching us to be happy. I have friend who's a minister and he used to do a lot of flying probably still does.

In fact, he it's one of those big shot speakers at conferences and such and we used to talk about evangelizing together. And one of the ways that he evangelizes, If he's on a plane or in an airport or something and someone asks him what do you do?

He says I teach the science of how to be happy perfectly, happy forever and obviously it gets a response out of a lot of people. And, And that's true. That's what's Psalm 128. Is. It's how to be happy. And of course the great way to be happy is to be happy in the Lord himself.

It's just what we learned in Proverbs 8 22-36 yesterday thinking about The pre-creation, the extra Creation outside of the creation into trinitarian within the Trinity Trinity. Personal interaction. The interaction between the persons of the godhead and the father, always delighting in the Sun, and the sun always rejoicing before the father and delighting in the father.

Which is pictured in. John chapter 1. Which does not use the ordinary word for with when it says the word was with God. But it uses the preposition from which we get the word face. The word was toward God or even better facing God, rejoicing before him.

And so God is happy in himself. He refers to himself in the Bible as the ever blessed God and he has created us Happy happy, as everyone, who fears, Yahweh, who treats Yahweh rightly, according to the greatness of his glory. And then, of course, being creatures. Treating Yahweh rightly also according to the goodness of his grace and you combine Proper.

Respect for response to valuing and interacting with the greatness of his glory and the goodness of his grace. And you get not a silly flippant. Superficial familiarity. But a profound reverent deeply joyous intimacy. Happy happy is the one who fears Yahweh. Verse 1 and then Behold. Thus saw the man be Happy who fears Yahweh in verse 4.

And so, our happiness is in the Lord himself, but that doesn't mean that we don't do anything in the creation or that we don't enjoy the creation. It is the Creator's creation and it's according to his design and there are in particular creation ordinances. What we call creation ordinances, those things that God had given man to do and to enjoy, and to have from before, even the fall,

Take dominion over all the Earth and subdue it. to work in the creation, imitating God. Created Creation in a procedural way. Who could speak it in an instant, all into existence, but didn't. He worked for six days establishing a pattern for us of working for six days and he worked in a progressive way in which He created it first chaotic and empty, and brought a, an increasing amount of order and thriving, and flourishing, and giving us to do the same.

And there's some repeal of the Fall. Then in this first creation, ordinance, in the beginning, in verse 2, when you eat from the labor of your hands, remember the curse, in the fall, was the ground was cursed on account of us by this, the sweat of your brow.

It'll be toilsome. It'll produce thorns. And thistles, and We were designed to be created to be happy in our working. The material world is God's creation for good. To be enjoyed as a gift from him and in which to be employed as images of and servants unto him, there's all these wonderful creational things to do.

And so one way to be happy in God is to receive your work as from him and do your work as for him. That's part of living in the fear of Yahweh. And that's part of how he has given us to be happy. Happy in doing your school and happy and doing your chores.

Happy and serving one another happy in taking care of The things that he has given, you happy and growing things, and making things and learning and doing, as well as you can with what you learn. And being productive. Not only being able to eat from your own labor, but remember, What the Apostle says, let him who stole steel no longer, but let him work with his hands, not just that he may eat and be happy in Psalm 128 to two-way, but that he may produce enough that others may eat, let him work with his hands so that he may have something to share with those who are in time of need.

So the the happiness of the creation ordinance of Of work. When other creation ordinance was marriage, he made them male and female says in Genesis 1, Matthew 19 Jesus. But quotes first Genesis 1, when talking about marriage he who made them from the beginning, made them male and female, but then he hurries up and he pairs that with Genesis 2 because Genesis 2 Zooms in on the making of male and then female.

Give us. Blessed happiness of the institution of marriage, the man made as Head and especially spiritual head and provider seeing God provide for him and do all these things as his own head, and God gave him the words. Of the Covenant of life in the garden about the tree and so forth.

And only then Does he make the woman and the man? Names, the woman he is. Her head, but it's not good for him to be alone. She's a helper. Exactly corresponding to him, meaning of The creation, only this man and this woman are made in the image of God.

So she exactly corresponds to him and The Lord providentially brings this particular woman to this particular man. so that Marriage is Still today. However the Providence of God brings her no no man today gets his wife from a rib of his that has been cut out and been fashioned by God into a woman, but it is the same God who in his Sovereign Providence.

Brings a particular woman to a particular man. So, that she is for you, or he is for you and the Blessed institution of marriage. And if he fears Yahweh and walks in his ways, Which includes the keeping of the seventh commandment includes, keeping of all the Commandments lives with her according to knowledge.

First Peter 3 who His wife and gives himself up for her and especially unto her. Sanctification Ephesians chapter 5 and In other places. This man is blessed with a wife who is like a fruitful Vine in the very heart of your house. So, The blessedness of marriage, the thriving of his wife, the fruitfulness of his wife, he doesn't just labor so that he can be fruitful.

follows the Lord and labors and seeks that she would be fruitful. Well, there's the creation. Coordinates of work, there's a creation, ordinance of marriage. There's a creation, ordinance of multiplying, be fruitful and multiply and fill the Earth. And that is how the Lord is blessing. This man in the second part of verse 3.

Our children like olive plants. The word there is not the word for tree. It's the the word for shoot. And the verb for all that is being translated all around your table is the verb for surrounding. you would use it for going around something in a circle. Or if you're talking about multiple things or multiple parties, you might use it for instance of an enemy surrounding and circling here.

Uh the idea is if you're doing like a time lapse of this man's life, as he fears the Lord and he walks with him, and his wife is being fruitful. What fruit is? She especially bearing she's bearing. These Olive shoots and in the time lapse the kids shoot up and Sprout and crawl and all around the table.

and the, the blessedness Of that glimpse into. Life as God created and designed it to be in these creation ordinances with work and marriage and multiplying and it's not just any sort of shoot, it's an olive shoot. There are olive trees still today. in Israel. Mom and I saw them.

When we were there that were around in the time of the Lord, Jesus, Thousands of years. Of producing food and fuel for light. And and oil that can be medication and All of this productivity and and blessedness and richness richness. for a thousand Generations worth The one who loves him, loves the Lord and keeps his Commandments.

You think about the second commandment, the one who properly fears yahweh. And if he fears, y'all play his first table of the law second commandment. And, second table of the law here, especially in his marriage and parenting. And what a joy to see your children. Springing up still in their green Chute.

Phase of their life and their existence. not yet. established in place not yet. With the hardened wood on the outside and bearing offspring of their own. And yet in this green and growing and Alive and full of promise. And not just one, but many of them surrounding the table.

you know, some people Call those who have lots of children from Psalm 127 quiverful. You know, if you were going to start using biblical analogies like that, you might, you might call them, Table surrounders. So, it doesn't have the same. ring to it but here are here are the images of the blessedness.

Well, there aren't just creation ordinances if you fear Yahweh Because the point of the creation was not the creation. Man fell. And the creation was cursed on account of him and has been bound to corruption and Decay, but this was not like the messing up of a plan. A In which?

The Lord had to revert to plan B after man, messed it up. Now, the point of it was Redemption. The point of it was the adoption of those who in the Lord would redeem in his son. So that even the creation, which has been groaning in bondage to corruption, and Decay would come Rejoice and participate in.

The Glorious freedom of the children of God, especially in the day of their adoption. Oh, the final ratifying of their adoption, which is the Redemption of our bodies, wonderful language from the middle of Romans 8. And so, the creation ordinances are followed by and reach their climax in. A Redemption ordinance.

The blessedness that comes from Zion. The gospel preached from out of the. On Earth which the Lord has established for himself, which has The words of God and which has the ministry of of God, Those whom the Lord has sent has sent to minister. First in anticipation of Christ to now under Christ and it has the ordinances of God the the sacraments and church discipline.

And so forth. And so there's blessing that comes from Zion above, of course. where God himself is and or has made his glory, especially to be known. there's blessing that comes from God himself, as he sends his son into the world and the fullness of the time, Born of a woman under the law and so forth.

And Because we are his children since the spirit of his son into our hearts. Indeed the Lord bless you from Zion, give you that blessing, that is him himself. But the Lord also bless you from Zion in the Bible way of using that language to talk about his visible church and the the benefits and blessings that he has ordained to give.

In that institution in, in that field or That Dragnet or that tree, or that batch of flour to use all of those. metaphors from The Parables in Matthew chapter 13, in which we

have been recently, the Lord bless you out of Zion. May you see the good of Jerusalem?

So as a Redemption ordinance to be blessed in and from and by the church there's also a Redemption ordinance to be a blessing to the church. That that's the first place. Of our service that not only would we receive the ministry from on high Apostles, prophets, evangelist Pastor teachers.

But then that we would speak the truth in love that we would be joints that Supply something of the strength of the body that we would be members of the body that have a share to do as The hole is built up into Christ and the Blessed, man. The, the man whose happiness, is defined the way the Lord defines happiness.

what makes him happy is to see the health of the to see the church prosper, and grow, and Thrive. And so may you see the good of Jerusalem? Well. Unless his heart is conformed to the heart and mind to the Lord as open to us in scripture.

The seeing the good of Jerusalem is not going to be so much happiness but oh the more you learn to think like the Lord, the more your heart and mind is conformed to that of the Lord. Jesus Christ, the more, you love the visible Are careful even of the baby wheat and drag the net for the sake of the good fish.

But love the church itself, who Rejoice over the field because of the Hidden treasure. That's in it and you give all to buy the field. Like the Lord. Jesus gave all to purchase the church. And you see the Lord Jesus is the one who does all of these beautiful things.

He's a merchant in beautiful pearls. Sake of purchasing the one pearl of great price, all of the other, great and good works that he has done, especially for the obtaining of that one, good work. That one great work. finally gathered fully Sanctified church in the last day. The more your heart is conformed to that of Christ.

The more you will love the church. The more you will come like, Psalm 128 and verse 5 and say, you know, what really makes me happy. See the good of Jerusalem. To see the church healthy to see the church reforming in her Doctrine and worship to see the church, Reviving in the Life of Christ in every heart and every life, and every home, Yeah, in obedience, and Holiness, and Zeal and service in the experiential knowledge of God.

And to see this not just in one generation, but generation after generation. The the children who are surrounding the table like olive plants, Olive shoots, in verse three, are part and parcel of this good of Jerusalem in verse five. You don't just have one table surrounded with olive shoots, but each of these shoots eventually get their own table and they start to be surrounded by olives shoots.

These happy ones who are happy in the Lord and happy in the creation ordinances that he has given them and happy in the Redemption ordinances. In their participation in and desire for the good of the church. They multiply these happy people. So that more and more are happy with the same happiness, indeed.

This is how the Shalom the entire well-being, and wholeness of Israel knowing that the Lord God himself is for them. It comes about as the Lord Works. In these happy people. These happy workers these happy Warriors. These happy servants of his church. Yahweh bless you, out of Zion. May you see the good of Jerusalem, all the days of your life?

Yes. May you see your children's children? Peace. Upon Israel. Now that's real happiness. Our flesh will want to Define. happiness in the use of created things alone. And in the misuse of created things. But we must not give in to our fleshliness. We must find our happiness first in the Lord.

And having our happiness in him according to his design in creation and Redemption. To be happy in walking with him, in his ways in the creation ordinances especially here at work. And Marriage. And Parenting and we could, of course, add the wonderful creation ordinance of the Sabbath there and those book ends being happy in the Lord himself on the seventh day.

The happy day, the Blessed day and Sanctified day. In his Redemption ordinances, especially Which is more. which lays hold of the, the Sabbath in a special way but especially, in his church, from his church unto his church. Giving ourselves to that and finding our happiness in her good.

So let's pray and ask that God would make us happy. Our gracious. God our glorious God Father Son and Holy. We confess that you are. The ever blessed God and we desire as you have designed and even spoken to us just now from your word. That we would be your ever blessed people.

By having our happiness from, and especially in you yourself. And so Grant, according to this portion of your scripture, The ministry of your spirit, to make us happy. We ask in Christ's name. Amen.