

PSALMS 127

Prosperity Comes from the LORD.

INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (11-20-96).
- B. A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon. "Without God, Man's Labor Is In Vain."
- C. Many modern "scholars" want to deny the attribution of this psalm to Solomon in the superscription, but others point out some very valid reasons for accepting it as from Solomon. Delitzsch listed three reasons but they are more technical than would probably be profitable for our study. I have more confidence in the ancient Hebrew superscriptions than the speculations of modern scholars.

THE TEXT.

- 127:1** Unless the LORD builds the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless the LORD guards the city,
The watchman keeps awake in vain.
- 2** It is vain for you to rise up early,
To retire late,
To eat the bread of painful labors;
For He gives to His beloved *even in his sleep*.
- 3** Behold, children are a gift of the LORD,
The fruit of the womb is a reward.
- 4** Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
- 5** How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;
They will not be ashamed
When they speak with their enemies in the gate.

COMMENTS.

- A. **[v1]** This literary form is similar to the proverbs with the balanced parallelisms. The focus is on the futility of human effort if God is not in the work.
- B. **[v2]** Again, the focus is the futility of working from early to late or any other sacrifice if God does not bless the effort. These two verses certainly fit Solomon's building God's house and many of his other great works.
But Kinder suggested, that "Like much Solomon's wisdom, the lessons of this psalm were mostly lost on him. His building, both personal and in the Temple, became reckless (1Kgs. 9:10-19; esp. 11), his kingdom a ruin. His marriages were a disastrous denial of God (see 1Kgs. 11:1-6).
In fact, Solomon's reign over Israel was an unqualified disaster, the scandal of 40 generations. The most pitiful thing of all being that the Jews fell in love with it, a love that blinded their eyes to the Christ when He came. Their rejection of the Messiah was solely because the leaders of the nation wanted nothing, either in heaven or on earth, as much as they wanted the restoration of that godless earthly kingdom."
- C. **[v3-5]** These verses praise the large family which was highly respected in those days. It gave him economic power because the young men and women could be very productive and also it gave him some protection to have a large clan to back him up in disputes; "...shall speak with their enemies in the gate."