

A Blessed Family Life

Rev. A. A. Brugge - Scripture: Psalm 128

Sing: Psalter 372:1, 2

Read: Psalm 128

Sing: Psalter 360:1-4

Sing: Psalter 444:5, 7

Sing: Psalter 360:5

With the help of the Lord, we wish to meditate on Psalm 128. This psalm focuses our attention on *A Blessed Family Life*. We will consider two main thoughts:

1. Missing and seeking the Lord
2. Finding and adoring the Lord

1. Missing and seeking the Lord

Psalm 128 is another Song of Degrees, another pilgrim's song. Like Psalms 120 to 127, Psalm 128 was sung as the pilgrims entered the temple to meet God there. This might raise the question in our mind, 'Can a holy God meet with unholy creatures, 'just like that''? No, that cannot happen 'just like that,' since God punishes sin, because He hates our sin and unrighteousness. Yet He can commune with sinners because of the sacrifice that the pilgrims will offer in the temple court. Perhaps there have been pilgrims who sung, "*Then, at Thy sacred altar bending*" (Psalter 417:2). Indeed, in the temple court the smoke of the sacrifices was rising up to heaven and rivers of blood were shed.

Boys and girls, you know that these sacrifices were not sufficient to save us from our sins and to reconcile us to God, but that they pointed to a different, a sanctified, a perfect sacrifice. It pointed to the Lord Jesus, the Son of God. Among those pilgrims undoubtedly there will have been those who sung these psalms without thinking. But let's not point the finger at them, because how often is it

not true of us in church that we sing without thinking? Then we have no notion whatsoever of the richness and depth behind the words.

There would also have been others who felt intensely involved and who felt a certain satisfaction from partaking in the singing and the outward religious service. A third group would perhaps have sung these psalms as a petition. But the most important question is not what was sung, but how these songs were sung. That applies to us as well, does it not?

The pilgrims have sung the gloomy tones of Psalm 127, which includes the words *'in vain'* three times! These words were as heavy hammer blows which repeated in a monotonous tone that everything outside of God is in vain, and anything that is not of God is in vain. You can feel yourself to be rich and you can feel at ease, but yet you are living outside of God and Christ. Therefore, you still miss everything in life. In vain! You might perhaps have everything your heart desires, and still live a life in vain. You might perhaps feel sad, because one of your wishes in life is not fulfilled; you feel cheerless and un comforted, because you are missing something; it is as a cross that painfully rubs against your shoulder and wounds it. Your life's experience is: in vain! Where the fear of the Lord is lacking, then everything in our life ultimately is in vain.

Psalm 128 extends the theme of Psalm 127 and goes deeper into what the fear of the Lord actually is, or what the practice of godliness actually is. The poet of this psalm explains what it means to fear the Lord in everyday life, and he talks about it in a very practical way. He shows that God is not a stingy God and that He wants to be a generous Fountain of blessings in married life, in family life, and for future generations. It is no wonder that this psalm is quoted in the form used for the confirmation of marriage. We often say, *"Children are an heritage of the Lord"* (Psalm 127:3). That's beautifully said and it is true, and it is also consistent with the form for the confirmation of marriage and this Psalm 128.

Congregation, we should hold on to the fact that children are part of the heritage of the Lord. They are the Lord's blessing. Do we deserve the blessing of receiving children? When you do not receive the blessing of having children, then

that can be a real struggle for you. When you do not receive the blessing of receiving a spouse, then that can be a real cross and struggle for you.

But this psalm does not begin with talking about children and marriage. We should carefully read what it says. The psalm begins by talking about the attitude of our hearts! Read along with me, "*Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in His ways*" (verse 1). So, all those who fear the LORD are blessed. In contrast, this also means that all those who do not walk in His ways are cursed and miserable. You might now be thinking, your words are very sharp, pastor. But, congregation, when we read Psalm 128, verse 1, we cannot escape that this conclusion is implied. God's Word is so honest and it warns us without beating about the bush that it will not go well with them who do not walk in His ways. Beloved, permit yourselves to be warned!

Congregation, if by grace we are walking in the ways of the Lord, does the Lord then always grant us what our heart desires? Does the Lord then automatically give us what we ask Him for in our marriage life? Will our prayers for receiving children then always be heard? No, that is not what this text is saying! It is not right to make God's Word say things for our own benefit which it does not actually say. God blesses in many different ways. He is the God of manifold grace, as it says in 1 Peter 4:10. And, indeed, children are an inheritance of the Lord. When the Lord grants a couple the blessing of receiving children, then it is always at His time. We are not in control of that. How often do we hear in our times, 'We are now focusing on building our career, but we will have children in five years' time.' If you reason like that, then you do not see children as an inheritance of the Lord. If you may know that children are an inheritance, then you know that they are born according to God's providence, and that means it is never too early and never too late.

Some of you might be sitting here with wounded hearts thinking, 'But for our marriage the reality is raw and harsh, and it disregards our desires and feelings. We are longing so much for God's blessing in our marriage.' Let's go back to the beginning of the psalm, "*Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in His ways.*" That is where it begins, beloved. Is that your prayer? Is that the longing with which you wake up and with which you go to bed? Those who

fear the Lord walk in His ways. They do not go in their own strength on the path of life. They no longer choose their own ways. They who walk with the Lord commit their ways unto the Lord to live in the fear of His Name.

Where does the fear of the Lord come from, beloved? Do you receive that because you are a churchgoer? Or because you have done your best and now hope that the Lord will reward you for it? Oh, that Roman Catholic inclination is so deep-rooted in our hearts! We still so often think that we can be saved by what we do and do not do. Do you know where the fear of God comes from? From Zion! That is the place where the sacrifices were brought, and there it was merited. The pilgrims will have confessed that the blessing is not to be found with us! The pilgrims know that they themselves will not bring forth any good thing. They knew that they needed the Lord to bless them from Zion.

Congregation, do you lack the fear of the Lord? Fearing the Lord affects your whole life; it requires a total dedication to Him, to serving Him and following His laws. The fear of the Lord is the restoration of what I, together with Adam, have lost in Paradise. To walk in His ways is to be restored from my wanderings into wrong paths. After the Fall in Paradise, I completely lost the right way, and outside of Him this will lead to my eternal destruction.

This psalm begins and ends by pointing to the Lord Himself, "*The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion*" (verse 5). That is how these Songs of Degrees end, with His blessing! We have just sung this at the beginning of the worship service:

*And unto you be giv'n,
The joys that Zion doth afford,
The richest blessing of the Lord.*

(Psalter 372:2)

'Yes,' you might be quietly saying in your heart, 'that is all nice and true, but this doesn't help me. It only confronts me with the raw and painful reality of my life.' I realize that. For example, at home you still have all those lovely family photos. The children were yet young and when you look at such a picture, it is almost as if you are looking at the ideal image of a happy family, a father and a mother with their children. But now you might be a widow, or a widower, or you

have separated. So when you look at those nice family photos, you think, 'It was so good when we were together; what a beautiful family we had.' But now you have a sorrow which as it were eats you up and consumes you. Your prayers are multiplied, and questions come up in your mind, one after the other. Yes, when the children were still young they listened to the Bible stories, but now ... now they are gone; gone into the world, onto the broad way. When they were young, they sat next to you in church; they were always there. At school they received the instructions from the Bible. But now? It has all become so different now. This fills your heart with a silent sorrow, because your children have turned their back to the Word of God and His service. You would almost be inclined to put a big question mark behind Psalm 128. After all, you feel like this psalm paints an ideal picture which cannot be attained, which is beyond our reach.

Dear friends, may I say one more time that we have to begin at the beginning. Ultimately, what do we deserve? Someone once said to me, 'The Lord has not had much pleasure from me.' When the Lord came into his life with His Holy Spirit, he learned to see that he deserved nothing, absolutely nothing. We think we have a right to so many things, but it would be a blessing if we came to see what rights the Lord has. He has a right to our heart and life, also to our marriage life and family life! But in our foolishness, we claim our imagined rights and abuse God's right to our whole life by wasting our life living as we please.

When we read, "*Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in His ways,*" we need to realize that this also applies to God's children. We should not think that those who walk in God's ways and who are led by the Holy Spirit, will automatically have everything go smoothly in life. Do those family photos not often remind God's children about the raw reality? In those earlier times it was so good in the family, but now everything seems to be broken and shattered! Those children who have departed from God's ways and have chosen their own ways may even include your own children. Perhaps there are some of your children who are bound by the chains of the spirit of the present times. What a sorrow that is in your life; it is there every day. You do not see the Spirit of God working in them, but the spirit of this world that is increasingly driving a wedge between them and God's Word and commandments.

Young people in the congregation, is this what is happening with you right now? Do not forget that you have been baptized and that the Lord has the right to your life. Please do not let the spirit of this world lead you astray. I want to beseech you: Do not let the spirit from the pit of destruction entice you; do not let the spirit of this world entice you, because this world will pass away together with its lusts. It will certainly lead to the place of eternal punishment and I don't want you to end up there.

Or is it your desire as an unworthy sinner, who has no rights, to know God. If that is the case, then it has become your prayer:

*O let Thy Spirit be my constant aid,
That all my ways may ever be directed
To keep Thy statutes, so to be obeyed,
That from all error I may be protected.*

(Psalter 428:2)

Let me ask the question once more. Is the path of life of those who fear the Lord always strewn with roses? You should ask Asaph and Job, or Jeremiah, for example. The answer they all will give you is, "*There is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; ... to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not*" (Ecclesiastes 9:2). By nature, that erroneous thinking is so deeply rooted in our hearts! We think that when we seek the Lord and are faithful churchgoers, then we deserve at least a somewhat reasonable life. Then at least we should have fewer cares and difficulties, fewer crosses and less sorrow than worldly people, don't we?

How is this now in the heart of those who really have learned to know the Lord in their life? In the life of God's children, the Lord was the First One. He set His children still and caused them to be sorrowful over their sin. He made them to seek for the eternal and incorruptible things. Every child of God will confess that if He had not been the First in their life, then they would have continued straying in paths that are not the Lord's. And then? Then God's children may think that they actually deserve to be treated somewhat more gently by the Lord and that they are entitled to walk on a somewhat smoother path of life. Not too many thorns, not too many thistles. But how wrong and mistaken such thoughts are, beloved!

This psalm is mainly about family life. "*Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in His ways.*" Perhaps you say, 'To be frank, that is not the case with our family; we do not walk in His ways. We are yet outside of the kingdom of God.'

Well, at least you are honest, and that is always a good thing. But, nevertheless, that in itself raises important questions. So what are you giving your children? Are you giving them an empty will? I hope you realize that I am now not talking about all kinds of earthly possessions which you could leave to your children. We are dealing here about much deeper issues. Do you give your children an empty will? Do you never speak about the Lord and His service at home? Boys and girls, is this something that you are missing at home, namely, that after a church service, nothing is said or discussed at home about the service of God? Of course, then I do not mean such conversations about the sermon which was too long, or too short, or too difficult. Neither do I mean such comments about whether or not the minister spoke enough to the children during the service. The all-important question is: What does the Word of God have to say to us?

Are you lacking these things in your marriage? Do you lack the blessing of the Lord, to serve the Lord together with your husband or wife and to walk in His ways? Even if you miss this, because you and your family are yet unconverted, let this then be a cause of sorrow and repentance. Let it bring you on your knees with folded hands, pleading and petitioning the Lord. Let nothing stand in the way of seeking the highest Good for your children. Even if you cannot say you are doing it with your heart, don't let that stop you. This is not the measuring stick anyway.

Do you know how you can best fear the Lord? When you look up to Him, as Psalm 123 instructs us to do. Look up to Him as a servant who highly esteems his master, or as a maiden who looks up to her mistress. Will you seek the fear of the Lord? Truly, our path is not always strewn with roses, but it is still always true that we must "*fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man*" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Pray this prayer everyday: 'Lord teach me to fear Thee.'

Teach me that my agenda isn't what's most important, but Thy service is. Grant that instead of my questioning, my desires and my things being barriers to Thee, instead everything related to Thee may become the most important thing in my life.'

How can this become possible? Without the Lord working in us through His Word and Spirit, we would never miss Him and seek Him. But by God's grace people begin to ask, 'Incline my heart to the fear of Thy Name.' Congregation, seek this grace! To seek something implies effort. To walk in God's ways is not something that happens by itself. No, it's not natural for us to walk in His ways, and neither do we desire it. By nature there is only one thing that lives in our hearts which is that I want it like this, I think that, and I feel it this way. For this reason you must continually pray, "Lord, teach Thou me!"

And what a wonder that the Lord desires to teach us to walk in His ways, as that is what He wants to be asked for. This is what parents may teach their children so that they will do it after them, in the realization that the act of walking in God's ways in itself does not save, but that He alone, who hears and answers prayer, can save. Boys and girls, maybe you sometimes ask, 'May we ask the Lord anything?' Yes, you may, but you always must add, "*Thy will be done*" (Matthew 6:10).

Congregation, this psalm contains many different issues and causes various feelings and emotions to rise to the surface in a short period of time. But yet it is true that we may lay all the things this psalm brings before our mind in prayer before the Lord. Calvin's motto was, 'Let me be consumed in His service.' Has this become your prayer? Though you may have been married for forty, fifty, or even fifty-five years, do continue to petition the Lord that you may support one another in all things related to temporal and eternal life? Are we still a support to one another?

Before we consider our second thought, let us first sing Psalter 444, stanzas 5 and 7.

*Like as a father looketh with compassion
Upon his children, lo, in such a fashion*

*The Lord doth look on them that fear and trust.
He knoweth that our frame is weak and humble;
How void of strength, how prone we are to stumble!
And He is mindful that we are but dust.*

*Jehovah's mercy floweth, like a river,
From everlasting, and abideth ever
On those that love and worship Him with awe.
His righteousness shall bless the habitations
Of children's children through the generations
That keep His covenant and obey His law.*

2. Finding and adoring the Lord

What is it to fear the Lord? It is to esteem Him highly, to think highly of Him. It also means that we know who God is, not as we think He should be, but to know Him as He really is! Do you know what else is included in fearing the Lord? To lay my time, my energy, my whole being, and everything in His hands. You ask what it means to fear the Lord. It is to expect everything we need from Him. Does He then give only what is pleasant? No, He knows what is good for us. He guides us through this life, and for the sake of His Son, He can and will be gracious and good to us. Congregation, shall I connect the dots? Do you know where the fear of the Lord comes from? Not from you and me, never! No, Isaiah 11:2 says, "*The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him.*" The spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of the fear of the LORD, was in the Servant of the Lord! Psalm 128 is empty if we do not read Jesus' Name in it! The poet of this psalm is focused on God's Son. The Lord Jesus alone is centre stage for him, and the poet desires to expect everything from Him alone.

Fathers and mothers, do you expect everything from Jesus in your family life? You are to be evangelists in your own home. That is our urgent calling, to speak with our children about the things that are necessary to know. It is our solemn duty to pray with them as small and dependent creatures. Don't be afraid to show that as parents we are weak and dependent creatures. Sometimes as parents we no longer know how it all must go. True, we are called to raise our children, but we are dependent on the Lord for the wisdom that it takes to raise

them. By the way, that also applies to being enabled to walk in His ways, whether we are married, with or without children, single, separated, or old and infirm. For everything we need that prayer, 'Lord, wilt Thou be our Guide upon our path of life, from the beginning to the end?' Those who have learned to pray this unconditionally have received a precious gift from the Lord. What a blessing it is when we have learned to pray together, 'Lord, do Thou what is good in Thy eyes, and may we be granted to follow Thee unconditionally?'

Beloved, the way the Lord works is so simple, and in those ways He is so near unto His children. That is why you may pray, "*O let Thy Spirit be my constant aid, that all my ways may ever be directed*" (Psalter 428:2). Who is aware that they need to pray like this? If it is well, we all do! Boys and girls, young people of the congregation, maybe your parents had you baptized seven, eight, ten, twelve, or fourteen years ago. Have you learned to know the depth and the riches of Holy Baptism in your life? Or do you find everything difficult to understand? Do you perhaps say, 'I do not really understand the meaning of the water of baptism'? Do you perhaps also find the sermons difficult to understand? Then please pray, "*O let Thy Spirit be my constant aid, that all my ways may ever be directed.*" You cannot ask this too often. And, congregation, even if you have become old and have been granted to learn something of the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the ways of the Lord, then still the prayer for God's direction remains so necessary. 'Lord, wilt Thou go before me, because only then can I follow safely. If I go before, then Thou wilt not follow me, and then I will perish. May I learn to follow Thee in Thy ways?'

Dear friends, Psalm 128 mentions a few things by which the Lord shows that His presence goes with them. It says in verse 2, "*For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands.*" Children of God, even if you don't have any work, the Lord will ensure that you will not lack what you need. What a comfort that is for time and eternity, for body and soul. It is stated with emphasis, "*Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee*" (verse 2). "Yes, but I don't have this, and I lack that, and I miss the other thing, and I would have liked many things to have been so different from what they now are." Oh, I see that you still think you have a right to so many things, and God is obligated to give you what you think you are

entitled to, or not? No, beloved, it will go well with *those who learn to follow*. It will only go well with those who learn to pray.

*Thou art my God, to Thee I pray,
Teach me Thy will to heed;
And in the right and perfect way
May Thy good Spirit lead.*

(Psalter 391:3)

Then the Lord will ensure that you lack nothing, not according to your time and desires, but according to His good pleasure.

The poet also mentions another blessing, "*Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house*" (verse 3). He uses a beautiful image, the image of a vine. Have you ever seen a vine which was not supported? This would not be possible, because then the vine would collapse. A vine is not like a tree which supports itself; therefore, a vine needs to be supported in order to stay upright. There you have the image of a good and godly marriage; in such marriages the spouses encourage and support one another. Then the husband knows what occupies the wife and vice versa. And if it is well, then husband and wife also know how it is in the other's heart with respect to the things of eternity. Thus that fruitful vine needs to be supported. Otherwise, it will not go well, as then the vine falls over, breaks apart, and dies. That is why the branches need to be guided and supported by wires. Boys and girls, you perhaps have seen this in the vineyards?

What else do we read in this text? "*Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.*" Young, tender olive plants are still flexible and is this not the case also with children? They are, as it were, still so flexible. Therefore, J. C. Ryle correctly says in his book *The Duty of Parents*: 'Shape your children while they are still pliable. They are no longer malleable when they have become big trees.'

Let us not disfigure our children. By this I mean that we should not turn a blind eye and allow them to do everything the world is doing. We should not give them the things desired by the world, but we should shape them, as much as possible. Let us petition the Lord in our prayers that He will make us faithful in this duty. True, from our side it will always be with shortcomings. Who would

deny that? Nevertheless, it is and remains our God-given duty. Is it also your prayer to be made faithful in this regard? Is it your prayer that the Lord will guide the direction of your marriage life, even if you do not have children, or do not have children yet? Maybe you are still single, but is it yet your prayer that He will lead you into His direction? Has it become your desire to walk in the fear of the Lord?

This psalm speaks about a wife, about children, and about children's children. The latter deals with the next generation, grandchildren. Are you already a grandparent and have been able to see your children's children? What a blessing that is! In the metrical version of Psalm 103 we sing:

*Jehovah's mercy floweth, like a river,
From everlasting, and abideth ever
On those that love and worship Him with awe.
His righteousness shall bless the habitations
Of children's children through the generations
That keep His covenant and obey His law.*

(Psalter 444:7)

Do remember, congregation, that grandfathers and grandmothers are important! We may not write them off, because they have become old and are no longer able to do much anymore. Sometimes people use such disrespectful language when they are talking about the elderly, but God's Word teaches us to honour and respect them! Do you know how from a biblical perspective grandparents have an important role to play? When out of life in the fear of the Lord, and from a godly walk with God, they speak and deal with their grandchildren! Then it happens that grandchildren say, 'I miss that life with the Lord which grandpa and grandma have, and I wish I had that, too.' Then sometimes you may hear them say with holy jealousy, 'I would like to possess what grandpa and grandma have.'

Grandparents, do you yet have a message for your grandchildren? To be silent is easy, and to be critical is easier still. Perhaps you recall with nostalgia, and with a certain sadness, the times of your younger years, but nevertheless it will remain true what Psalter 444 says:

*Jehovah's mercy floweth, like a river,
From everlasting, and abideth ever
On those that love and worship Him with awe.*

Congregation, does this biblical homework, namely to be busy with the spiritual needs of your children and grandchildren, weigh on you? I think we all realize now that none of us will be let off the hook so easily. Grandparents still have a big task. For what purpose? You can read this in verse 6 of the psalm, that there may be *"peace upon Israel."*

Look now also to what it says in verses 4 and 5, *"Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion."* He shall bless thee *out of Zion!* That is the place they were going to, that is the place where the sacrifice burns and where the song will be heard:

*And unto you be giv'n,
The joys that Zion doth afford,
The richest blessing of the Lord.*

(Psalter 372:2)

But first a sacrifice had to be brought. First, the smoke had to ascend from the altar of burnt offering. Are we today to think especially of the sacrifices, of the rivers of blood, and of the killing of bullocks and of goats? Are we to think of the sacrificial services in the tabernacle and the temple? No, that is not what we are to think of. God can grant a blessing to you out of Zion, because a rugged cross was erected on Golgotha. Only because of that cross can God bless you out of Zion. Do you now understand why every servant of God is determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified?

If you now say, 'How can an unholy person fear the Lord?' I answer, 'That is possible because of the blessing coming out of Zion.' And if you then reply, 'With deep sorrow in my heart, I have to say of myself that I walk yet so little in His ways. I chose the ways of the world, I chose my own way, I followed my own direction ... How can such a person as I am then fear the Lord?' Listen, it is possible for Jesus' sake. After His ascension, He entered into the heavenly Zion, into the inner sanctuary, and from Zion He is dispensing His blessing. He is now in

heaven and prays that more sinners may be added to that multitude which no man can number. He prays that His children will be kept in the truth. He prays for His Spirit which teaches true wisdom. He prays that the Word of God may be discovering and uncovering. He prays at the right hand of His Father as the praying and thanking High Priest. He prays for a blessing, a blessing that will abide for evermore.

But beloved, there is also another psalm. You say, 'Indeed, there are 150 psalms.' True, and if you have a moment, you should read Psalm 37 reverently and give it your full attention. The content of that psalm is as it were the inverse of that of Psalm 128. Do you know what it says there? *"That the seed of the wicked shall be cut off"* (verse 28). This should deeply touch us. What will it be if we have lived close to the Word and yet never bowed before this King? I hear you say, 'Only God can do that; we are not able to do that, are we?' Yes, God is sovereign in all His ways and deeds. Yet I have to say, 'You are eternally lamentable if you do not walk in His ways, if you do not fear the Lord.' The wicked will be cut off. Do you believe that? If you would truly believe that, then you would spend *"day and night in your complaining, ne'er your mournful voice restraining, but with tearful eye would seek relief with God, the Most High"* (Psalter 440:1). Because then that ungodly person is not the other one, but it is you yourself! You will then plead for yourself, and for your husband and wife, children and grandchildren, and you would say, *"LORD, please save me and deliver all those that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain"* (see Proverbs 24:11).

Perhaps there is one here in church who says in his heart, "How will I ever come to Him?" Listen, it says in the second part of verse 5, *"The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion."* Beloved, we must look upon Him, the Son of God. You ask, 'Who are the ones that will enter into Jerusalem?' The Word of God says, *"Behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her."* Again, who will enter in? Has this become your biggest question? Then I call out to you:

*The sparrow finds a house to rest,
The swallow deftly builds her nest,*

And broods her young hard by Thine altar.

(Psalter 421:2)

The swallow is there where the ministry of reconciliation is. Do you also long for that ministry of reconciliation? Then the promise is, "*Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel*" (verse 6). There can be horizontal peace which applies to the peace between people and between nations, but peace can also be vertical. This is the case for the peace with God, peace by the blood of reconciliation, which is applied to the souls of God's children. That peace at times is tasted, loved, and admired here upon earth. But the essence of this psalm in its deepest sense is yet to come true; the deepest fulfilment of this psalm is yet to happen. The image pictured by the psalm will never be on earth as beautiful as what it will be for the saved in heaven.

The marriage life depicted in this wedding song is an image of Christ and His Church. Upon earth it will never be perfect, but soon He will present His Church before His Father's countenance as a chaste virgin not having spot or wrinkle. Then His work will be completed. The multitude which no man can number will say, "*Behold I and the children which God hath given me*" (Hebrews 2:13). They are anointed with His anointing, and saved by His merits.

"Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD" (verse 4). This is absolutely certain! Do you know what the ground of that blessing is? It is the faithfulness of a triune Covenant God.

*His works are true and just indeed,
His precepts are forever sure;
In truth and righteousness decreed
They shall for evermore endure.*

(Psalter 304:5)

Psalm 128 is sure and steadfast in the Name LORD, the I AM THAT I AM. God's promises are yea and amen in Christ, unto the last day of this earth. How many people are able to call themselves blessed? How many people can say in truth that their marriages are blessed? Let me come one step closer: Are you and I able to say, 'I am blessed'?

Amen.

Concluding Psalter 360:5

*Thou shalt see God's kingdom prosper
All thy days, till life shall cease,
Thou shalt see thy children's children;
On Thy people, Lord, be peace.*