**Cross And Crown Christian Outreach**

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**Build A Divinely Blessed Family.**

**Blessed are all who fear the Lord , who walk in obedience to him. -** Psa. 128:1 NIV

The scripture for today’s Devotional is the one hundred and twenty-eighth chapter of the biblical book of psalms. Though its authorship is not defined, its message however, is very clear and direct, and has generally made many biblical scholars describe the psalm as the family psalm, because it states the blessings that come to the family of the one who fears, loves and respects Jehovah.

The first verse which is the foundation scripture for today’s Devotional states emphatically that all who fear the Lord and walk in obedience to Him will be blessed. This scripture highlights the simple fact that there is indeed a huge difference between fearing and respecting someone, and in this situation, both are required to trigger the associated blessing. Both are usually two actions that human beings tend to mix up, especially in relation to Jehovah. Someone may indeed fear another because of the consequence of not doing so on his/her well being. Children may fear their parents just as subordinates may fear their bosses but in both cases, respect may be missing. Fear is basically an action taken to avoid the possible negative effect of not being cautious while relating with someone or something that has greater ability to hurt one, while respect is an action that results from the appreciation of the achievements of someone.

Most people who are feared are not really respected as the people who fear them do so, more to avoid a loss of some sorts or a negative consequence unlike respect that is the result of a deep appreciation for the achievements of another. The Psalmist wants people to fear Jehovah. Yes! Because the effect of His wrath on those who have incurred it can be very devastating but more importantly, he desires that people should respect Him because of all His goodness. The one who fears and respects Jehovah will do all possible to know His view on every situation and willingly submit to walking in them, not just because operating outside of them can have devastating effect but because He is indeed worthy of being trusted with all that we do if we really desire to have good success.

The psalmist says that the reward for anyone who sincerely fears and respects Jehovah is that such a person will be blessed. The one who is divinely blessed is one who is enjoying divine favour or endowed with some special attributes that are associated with success in life. Such may not be classed as being financially rich since there may be no fat bank accounts to reference, yet will not lack any good thing. Like the psalmist stated, such will be like a tree planted by the river that brings forth fruits in due season – Psa. 1:3; Jer. 17:8.

The writer of today’s scripture defines the divine blessings that comes to the one who fear and respect Jehovah as follows;

1. Such will eat the fruit of his/her labor – Psa. 128:2a. It should never be taken for granted that all those who work are able to enjoy the fruit of their labour as life has many instances of people who are not able to enjoy the success of their efforts, but that cannot be the portion of all those who fear and respect Jehovah. The Psalmist gives all the assurance that they will always be in a position to enjoy the success of their efforts.
2. Blessings and prosperity will belong to such – Psa. 128:2b. Such will not only receive the favour and protection of Jehovah, but will also be successful, wealthy and live in affluence.
3. Such will experience domestic fruitfulness like vine – Psa. 128:3a. Barrenness of any type will not be the portion of all those who fear and respect Jehovah.
4. The children of such will be like olive shoots around his table – Psa. 128:3b. The fruitfulness of such will even reflect on their children as they too will become blessed and prosperous.

He concluded with prayers for those who fear and respect Jehovah that;

1. The Lord will bless them from Zion – Psa. 128:5a. The use of Zion is in reference to the throne of heaven and it is implied that the blessing of such will have its source from heaven.
2. That such will see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of his/her life – Psa. 128:5b. Not only will such be blessed but will live during a period of plenty even if his environment is experiencing situations that can be considered as famine.
3. Such will live to see his children’s children – Psa. 128:6. This means that such will be blessed with long life to witness the fruitfulness and prosperity of his Children.

Most couples today seek all the blessings listed in the reference psalm above and continually pray to have them. Not only do they seek blessings for themselves but also pray that such grace extends to their Children and desire to witness it but the psalmist reveals that it is more about fearing and respecting Jehovah than wishing, fasting and praying for such to occur. Though, the psalm seems to have been written with focus on the masculine gender, it actually applies to both male and female, especially with regards to its relevance to the family. The fear and respect that David had for Jehovah was not in doubt but was not sufficient to stop Michal, his wife from becoming barren because she did not have a similar approach to Jehovah – 2Sam. 6:23. Each member of a family that intends to benefit from the wisdom available in this scripture must be so minded for the entire blessing to receive this divine favour.

Though receiving the favour of Jehovah is deemed generally as grace-based, it will be almost impossible for any one or family that does not fear and respect Jehovah to enjoy His favour, irrespective of how much effort is put into fasting, praying and keeping vigils. Rather than praying to overcome such trying situations in such families, they will be better off developing a fearful and respectful approach to their relationship with Him. By doing that, such an individual or family will be on the path to receiving that desired favour needed for success in that situation.

It may be possible to enjoy temporary favour due to the Grace of the spiritual leader or mentor but the favour lasts longer and is more grounded when the one who desires it operates in fear and respect for Jehovah. May we continue to genuinely operate in the fear and respect for Jehovah so as to continue to enjoy His Grace in Jesus name. Amen.