

# Psalm 127: A Faith Forged Family

A team of New York state sociologists once attempted to calculate the lasting influence of a father upon his children and the following generations. Two men were researched and studied who lived at the same time in the eighteenth century.

The first man was Max Jukes, an unbeliever, a man of no principles. What kind of lasting influence did he leave his family? Among the 1,200 known descendants of Max Jukes were: 440 lives of extreme sensuality, 310 paupers and vagrants, 190 public prostitutes, 130 convicted criminals, 100 alcoholics, 60 thieves, 55 victims of impurity and 7 murderers. Not exactly a distinguished legacy!

The other man studied was Jonathan Edwards. Edwards was perhaps the greatest theologian America has ever produced. He married Sarah Pierrepont, a woman of great faith. Among their descendants were: 300 pastors, missionaries or theological professors, 120 college professors, 110 lawyers, over 60 doctors, over 60 authors of good books, 30 judges, 14 presidents of universities, numerous giants in American industry, 3 United States congressmen, and 1 vice president of the United States. This was a legacy that lasts, one that honors and glorifies God.

Psalm 127 brings a strong message on the house that God builds. It provides instruction on how to establish a godly family with children who are used by God. Dependence upon Lord is necessary to have a God blessed family. Psalm 127 details four principles necessary to produce a godly family.

The first principle details the builder of the home. “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it...” Raising a family is futile without God. The idea is not that the Lord literally uses a hammer and nails but metaphorically. God must be the architect, builder and foundation of every successful home. Jesus must provide the foundation. He is our Messiah. The Word of God must be the manual. A strong church family must be included.

The second principle describes the protector of the home. “Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.” A city is made up of many homes located closely to one another. God Himself must be the protector of our families. The idea is not that God takes up a literal sword and shield to defend the houses. Rather, his invisible hand guards the homes that he builds from the evil influences that would harm them.

The third principle deals with the provider of the home. “It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he gives his beloved sleep.” All who have families must work hard to provide for them. Life is expensive today! Again, it is “vain to rise early and stay up late,” striving hard, without God in the center of your life. Solomon warns against being a person who burns the candle at both ends, neglecting one’s family and failing to trust God. Rising up early speaks of feverish activity. It is rising before sunrise to begin working. It is coming home late- long after the sun has

gone down. Without time for God, their food only maintains people in their miserable existence.

God “gives His beloved sleep.” This represents the peace and rest a person receives when he commits himself to the Lord. The person who trusts God, while working hard yet within certain boundaries, lies down at night and sleeps well. He believes that God will provide the increase. God gives peace and contentment to the person who works in humble obedience to Him.

The fourth principle mentions the rewarder of the home. “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is His reward. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior, so are the children of one’s youth” (verses 3-4). Children are a gift from God. They are a highly valued prize, not a burden. They are the expression of God’s goodness.

Children are “like arrows in the hands of a warrior.” A father is pictured like a warrior in battle. His children are like arrows. Children are invincible weapons to be shot into the world for the kingdom of God. “Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them...” (verse 5) Arrows must be shaped. Arrows must be directed. Arrows must be released. Children must be shaped and directed and released for God’s glory.

Jonathan Edwards pointed his children to Jesus. He passionately pursued God’s kingdom. He repented of his sins, believed on Jesus, trusted in God and left a lasting influence. Won’t you do the same?

Ethan Hansen  
Pastor, Faith Bible Fellowship  
Big Lake, AK