

## ARROWS

**“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.” (Ps 127:3-5)**

This psalm was written by Solomon. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines, but only one son. He named his son “Rehoboam”, which means “The family is enlarged”. Obviously, Solomon hoped to have a large family, but he did not. After marrying all those women without having any more sons he finally came to realize that unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it.

Children, he concluded, are a heritage of the Lord. They are like “arrows” in the hand of a mighty man, and happy is the man whose quiver is full of them. Solomon knew about arrows, his soldiers and hunters used them all the time. They represented, among other things, the ability to accomplish something new and different beyond his immediate reach. Other weapons were effective at close range, but arrows were deadly at a distance.

On Sept. 11, 1991, some German hikers discovered the frozen body of a man who died 5,000 years ago. He was found high in the Alps near the border between Austria and Italy and is known as “Oetzi” or the “Iceman”. His cloak was made of woven leaves, and his shoes and leggings of animal skins. His utility belt contained a flint dagger, copper axe, and a quiver of arrows. His dagger and axe were valuable, but his arrows were in a totally different category. The arrows enabled him to accomplish something new, something beyond his immediate reach. With arrows he could kill birds in a tree or animals as swift as a deer. By the time of Solomon a composite bow had been developed that could shoot an arrow 400 yards.

Children are like arrows. They extend and magnify the influence of parents. While Jacob was starving in Palestine, his son Joseph was ruling in Egypt. While Amram was enslaved in Egypt, his son Moses was empowered to defeat Pharaoh before a burning bush in Sinai. While Manoah was languishing under the cruel oppression of the Philistines, his son Samson was miles away slaughtering them with the jaw-bone of an ass. When Saul was under a pomegranate tree in Migron, his son Jonathan was achieving a great military victory at the cliffs of Bozez and Seneh.

Children are like arrows. We aim and let them fly. Once the bow string has been released our work is done. The arrow, however, is just beginning to work. Beyond our reach and even beyond our sight, the arrow does what we could never do without it.

My wife and I have been blessed with five children. Our oldest son, John, is a preacher who has preached in many countries of the world where I will never be able to travel. Our second son, David, is a Circuit Judge. He also can accomplish things for Christ beyond my wildest dreams. Our daughter, Mary, is a pastor’s wife, home - schooling mother of seven, and an internationally known Christian artist. Our son Steve, is a U.S. Diplomat preparing to take his wife and five children on another overseas assignment. Our son, Paul, is active in politics, seeking to get godly people elected to office. All of our children have surrendered their lives to Christ, are in church every week, and are actively serving Him in ways too numerous to mention. They are like arrows and we are blessed to have had them in our quiver.

Paul was single and pointed out to the Corinthians the advantages he had in serving Christ. This calling, however, is not for everyone. It is a unique and special gift conferred by the Holy Spirit on only a few. The majority of us will marry and have children. In some parts of the world children are an economic asset as they work in the fields and help the family to survive. In the United States, however, children are not an economic asset. Not only are they not “needed”, sometimes they are not even “wanted”. Christians, however, should see children in a different light. They should be seen as an extension of our lives and influence to help conquer the world for Christ. They can have new and different gifts and abilities from their parents, and can work for Christ long after mom and dad have gone home to the Lord. Children, you see, are like arrows!