

“May our sons flourish in their youth like well-nurtured plants. May our daughters be like graceful pillars, carved to beautify a palace. May our barns be filled with crops of every kind. May the flocks in our fields multiply by the thousands, even tens of thousands, and may our oxen be loaded down with produce. May there be no enemy breaking through our walls, no going into captivity, no cries of alarm in our town squares. Yes, joyful are those who live like this! Joyful indeed are those whose God is the Lord.” Psalms 144:12-15 NLT

lectio // Psalm 144

David writes his “state of the union” or how he sees a prosperous nation/city. This is an ancient view of a prosperous good day in the city. A day where all is at peace and everything, people, crops and livestock are thriving. He is so happy in these moments, maybe he is just projecting hope into the future, but I think he had seen quite a few days like this. He begins with the children of the city. May the boys flourish and the girls make the palace look like pretty pillars. At least pillars are a great symbol of strength and stability, not just adorned objects that look good! Then the crops are bountiful and the barns are full. The livestock are all healthy and multiply like rabbits and the oxen are loaded up with (or down as he puts it) with produce. This is the perfect picture of ancient prosperity. The gross national product of exports are at an all time high! All of this means strong families, strong economy and work is available and plentiful. Then David moves onto his real expertise - war and peace. Here there is no enemies busting down walls, no serving as slaves to another nation, no alarms going off in the middle of the night. This is a time of total prosperity and peace - and they can go together, David states. Joyful indeed are those whose God is the Lord! David makes a very strong correlation between God being in charge and the nation experiencing the richness of life. Is that true all the time, every time? I believe it can be true much of the time. Saying that it is all the time is denying the reality of evil, enemies and just good old humanity always operating at its best. We know that here on earth as a broken planet, filled with broken people, it just doesn't play out that way. However, God is always at work and His ways, plans and intentions are to bring a full measure of justice and mercy.

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Dad,

Who doesn't want to look into the future and see happy, thriving kids, bumper crops, fat and flourishing flocks with NO enemies (natural or otherwise)? Those would be amazing times! And, our country has experienced this at times. Right now, however, our crops and flocks might be healthy, but our kids are NOT. And, our enemies, within and without, are always looking for ways to breach our walls of democracy, freedom and even prosperity. We need you! We need our country to recognize your very existence and your Lordship and love over all of us!

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rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root