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QUIVER FULL OF ARROWS

David penned a song concerning the home and family in Psalm 127. While there are many things we could discuss from this psalm, in this article, let us focus on verse 4: *"As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth."* What a picture this paints for us! Imagine the bowhunter who not only works at his aim but also takes care of his bow and arrows so they are ready for the hunt. He realizes that each piece cannot function properly without the other. In fact, his reputation as a "mighty man" is the result of where and when he shot his arrows! We see this man is "mighty" because he shot his arrows purposefully. He had an intended target in mind and shot his arrows toward that target. What does this statement from Psalm 127:4 teach us about parenting? First, parents have a

purpose. Parenting is more than the physical act of reproduction. Parenting means taking responsibility for another life (or lives) and trying to make sure this life is productive in following God's will (Eph. 6:4) and in society. When we appreciate what God expects of us in parenting, it proves again why God knows best in saying that parenting belongs to a married couple (Heb. 13:4). Not only does marriage keep us from fornication (I Cor. 7:2), but in such a relationship, we bring children into this world where both father and mother work together in the training and admonition of these precious ones. From Abraham's day, we see this is God's purpose for parents. God said, *"I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD,*

to do justice and judgment ...” (Gen. 18:19). Second, Psalm 127:4 shows us that just as arrows don’t fire themselves from the bow, so also children cannot be left to raise themselves. David’s son Solomon understood this. He said, *“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame”* (Prov. 29:15). Children make foolish decisions (Prov. 22:15), and they need training and encouragement from parents so they can grow up, be parents themselves, and continue this process for another generation (Prov. 22:6). Parents, whether they have one or a dozen children, cannot put matters on “auto-pilot” and expect a good result when it comes to child-rearing! Third, we see that the “mighty man” purposely sends his arrows in the direction intended. In other words, he has a purpose in mind. Sometimes, we find parents who never intend for their “arrows” to leave the “quiver”! Thus, children grow up and seem to have no direction or purpose in their lives. This is not right. Parenting requires we send our “arrows” out into the world so that they can benefit this world as “shining lights” (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-15). The Bible is

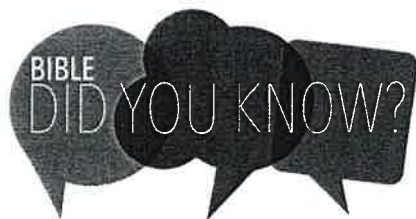
clear concerning the parent’s purpose in training our children in the right way. If we have been lacking in this area, let us repent and start today to follow the Lord’s will. Following what the Lord says will benefit us, our children, the church, and the community in which we live. Don’t be selfish, but selfless. Let us give our children the “tools” necessary for living in this world and preparing for the next so that our children can then prepare their children, and so on! – Jarrod Jacobs

About 1000 years before Christ, David wrote, *“Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain”* (Ps. 127:1). These words are still true. Unless the Lord is building the house (i.e., one’s family) then the work we do is in vain. Men today try to say a family can include two men marrying one another, or two women marrying one another. Some have said that polygamy is acceptable before God. Yet, when we read the Bible, we see that in the beginning, God created man and woman, and these two, male and female, are the ones to be married (Gen. 2:18-25). This was God’s intention from the beginning. So

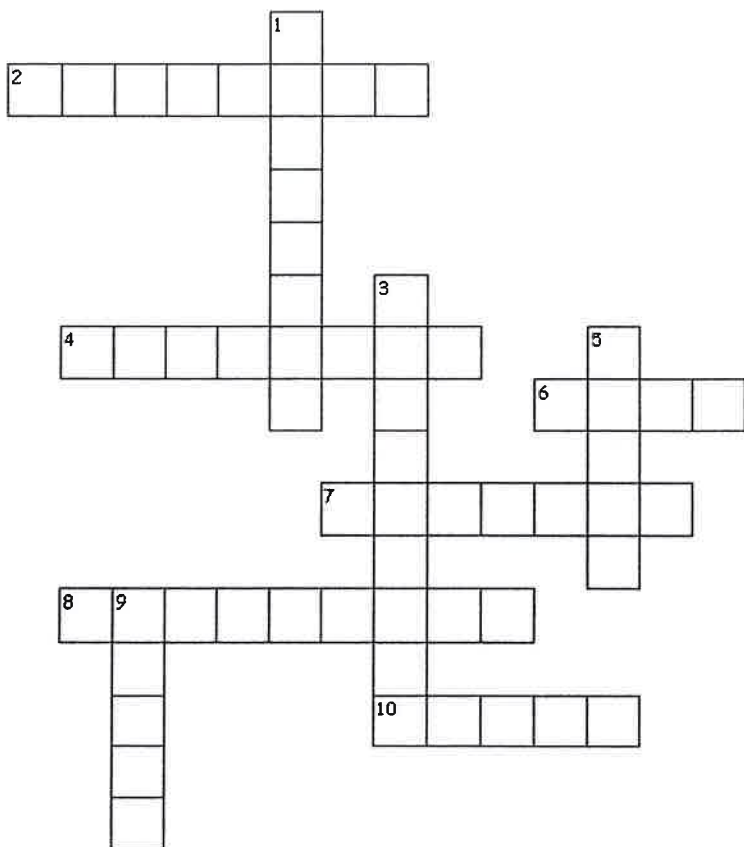
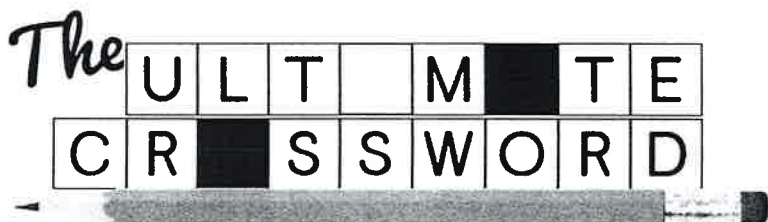
said Jesus in Matthew 19:4-6. How can the Lord build your house? Is this some kind of mystical saying wherein God chooses your mate for you? Of course, not. Allowing the Lord to build our house means that we are allowing the Lord to take first place in our lives. All that we do and say in our home must be based upon what the Lord has said (Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11). When a husband and wife submit their lives to the Lord's will, He will then build the home, and they will be truly blessed. When a husband and wife determine that, no matter what, they are going to live as husband and wife for life (Matt. 19:6; Rom. 7:2-3), then they are allowing God to build their home. Sadly, our world says that marriage should only last so long as it is "convenient" for both partners. In fact, one practice becoming more widespread is children being brought into the world by parents who are not even married. There are many today "playing house" as the innocent children born to them are made to suffer. Sometimes, people are living this way because they allowed their passions to get out of control. What is beautiful in the relationship of marriage (I Cor. 7:2) was made ugly due to sin. Sometimes, this behavior is

excused as a way to get a "tax break" or a larger check from the government. How terrible that we justify our sins in the name of money! This is not only justified by younger folks, but also by widowers and widows. Some have said, "I'll lose my SSI check if I get married." Those people need to get acquainted with I Timothy 6:10! Our society has forgotten that *"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge"* (Heb. 13:4).

- Jarrod Jacobs



***"The proverbs of Solomon.
A wise son makes a father
glad, but a foolish son is a
grief to his mother. Ill-
gotten gains do not profit,
but righteousness delivers
from death. The LORD will
not allow the righteous to
hunger, but he will reject the
craving of the wicked. Poor
is he who works with a
negligent hand, but the hand
of the diligent makes rich.
Proverbs 10:1-4***



ACROSS

2. Joseph planned to send Mary away secretly to not ____ her. (Mt. 1:19)
4. The Lord's name, _____, means "God With Us" (Mt. 1:22-23)
6. ____ from the East came to Jerusalem looking for a king. (Mt. 2:1-2)
7. Magi came looking for Jesus to ____ Him. (Mt. 2:2)
8. Herod sent the Magi to _____ to search for the Child. (Mt. 2:8)
10. The magi were warned by God in a ____ not to return to Herod. (Mt. 2:12)

DOWN

1. Jesus lived in Nazareth since He was to be called a _____. (Mt. 2:23)
3. Mary was found to be with child while _____ to Joseph. (Mt. 1:18)
5. Joseph registered in Bethlehem, which is the city of ____ (Lk. 2:3-4)
9. To protect Jesus from Herod, Joseph was told to flee to ____ (Mt. 2:14-15)