

Psalms 147:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

Analysis

For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee. The Hebrew chizzaq brichei she'arayik (חִזְקָה בְּרִיכָה שְׁעָרֵיךְ) uses chizzaq, meaning to make strong, fortify, or secure. City gates were vulnerable points in ancient defenses; strong bars (brichei, בְּרִיכָה) were essential for security against invaders. God's strengthening of Jerusalem's gates represents His protective covenant faithfulness—He Himself guards His people.

The second half shifts from external security to internal blessing: "**he hath blessed thy children within thee**" (beirakh banayik beqirbek, בְּרָךְ בָּנָיךְ בְּקִרְבָּךְ). The verb beirakh (blessed) conveys God's active favor, prosperity, and multiplication. Banayik (your children/sons) extends God's covenant promise generationally—He doesn't merely preserve the present generation but ensures a future through their offspring. The phrase beqirbek (within you/in your midst) emphasizes internal wholeness and communal blessing.

This dual blessing—external protection and internal flourishing—fulfills covenant promises. Deuteronomy 28:3-6 details blessings for obedience: safety, fruitful wombs, agricultural abundance. The New Testament applies this spiritually: Christ is the gate who protects His sheep (John 10:9), and believers are blessed with spiritual children—disciples made through gospel proclamation (Galatians 4:26-27; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8).

Historical Context

Nehemiah's rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls and gates (Nehemiah 3-6) provided historical context for this imagery. The returned exiles faced hostile opposition during reconstruction. Once completed, the fortified city represented God's faithfulness to restore His people. The blessing of children within secure walls reversed the exile's devastation, where families were scattered and children grew up in foreign lands. This psalm celebrates both physical restoration and renewed covenant relationship.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What 'gates' in your spiritual life need God's strengthening to protect against enemy attacks?
2. How does God's promise to bless 'children within' speak to the importance of discipleship and spiritual reproduction?
3. In what ways does external security (strong gates) relate to internal blessing (thriving children) in the life of faith communities?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	מִلְחָמָה	בְּרִית	שָׁעַךְ	בְּבָנֶךָ	בְּבָנֶךָ
H3588	For he hath strengthened	the bars	of thy gates	he hath blessed	thy children

בְּבָנֶךָ:

within

H7130

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 144:12 (Parallel theme): That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:

Psalms 125:2 (Parallel theme): As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

Nehemiah 12:30 (Parallel theme): And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

Nehemiah 7:1 (Parallel theme): Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters and the singers and the Levites were appointed,

Psalms 51:18 (Parallel theme): Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 6:1 (Parallel theme): Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;)

Nehemiah 7:3 (Parallel theme): And I said unto them, Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house.

Lamentations 4:12 (Parallel theme): The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.

Daniel 9:25 (Parallel theme): Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.