

Straight As An Arrow

Psalm 127

Longfellow's arrow

“I show an arrow into the air
It fell to earth, I knew not where
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight”

Ps.127 compares child-rearing
to other important activities

Psalm 127

- 1a: construction.
 - Hard work not enough.
 - Even professionals may ruin building.

Psalm 127

- 1a: construction.
- 1b-2: city.
 - Ps.127:1, unless LORD guards...
 - Dn.5

Psalm 127

- 1a: construction.
- 1b-2: city.
- 3: children.
 - Behold: training the trainers
 - Fatigue can blind us to blessings
 - Children...heritage (inheritance, gift).
 - Reward. Gn.37:3
- 4: Like arrows...
 - 2 K.13:15-19, object lesson

I. Children Are Like Arrows

Protect

- Soldier without arrows: dead
- Arrows protect against starvation, enemies, wild animals...

Must know target

- See it . . . Hit it. [Can't hit target in darkness]
- Jg.13, baby? What to do?
 1. Aim is important. Jg.14:1-3
 2. Don't forget your training. Jg.14:3
 3. Wrong company, off guard. Jg.16

Pleasing
to eyes

Tears
in eyes

No sight
in eyes

Had to lose sight to see God.
16:21-31 – Hb.11:32

Aim for bullseye

- Some are satisfied with outer circles
- Casual parenting / training produces casual archers

If aim at wrong target, may hit it

⁹ “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment. ¹⁰ Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity. ¹ Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, “I have no pleasure in them” – Ec.11:9-12:1

Can't inherit marksmanship

- Marksmen are made, not born
- “My parents had good marriage, so...”
- Lack of practice shows in time

Hitting target is not guaranteed

- RYR knew Bible, desired heaven (target)
- Riches blindfolded his eyes
 - Gn.4:7, sin
 - Miss, misstep, slip with foot, sin...

Shooting without aiming guarantees miss

- Longfellow
- Archers unleashed hundreds at once...
- Mt.6:33
- Not trivial “Bible studies” or “sharing”...

Focus, concentration, attention required

“Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it” – Hb.2:1

Poor / bad aim can prove fatal

- Abimelech, Jg.9

Hold bow steady, without wavering

- Hb.10:23, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”
- David’s careless arrows hit his family – careless discharges...

Sharp arrows stick better

- Isa.5:28, “Whose arrows are sharp, And all their bows bent...”
- Jer.51:11, “Make the arrows bright” [polished]
- Ps.38:2, “For Your arrows pierce me deeply...”
 - Know children; stick them

Broken arrows will not shoot

- Miss right target, hit wrong one

Learn from a skilled archer

- 1 Chr.12:2, “armed with bows, using both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows with the bow. They were of Benjamin, Saul’s brethren.”

Learn also from poor examples

- Heb.4:11, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.”

Hitting the target can save life / soul

- Ps.127:4
 - Hunter without a gun / bow?
 - Soldier without a bow...?

More we enjoy it, better we will do

- Ps.127:5
- 1 Tim.5:4, “But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.”

Self-discipline is important.

- If string is slack, no shooting.
- Prov.10:4, “He who has a slack hand becomes poor, But the hand of the diligent makes rich.”
 - **Slack**: cord or string not being taut.
Laxity, sluggishness...

Every arrow hits something

- Jer.50:9, “For behold, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon An assembly of great nations from the north country, And they shall array themselves against her; From there she shall be captured. Their arrows shall be like those of an expert warrior; None shall return in vain.”

Must release arrow to hit target

- Very soon, parental training ends.
- Ep.6:4, “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

Some use good training to do evil

- Psalm 11:2, “For look! The wicked bend their bow, They make ready their arrow on the string, That they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart.”

I. Children Are Like Arrows

II. Hannah, A Great Archer

1 Sm.1

- Passion, 2. Tit.2:4
- Pain: no children, 4-8. Gn.30:1
- Prayer, 9-18. Ja.5:16
- Promise, 11.
- Perseverance, 14-16.
- Persuasion, 18.
- Planning, 22.
- Present to Lord, 22-27.
- Powerful, 28.
- Product: Samuel