

2. BIRTH IN THE FAMILY

*Thank you for children
brought into being
because we loved.
God of love
Keep us loving
So that they
May grow up whole
In love's overflow
--Joseph Bayly, Psalms of My Life*

1. The Lord oversees and facilitates the complex workmanship of forming each child in the womb.

** You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—and how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (Psa. 139:13-16 NLT)*

2. The Lord determines the appropriate timing for the birth of each child.

** Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I sanctified you. (Jerm. 1:5 NKJV)*

** To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die. (Eccl 3:1-2)*

** Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him. (Gen. 21:2 NASB)*

3. The birth of a child is often in answer to the earnest prayers of parents.

** Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren, and the LORD answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived. (Gen. 25:21 NASB)*

** She, greatly distressed, prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. . . It came about in due time, after Hannah had conceived that she gave birth to a son, and she named him Samuel, saying, 'Because I have asked him of the LORD . . . For this boy I prayed, and the LORD has given me my petition which I asked of Him. So I have also dedicated him to the LORD, as long as he lives he is dedicated to the LORD. (1 Sam. 1:10, 20, 27-28 NASB)*

** But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid. Zechariah, your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John.' (Lk. 1:13 NIV)*

4. Each child should be viewed as a gift and reward from the Lord.

** Children born to a young man are like sharp arrows in a warrior's hands. How happy is the man whose quiver is full of them! He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers in the city gates. (Psa. 127:4-5 NLT)*

5. The birth of a child can be an occasion of joyful celebration for family and friends.

** You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. . . . When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her. (LK 1:14, 58 NKJV)*

6. During his earthly ministry Christ revealed a high view of children.

** And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all. And he took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them. (Mk 10:13-16 NASB)*

** And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. (Matt. 18:5-6 NIV)*

7. God ordained worship and praise to come from the lips of infants and children.

** From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. (Psa. 8:2 NIV –see also Matt. 21:16)*

PRAYER

Father, You are the giver of every good and perfect gift, and my heart is exploding with joy today because of the treasure I hold in my arms. Surely no language on earth contains enough words to express the feelings of gratitude that well up inside me. I am in awe of the miracle I cradle in my arms. To think that the life that I hold is made in your image is beyond what I can fully fathom. If only this child will grow to recognize your image in me I could have no greater joy. Thank you for entrusting me with this precious life to nurture in reverence. Thank you that the birth of this child enables me to understand in the smallest of ways at what great cost you sacrificed the Son that you loved. I pray this prayer in the name of the one who sees in my child the very kingdom of heaven.

PROMISE

Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. (Mk. 10:14 NASB)