

## STRENGTH AND GOOD HEALTH BRINGS WEALTH

Whenever we worship with the natives in our farm, they would often stand up to thank God by saying, "Pasalamat ko sa Ginoo sa kusog ug maayong lawas na liyang gihatag sa ako ug sa akong pamilya" (I thank God for the strength and the good health He gave me and my family). I seldom hear them thank God for their good harvest and the good weather. So in my mind I used to ask, Can't they think of something else to say? Is this a habit, or just part of their culture?

I understood the beauty of their ways when I learned the meaning of wealth in Deuteronomy 8:18. The Hebrew word used for wealth is chayil, meaning army, faculty, strength, and property. Strength represents our ability to work and overcome the problems we have, by using the resources God entrusted to our care.

I realized that strength and good health are more important than money and riches. When we are strong and healthy, we can work to produce money and riches, but having a lot of money can not buy us strength and good health. In Ecclesiastes 5:12 Solomon said, "The sleep of the working man is pleasant, whether he eats little or much; but the full stomach of the rich does not allow him to sleep." Then in Ecclesiastes 6:2 Solomon talked of a man who lacks nothing in riches but do not have the ability to eat from them. What great irony!

What is the use of our riches if we do not have the strength to enjoy them? What is the value of our properties if we do not have the ability to work on them?. Instead of being source of blessings, they will just become our burdens. What is the value of money if we just spend them on medicine to heal our illness? Therefore, to be strong and healthy are indeed blessings we should thank God for.

The next time you pray, pray like the natives of Bukidnon. Desire strength and good health before material wealth. Continue to ask God to give you the strength to create wealth from the things He has already entrusted to you.