

## THE FEAR OF GOD

⇒ **Bible Reading:** Psalm 34:11; Jonah 1:9-10.

⇒ **Introduction:**

- When God describes unbelievers in Romans chapter 3, one thing He says of their life of sin is that “**there is no fear of God before their eyes.**” Romans 3:18.
  - Unbelievers don’t care about God or others, they mainly care about themselves.
  - They have not yet discovered that God judges their sins in this life and will judge their sins in the next life.
  - They don’t think that they’ll be cast into the lake of fire, nor do they appreciate the horrors of hell, nor the statement, “**it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**”
  - Some questions we need to ask during the course of this study -
    - **Question:** Do you truly fear God?
    - **Question:** What does it mean to fear God?
    - **Question:** What will we do if we fear God?
    - **Question:** What benefits come to us by fearing God?
    - **Question:** Who are some Bible characters that feared God?

⇒ **I. Kinds of Fear**

⇒ **Question:** What does it mean to fear God?

- The Bible uses the word “Fear” in 7 ways:

⇒ **1. Holy Fear** = Love and respect for the majesty and holiness of God.

- In **Genesis 20:11**, Abraham said, “because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife’s sake.”
- **Acts 9:31**, “Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria, and were edified and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied.”
- **Psalm 34:11**, “Come ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach the fear of the Lord.”
- David speaks of this fear as clean and pure in **Psalm 19:9**.
- **Proverbs 1:7 & Psalm 111:10**, “The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”
- **The Fear of the Lord enables man to:**
  - a) respect God’s authority (Revelation 14:9),
  - b) obey God’s commandments,
  - c) turn from evil (Jonah 1:9), and
  - d) pursue true holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1; Philippians 2:12).
- The believer has this fear of God which is defined as ‘the proper reverence of a child of God for his Heavenly Father (**2 Corinthians 6:17 – 7:1**)
  - so that we obey God because we:
    - - love Him for who He is,
    - - obey Him because He is good and His plans are best for us, and
    - - respect Him because of His power to correct and discipline us.

- ⇒ **2. Fear of Unforgiven Sin.**
  - Caused by the work of the law written on unbelievers hearts.
    - This is fear of the guilt of sin.
      - “**which show the work of the law written on their hearts.**” (Romans 2:15).
  - **Examples include:**
    - a) Adam’s fear of unforgiven sin when he sinned. (**Genesis 3:10**).
    - b) Felix’s fear of unforgiven sin as he heard Paul preach. (**Acts 24:25**).
    - c) Men who reject the preaching of the Gospel: “A certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.” (**Hebrews 10:27-31**).
- ⇒ **3. Fear of Judgment at Christ’s Second Coming.**
  - The wicked will have a fear and terror of God’s judgment at Christ’s Second Coming.
    - **See Rev. 11:11.**
    - **See Isaiah 2:19**
  - God places a fear of His people in their enemies to protect Israel:
    - a) When God smote one million soldiers who attacked Israel during King Asa’s reign (951BC), the fear of God came upon them. **II Chronicles 14:14**.
    - b) When a large army from Ammon, Moab and Mt Seir (Jordan) invaded Israel during King Jehoshaphat’s reign (896BC), God smote the invaders, and “The fear of God was in all the kingdoms of those countries when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel.” (**2 Chron 20:29**)
    - c) ‘The land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself.’ (**Isaiah 9:17**).
- ⇒ **4. Fear of Man.**
  - Two kinds are:
    - a) Proper respect for those in authority.
      - i) Fear to whom fear is due. “He beareth not the sword in vain”. **Romans 13:4,7**.
      - ii) Servants (employees) be subject to your masters with all fear. **1 Peter 2:18**.
    - b) Senseless dread of man.
      - Israel was told not to fear the Canaanites, but to go and conquer the land. **Numbers 14:9**.
- ⇒ **5. Cowardice and Timid ness.**
  - “God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” **II Timothy 1:7**.
  - “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” **John 14:27**.
  - “The fearful, and unbelieving..” **Revelation 21:8**.
    - This is people afraid of receiving Christ as Saviour.
  - Jesus said to the disciples in the storm on the Sea of Galilee: “Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?” **Mark 4:40**.
- ⇒ **6. Fear of the Unknown.**
  - “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth.” **Luke 21:26**.

- Other examples are the fear of ghosts, or of scary things. (**Job 4:14-16**).
- ⇒ **7. Fear for others and the danger in which they stand.**
- “I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.” **1 Corinthians 2:3**.
  - “But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” **2 Corinthians 11:3**.
- ⇒ **II. People Who Feared The Lord**
- 1) Godly women fear the Lord. - **Proverbs 31:30**.
  - 2) Jonah said to the sailors, “I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea.” - **Jonah 1:9**.
  - 3) Joseph said to his brothers: “I fear God”. - **Genesis 42:18**.
  - 4) Job was described by Satan to God as: “Doth Job fear God for naught?” - **Job 1:9**.
  - 5) Repentant thief on the Cross said to the other thief, “Dost not thou fear God?” - **Luke 23:40**.
  - 6) Obadiah said to Elijah: “I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth.” - **1 Kings 18:3,12**.
  - 7) One of the priests taught the people of Bethel how they should fear the Lord. **2 King 17:28,41**.
  - 8) Abraham was told by the angel at Moriah: “Now I know that thou fearest God.” – **Genesis 22:12**.
- ⇒ **III. What People Will Do Who Fear God**
- 1) “Serve the Lord with fear.” **Psalms 2:11**.
  - 2) “Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.” **Psalms 128:1**.
  - 3) “They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.” **Malachi 3:16**.
  - 4) “Ye that fear the Lord give audience.” **Acts 13:16**.
    - Fear of The Lord = listen to preaching of God’s Word.
  - 5) “Perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
    - Fear of The Lord = grow in holiness and love for God. **2 Cor.7:1**.
  - 6) Husband and wife will submit themselves one to another in the fear of God. **Ephesians 5:21**.
  - 7) Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (**Philippians 2:12**), because you’ll have to give account of your service to God.
    - This means to work out the details of how to live and serve God.
- ⇒ **IV. Benefits and Blessings of Fearing God**
- 1) **Psalms 15:4** “He honours them that fear the Lord.”
  - 2) **Psalms 25:12** “Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.”
  - 3) **Psalms 25:14** “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.”
  - 4) **Psalms 31:19** “How great is thy goodness laid up for them that fear thee.”
  - 5) **Psalms 33:18** “The eye of the Lord is on them that fear him.”

- 6) **Psalm 34:7** “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them.”
- 7) **Psalm 34:9** “There is no want to them that fear Him.”
- 8) **Psalm 34:11** “I will teach you the fear of the Lord.”
- 9) **Psalm 85:9** “His salvation is near them that fear him.”
- 10) **Psalm 103:11** “So great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.”
- 11) **Psalm 111:10** “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”
- 12) **Psalm 112:1-2** “His seed shall be mighty upon earth.”
- 13) **Psalm 115:13** “He will bless them that fear the Lord.”
- 14) **Psalm 119:63** “I am a companion of all them that fear thee.”
- 15) **Psalm 119:74** “They that fear thee will be glad when they see me.”
- 16) **Psalm 147:11** “The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him.”
- 17) **Proverbs 8:13** “The fear of the Lord to hate evil.”
- 18) **Proverbs 10:27** “The fear of the Lord prolongeth days.”
- 19) **Proverbs 14:2** “In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence.”
- 20) **Proverbs 14:27** “The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.”
- 21) **Proverbs 16:6** “By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.”
- 22) **Proverbs 19:23** “The fear of the Lord tendeth to life.”
- 23) **Proverbs 22:4** “By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honour and life.”

⇒ **Conclusion:**

- “Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.” Proverbs 23:17.

