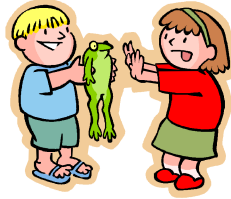


WHICH FEAR MOTIVATES YOU?



The Spirit of Fear is a “package” of demonic fears designed to enslave us to sin and iniquity. These fears rely on bondage and torment as the strength of their slavery. The Spirit of Fear is, in reality, the rule of fear.

See:

2 Timothy 1:7 – Spirit of Fear
Romans 8:15 – Bondage
1 John 4:18 - Torment

The demon possessed man in the country of Gadarenes (Mark 5:1-20) was under **extreme** bondage and slavery to the Spirit of Fear, even doing himself harm and living away from society because he was unable to be tamed. It was a perfect example of what the Apostle Paul would later write in 2 Timothy 1:7: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

However, at Jesus’ command the man was freed from his Spirit of Fear and the intense bondages and torments that were enslaving him. The evidence of his new freedom was that he was “sitting and clothed and in his right mind.” (Mark 5:15)

You need not be a demon possessed person like the man of Gadara to need freedom from the Spirit of fear because it is comprised of many specific fears. A few of these include the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15); the fear of man or dishonoring God (1 Samuel 2:29-30 and 15:24); the fear of failure and many others. Whatever fears comprise your personal Spirit of fear can be evicted by the Holy Spirit, giving your mind progressive soundness and peace.

At the opposite end of the “fear” spectrum, the Fear of the Lord, referred to many times in Scripture, is the pervasive rule of God that controls the life of the person who chooses to live under God’s authority and in accordance with His precepts.

It is comprised first of the reverential fear of God, holding Him in the very highest esteem and honor. It is responding in utmost reverence to the majesty of God. Isaiah’s reaction of utter personal unholiness as he saw the holiness of God in a vision probably approaches this definition of the reverential fear of the Lord (Isaiah 6:1-5).

It must be noted that there are times when the fear of the Lord is not especially reverential in nature as just described. It may be a wave of genuine emotional fear brought upon us by the conviction of the Holy Spirit. This pattern of the fear of the Lord by the Holy Spirit is usually to convict us of who we should fear (Luke 12:4-5) or to convict us of our sins and the urgency of repenting of them. (John 16:8). Our obedient

response to the Holy Spirit's strong conviction will, however, lead us ultimately into the reverential fear of the Lord.

But the fear of the Lord is also comprised of benefits from God to those who live in its influence. By it we learn to hate evil (Proverbs 8:13) and are able to depart (be delivered) from evil. (Proverbs 16:6) Furthermore, we are cleansed and purified by the fear of the Lord, which David reported "is clean, enduring forever...." (Psalm 19:9) David revered God by asking God to prevent him from "secret faults" and from "presumptuous sins" so they would not have dominion over him. (Psalm 19:12-13).

But possibly the most incredible reward of living in the fear of the Lord is that God shares secrets of His covenant with those who fear Him. (Psalm 25:14) Imagine Almighty God sharing His secrets with mortal men and women whose only qualification is to fear Him.

The next section is about two men: one who operated in the Spirit of Fear (Eli) and the other who operated in the Fear of the Lord (Cornelius). By making this comparison, the consequences of the decisions of each man and his spiritual life style will become evident.

ELI

**Operated in the Spirit of Fear
1 Samuel 1:8-20; 2:12-34; 3:13-14; 4:10-18**

Eli was the priest in Shiloh in the days when Samuel was born. But Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were very corrupt. They took the best meat brought in as an offering in the Temple and they "lay with the women who assembled at the door of the Tabernacle of Meeting." (1 Samuel 2:22)

It was Eli's duty to discipline his sons but instead he gave them a very weak and mild rebuke, which they ignored – "because the Lord desired to kill them." (1 Samuel 2:25)

Then a man of God came to Eli and prophesied that Eli had honored his sons more than God "to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel my people...." (1 Samuel 2:29) It was obvious that Eli had honored his sons more than God (fear of man) and the man of God repeated what God had told him – "but now the Lord says: 'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.'" (Not honored) 1 Samuel 2:30

The consequence of Eli's failure to restrain his sons, thus dishonoring God, resulted in the death of Hophni and Phinehas (and Eli) on the same day. (1 Samuel 4:11, 18) Besides this, God had said through the man of God "that there will not be an old man in your (Eli's) house." (1 Samuel 2:31) In other words, Eli's male descendants would die early.

Even a priest is not exempt from the consequences of allowing the Spirit of Fear (fear of man in this case) to override his fear (honor) of God.

CORNELIUS
Operated in the Fear of the Lord
Acts 10:1-48
Galatians 2:9

At the time of the early Christian Church during which the Apostle Peter was regarded to be a pillar of the church in Jerusalem (Galatians 2:9), a Roman Centurion and notable Gentile of Caesarea (whose name was Cornelius and who feared God) was given an angelic vision to contact Peter in Joppa. Cornelius then sent two of his servants and one of his soldiers to the house where Peter was lodged in Joppa. Even as the three men approached Peter's lodging, Peter also had a vision from God that explained to Peter that Gentiles were now accepted of Him.

Peter's vision prepared him to listen to the men of Cornelius explain how God had told him to have Peter speak to him, his relatives and close friends in Cornelius' house in Caesarea. Peter accepted the invitation and addressed the assembly of Gentiles, now certain that "of a truth I perceive God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him." (Acts 10:34-35)

Peter preached Christ crucified, raised from the dead and that all those who believe in Him will receive forgiveness of sins. As he preached this message everyone in the audience received the Holy Spirit. It was a landmark occasion because it was absolute proof that Gentiles could receive the preaching of the Gospel of Christ and believe it for salvation and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. It literally opened new doors for the spread of the Gospel. All of this was made possible because God knew of a Gentile Centurion who feared and obeyed Him.

Finally, you can choose the fear of the Lord or remain in the Spirit of Fear by default. Which will it be for you?

**FOR YOUR FURTHER STUDY ON THIS TOPIC...INDIVIDUAL OR
SMALL GROUP**

GODLY FEAR:

Defined as:

Hating evil: Proverbs 8:13

Satisfying: Proverbs 14:27

Sanctifying: Psalm 19:9

Beginning of wisdom: Proverbs 1:7

Motives to God's:

Majesty: Jeremiah 10:7

Holiness: Revelation 15:4

Forgiveness: Psalm 130:4

Power: Joshua 4:23, 24

Goodness: 1 Samuel 12; 24
Judgment: Revelation 14:7

Further examples in the life of:

Noah: Hebrews 11:7
Abraham: Genesis 22:12
Jacob: Genesis 28:16, 17
Joseph: Genesis 42:18
David: Psalm 5:7
Obadiah: 1 Kings 18:12
Job: Job 1:8
Nehemiah: Nehemiah 5:15
Early Christians: Acts 9:31

FEAR: SPIRIT OF

Causes of:

Disobedience: Genesis 3:10
Impending judgment: Hebrews 11:7
Persecution: John 20:19
Events of nature: Acts 27:17, 29
Suspicion: Acts 9:26
Uncertainty: 2 Corinthians 11:3
Final events: Luke 21:26
Death: Hebrews 2:15

Effects of:

Demoralization: 1 Samuel 13:5-8
Paralysis: Matthew 28:4
Silent testimony: John 9:22

Instances of in the lives of:

Abraham: Genesis 20:11
Jacob: Genesis 32:11
Soldiers: Matthew 27:54