

**Monday, 26 March 2018** Genesis 22:11-12

*But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."*

Abraham demonstrated his willingness to obey. *For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."* Romans 4:3 He believed/trusted/committed/obeyed/had faith in the promise of the LORD, God, the Almighty, and it was the necessary and sufficient proof that he feared God.

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**Tuesday, 27 March 2018** Genesis 26:24

*And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham's sake."*

The Fear of the LORD, God the Almighty releases us from fear of the unknown and uncertainty of life in a fallen world. It is the summary term for a life lived in belief/trust/commitment/obedience to the LORD. It is the life of faith in the Word of God. As I wrote the above and contemplated the implications, I was overcome with a sense of completion. Have you ever experienced the special sound that accompanies the insertion of the last piece of a jigsaw puzzle? Now to begin to appreciate and apply the beauty of the picture being revealed.

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**Wednesday, 28 March 2018** Genesis 42:18-20

*On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so.*

It is interesting that Joseph invokes the fear of God as a surety for his promise that his brothers will live. It indicates a mutuality of understanding between him and his brothers. A

vow to an unknown deity is meaningless for there is no agreement on the value of the vow. In this case, there was a mutuality of understanding for Joseph stated that he feared *Eloheem*, the God of Abraham, Issac and Jacob. Why didn't this cause the brothers to begin to suspect something strange? Why was this Egyptian familiar with the God of their ancestors and their father?

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**Thursday, 29 March 2018** Genesis 43:23

*He replied, "Peace to you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you. I received your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them.*

Joseph counsels his brothers not to be afraid for the God of all comfort (2 Cor. 1:3) is with them. Here's a truth we can 'take to the bank'. We have nothing to fear (be afraid of) when we are living in the fear of the LORD, God, the Almighty. Even the fear, the fright of the numinous, the great unknown has been lifted from us and replaced by an awe of Him.

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**Friday, 30 March 2018** Genesis 46:1-4

*So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes."*

The LORD, God, the Almighty reaffirms his covenant with Issac, assuring Israel that all was well; that the pilgrimage to Egypt was part of His great plan to bless all the nations through a descendant of Jacob.

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**Saturday, 31 March 2018** Genesis 50:19-21

*But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.*

God's ways are strange, complex, even mysterious but are always directed towards the good of His people. We need to turn back and review this passage frequently. How often do we fret and worry because someone, a non-follower of the LORD, is working against us? Should we be praising the LORD as various efforts are taken by the secular culture to inhibit the preaching of the Gospel? Or cases that come before the courts that are attempting to force us to support practices that are banned by the Word?

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**Lord's Day, 1 April 2018 Psalm 119:57-64**

*The LORD is my portion; I promise to keep your words. I entreat your favor with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise. When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies; I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments. Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me, I do not forget your law. At midnight I rise to praise you, because of your righteous rules. I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts. The earth, O LORD, is full of your steadfast love; teach me your statutes!*

Lord, there is this thread of obedience to Your Word, of striving to know it, of comparing my ways to conform to Your teaching and dedicating my life to praising You for Your righteous rules. Bless that group of men in the prison who are among those who fear You and are striving to keep Your precepts in that dark place. Protect us as we, Your church, seek to spread the message of Your mercy in there.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org); along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to: Pastor John Nunnikhoven, The Church at Prison, Inc. PO Box 8318, Essex Junction, VT 05452

or to [prior@ailbe.org](mailto:prior@ailbe.org)

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# VOICES TOGETHER

*Daily Meditations from the Scriptures*



*March 26-April 1, 2018*

**Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: Colossians 1:9-14**

*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

LORD, our prayer this week is that each of us will be fervent in prayer for our congregation; that we will be constant in seeking the transformation of our minds that will enable us to recognize Your good and perfect will. We pray this so that we will live lives worthy of You and please You in every way, that we will bear fruit in every way as we grow in knowledge of You.

We pray that our fellowship will be strengthened with all power so that we may have great endurance and patience, joyfully giving thanks to You for qualifying us to join in the inheritance of the saints in the Kingdom of light.

We praise and thank you that we have been rescued from the kingdom of darkness and brought into the Kingdom of Your Son whom You love, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Amen

***To fear or not to fear, that is the question.***

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.