

Monday, 9 April 2018 Exodus 15:8-10, 15-16

At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.' You blew with your wind; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters...Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O LORD, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased.

Is the problem today that when we see the present-day equivalent of the parting of the Red Sea, we attribute it to chance? That we no longer acknowledge the awesome power of the LORD, God, the Almighty as He controls all things? Is it that we demand answers that fit with our finite abilities to understand and comprehend? Can we no longer join with Job and say, "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." (Job1:21)

Tuesday, 10 April 2018 Exodus 18:21

Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.

Is it a true statement that a God-fearing person will exhibit characteristics of trustworthiness and love of justice? This is something to keep in mind as we continue to examine the fear of the LORD. How can a God-fearer be recognized as such? Always keeping in mind that to hate bribes, for example, will not create a God-fearer, but the Spirit working in a God-fearing individual will develop a love of justice that refuses to accept bribes.

Wednesday, 11 April 2018 Exodus 20:18-20

Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin."

This passage brings out the two elements of fear of the LORD that we are looking at. One is the fright that is inspired by the physical manifestations of the power of the LORD. The other is trust in the LORD that accompanies His forgiveness.

It is a misconception that we completely understand the mechanisms used by God. It is also a misconception that our limited understanding means that we understand His purposes. We think that our limited understanding of how eliminates the need to understand why. For example, our current weather forecasting does a fair job of predicting when and where a hurricane is going to make landfall, and we never question why God directs that weather system in that direction. Random chance is all the answer we need.

Thursday, 12 April 2018 Exodus 34:29-30

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.

Moses had been talking with God, not talking to God. They were having a conversation, could we say even enjoying a conversation? Have you ever been trapped by someone who spews words?

And I wonder why my face does not shine like Moses' after a prayer time? I told God about all the stuff I need and even thanked Him for the blessings He had bestowed on me. It never occurs to me that He can't get a word in edgewise.

Friday, 13 April 2018 Leviticus 11:44

For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.

The book of Leviticus has 37 references in the ESV which contain the phrase, "For I am the LORD your God" or a variant thereof. It is not an exaggeration to suggest that the entire book should be read as a treatise on how to respond in acknowledgment of the Lordship of the LORD, God, the Almighty. Every sentence should be read as an instruction about how His people are to demonstrate their love for the LORD or their neighbors. And to do so in gratitude for His mercy that has redeemed us.

Saturday, 14 April 2018 Deuteronomy 1:21

See, the LORD your God has set the land before you. Go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has told you. Do not fear or be dismayed.'

Does not this passage tell me to go out in strength and courage, to trust the LORD, God the Almighty as I set about doing all He instructs me to do? Do I heed the warning in Isaiah

31:1 *Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD!*

These dicta are as authoritative today as they were in Moses' and Isaiah's times. When He sends us out to do battle against the forces of evil, we are to go in His strength, not doubting the outcome.

Commandments 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, and 10 are as absolute today as when they were given on Mount Sinai.

Lord's Day, 15 April 2018 Psalm 119:73-80

Your hands have made and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn your commandments. Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice, because I have hoped in your word. I know, O LORD, that your rules are righteous, and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me. Let your steadfast love comfort me according to your promise to your servant. Let your mercy come to me, that I may live; for your law is my delight. Let the insolent be put to shame, because they have wronged me with falsehood; as for me, I will meditate on your precepts. Let those who fear you turn to me, that they may know your testimonies. May my heart be blameless in your statutes, that I may not be put to shame!

A sense of pleading with the Lord to bring knowledge and understanding. Learn. Hope. Know. Comfort. Delight. Meditate. Blameless. Yes, Lord, I seek complete immersion in Your Word, to take it in and completely assimilate it into my being; that there be no seam between my soul and Your Word.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



April 9-15, 2018

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank You, LORD, for the Fellowship of Ailbe; for this [congregation] drawn together by a mutual desire to advance Your Kingdom wherever You have placed us. Thank You for these tasks which You laid out for us as our way of life. Thank You for Your love that prompts us to respond in kind and is the source of the hope, the certain expectation of Your imminent return, that enables us to endure. *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.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, 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:

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