

**Monday, 25 March 2019** 2 Chronicles 29:6-8

*For our fathers have been unfaithful and have done what was evil in the sight of the LORD our God. They have forsaken him and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD and turned their backs. They also shut the doors of the vestibule and put out the lamps and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the Holy Place to the God of Israel. Therefore the wrath of the LORD came on Judah and Jerusalem, and he has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes.*

The word to me is that even if I profess Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, my life must reflect that commitment. I must not turn my back on the LORD, God, the Almighty. I must follow the leading of the Spirit in every aspect of my life.

Proverbs 28:9 *If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.* It is still as true today as it was in Hezekiah's day.

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**Tuesday, 26 March 2019** 2 Chronicles 32:1-8

*After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself. And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, he planned with his officers and his mighty men to stop the water of the springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. A great many people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the brook that flowed through the land, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?" He set to work resolutely and built up all the wall that was broken down and raised towers upon it, and outside it, he built another wall, and he strengthened the Millo in the city of David. He also made weapons and shields in abundance. And he set combat commanders over the people and gathered them together to him in the square at the gate of the city and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him, for there are more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles." And the people took confidence from the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.*

Three important themes jump out of this short story which are of value in my walk as a disciple of Jesus Christ. 1) Hezekiah took steps to ensure that the surrounding countryside was inhospitable to the enemy. Is my life in the world prepared to be inhospitable to Satan? 2) Hezekiah repaired all the damaged defense structures. Am I armed with the Sword of the LORD

and are my weapons sharp and well-honed? Am I skilled in their use? 3) He gathered his forces urged them to be strong and courageous for the LORD was with them. Do I accurately and always encourage those whom the LORD has assigned to me to shepherd?

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**Wednesday, 27 March 2019** 2 Chronicles 32:18-21

*And they shouted it with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, in order that they might take the city. And they spoke of the God of Jerusalem as they spoke of the gods of the peoples of the earth, which are the work of men's hands. Then Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed because of this and cried to heaven. And the LORD sent an angel, who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword.*

The message is that the Fear of the LORD, God the Almighty can surmount the fear of man. I am not to expect the Evil One to succumb and flee when I resist him, but I am assured that the LORD is with me and will bring me into His Kingdom in the here and now.

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**Thursday, 28 March 2019** Ezra 3:1-3

*When the seventh month came, and the children of Israel were in the towns, the people gathered as one man to Jerusalem. Then arose Jeshua the son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel with his kinsmen, and they built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of Moses, the man of God. They set the altar in its place, for fear was on them because of the peoples of the lands, and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, burnt offerings morning and evening.*

In short, the fear (terror, horror) of man drove the people of Israel to the Fear (awe, love, respect, acknowledgment, worship) of the LORD. A proper and correct destination. How often do I crumple at the threats of man? I must stand upon His might and power. I must insist that as His Ambassador, I have all His sheer munificence at my beck and call.

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**Friday, 29 March 2019** Ezra 4:3-5

*But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers' houses in Israel said to them, "You have nothing to do with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us." Then the*

people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build and bribed counselors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

The leaders of the returning Jews were entirely correct in refusing the offer of help from a people group that had been forcibly imported to replace the Jews exiled to Babylon. The temptation to blend in other beliefs other than in the LORD, God, the Almighty would have been overwhelming.

But the returnees had not learned a valuable lesson during their exile—"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." (Proverbs 3:5). Their fear of man caused them to abandon the building of the Temple. It overcame the Fear of the LORD, God, the Almighty.

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**Saturday, 30 March 2019 Nehemiah 1:11**

O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Isn't this a beautiful phrase? "Servants who delight to fear your name." Oh, to be one who delights in the Fear of the LORD, God, the Almighty. Fright—yes indeed for it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hand of the living God (Hebrews 10:31) to wisdom—the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 110:10) with many blessings in between. Righteousness, peace, joy, love, gentleness, goodness being a few for starters.

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**Lord's Day, 31 March 2019 Psalm 119:113**

*I hate the double-minded, but I love your law.*

I hate the double-minded within me. How can I claim to love You and yet be so disobedient? Help me, Lord, transform me into Your image.

# VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



March 25-31, 2019

**Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: 2 Thessalonians 3:2-5**

And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

Lord, we pray for our [Congregation], that we may be wise and discerning. There are many who among those we are called to minister to, who profess the faith but do not walk it when out in the world. Guide us as we seek to lead our flocks into lives that honor and glorify You in all aspects.

We pray for each other that we will led into the fullness of Your love and filled with Your perseverance. *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.

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