

# **GRACE & TRUTH**

**MAGAZINE**

- **The Fear Of The Lord**
- **Moses At Forty**
- **Selfishness**



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# GRACE & TRUTH

MAGAZINE

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# NEW BEGINNINGS

This month's *Feature* articles focus on "the fear of the Lord." Like the new year we are entering, this subject is also related to beginnings. Scripture says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of both "knowledge" and "wisdom" (Prov. 1:7, 9:10 NASB). Thinking about these two qualities, we realize that they are desired by the world. To know more, science "researches" and the news media "investigates." Individuals follow much the same path, driven by an appetite for knowledge.

Wisdom can be defined as applying knowledge in a sound way. Sometimes we find ourselves with a problem and know many details, but in frustration we conclude, "We don't know what to do!" By contrast, wisdom knows the right course of action. How nice it would be if we always knew how to act or react in situations. Family matters, work issues, community problems and any number of other things may weigh on our minds. We seek and need wisdom.

True knowledge and wisdom do not come naturally or through worldly means. They are only found in the fear of the Lord. For that reason it is important for us

to understand and be immersed in the fear of the Lord. Ultimately, knowledge and wisdom are only found in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not something to take lightly, as King Solomon wrote: "Fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. 1:7).

Do you desire this knowledge and wisdom? The answer is easy: Fear the Lord! Recognize that you are a sinner in need of the salvation offered by God through Jesus Christ (Lk. 23:39-43). Believe on Him and confess Him as Lord (Acts 16:31, Rom. 10:9-11). Live in obedience to Him and for His honor and glory, while confessing your failures and sin (Jn. 15:10; 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Jn. 1:9).

We are thankful for your interest in the *Grace & Truth Magazine*. The staff prays regularly for the blessing of its readers. We ask that you pray as well for those connected with this work, in one way or another. Remember also to thank the Lord for those He uses to provide for subscribers unable to contribute toward the cost of the publications.

Paul

# The Grace Of The LORD JESUS CHRIST

by John G. Bellett (adapted)

Neither are  
your ways  
My ways,  
saith the LORD.

—Isaiah 55:8 KJV

## Provoked And Proved

We are aware that in many different ways our fellow disciples try and tempt us, as, no doubt, we do them. We see, or we think we see, some bad quality in them and we find it hard to go on in further association with them. Yet the fault may be with us – mistaking a want of conformity of taste or judgment with ourselves for something to be condemned in them.

But the Lord could not mistake things in this way. He was never overcome by evil, but was ever overcoming evil with good – the good being in Himself. Pride, ill temper, indifference about others, carefulness about themselves and ignorance after painstaking instruction were some of the things in His disciples which He endured continually. His walk with them, in its way and measure, was a day of provocation much as the forty years of Israel in the wilderness had been. Again and again, Israel tempted and provoked the LORD, but in this

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they proved Him as well. He suffered, but took it patiently. He never gave them up. At the end of their walk together, He was nearer to them than ever.

Perfect and excellent this is, and comforting to us. The Lord's dealing with our conscience never turns His heart from us. We lose nothing by His rebukes. He is quick to restore our souls that the conscience, so to express it, may be enabled soon to leave His school – our hearts finding their happy freedom in His presence again. We may think of this hymn:

*Still sweet 'tis to discover,  
If clouds have dimmed my sight;  
When passed, Eternal Lover,  
Towards me, as e'er Thou art bright.*

## Perfection

In the character and course of the ministry which He was called to take up, we see for each and every moment the same perfection and moral glory as in the path He trod daily. For example, consider that of Judge as in Matthew 23 and that of Advocate or Pleader in Matthew 22. I only suggest this, as the theme is too abundant.

His every step, word and action carried with it a ray of this glory. The eye of God had more to fill it in the life of Jesus than it would have had in an eternity of Adam's innocence. It was in the

midst of our moral ruin that Jesus walked, and from that region He was sent up to the throne on high. His was a richer sacrifice of sweet-smelling savor than Eden and the Adam of Eden would or could have rendered had they continued unsoiled forever.

## The Same

Time made no change in the Lord. Kindred instances of grace and character in Him, before and after His resurrection, give us possession of this important truth. We know what He is this moment and what He will be forever from what He has already been, in character and in relationship to us. He is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). The very mention of this is blessed.

Sometimes we may be grieved at changes and sometimes we may desire them. In different ways we all display the fickle, uncertain nature of human life. Circumstances, associations, friendships, affections and characters continually undergo changes which surprise and sadden us. We are hurried from stage to stage of life; affections and principles rarely staying the same with us.

But Jesus was the same after His resurrection as He had been before, though events had put Him and His disciples at a greater distance than companions had ever known or could ever know. They

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had exposed their unfaithful hearts, forsaking Him and fleeing in the hour of His weakness (2 Cor. 13:4) and need. He, for their sakes, went through death – a death as never could have been borne by another as it would have crushed the creature. After His resurrection the disciples were still poor, feeble Galileans, yet He was glorified with all power in heaven and on earth (see Matthew 28:18).

### Grace Amid Doubt

Their forsaking Him did not change His love toward them. “Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,” as the apostle expressed, could do that (Rom. 8:38-39). Love defies them all; and He returned to them being the Jesus whom they had known before. He was their companion in labor (Mk. 16:20). On the sea in the day of Matthew 14 they thought that they saw a spirit and cried out for fear. But the Lord gave them to know that it was He Himself who was there – near to them and in grace, though in divine strength and sovereignty over nature (vv.22-33). And in Luke 24:40-43, after He had risen, He took the honeycomb and the fish, eating before them that with certainty and ease of heart they might know that it was He Himself.

In John 3:1-21 He led a slow-hearted rabbi into the light and way of truth, bearing with him in

all patient grace. And thus did He again in Luke 24 with the two slow-hearted disciples who were finding their way to Emmaus (vv.13-35).

Mark 4:35-41 tells how He calmed the fears of His people before He rebuked their unbelief. He said to the wind and waves, “Peace, be still,” before asking the disciples, “How is it that ye have no faith?” Likewise, as the risen One, in John 21, He sat and dined with Peter in full and free fellowship, as without a breach in the spirit, before He challenged him and awakened His conscience by the words, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?” Peter had boasted earlier of special self-confidence: Though all should be offended, yet he would not, and though he should die with his Master, he would not deny Him (Mt. 26:35). But Peter’s Master had told him of the worthlessness of such claims; and He had told him of His prayer for him, that his faith should not fail (Lk. 22:31-32). When the boast was found to have been empty and Peter denied the Lord, even with an oath, his Lord looked at him. The prayer and the look availed. The prayer had kept his faith from failing and the look had broken his heart. Peter did not “go away,” but he wept bitterly (Mt. 26:75).

At the opening of John 21 we find Peter in the condition in



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which the prayer and the look had put him. He was enabled to give very sweet proof that his faith had not failed; for as soon as he learned that his Lord was on the shore he threw himself into the water to reach Him. This was not done as one who was repentant and sorrowing because of wrongdoing. Rather, it was as one who could trust himself to the Lord's presence in full assurance of heart. In that character his most blessed and gracious Lord accepted him, and they dined together on the shore. The prayer and the look had already done their work with Peter and they were not to be repeated. The Lord

simply went on with His work already begun to conduct it to its perfection. Accordingly, the prayer and the look were followed by the word.

### Perfect Master!

He is the same to us yesterday, today and forever – the same in His gracious, perfect skill of love and going on with the work He has already begun. As the risen Lord, the service which He had left when He was taken away from His own He resumed from the point where it was suspended, knitting the past to the present. His was and is a service in the fullest grace and skill! **GT**

*Not as Thy ways, our ways  
We bow before Thy face;  
Not like Thy thought, our thought,  
As by Thy Spirit taught.*

*Not as our ways, Thy ways!  
Savior, Thy name we praise;  
Not as our thoughts, Thy thoughts,  
Told by Thy love-work wrought.*

*Neither  
are  
your  
ways  
My  
ways,  
saith  
the  
LORD.*

*—Isaiah  
55:8 KJV*

# THE FEAR OF THE LORD

by A. M. Behnam

## What Does It Mean?

The “fear of the Lord” means a deep reverence of God that leads to hatred of evil and to the practice of unwavering obedience to Him. It is a result of an appreciation of His greatness, of His omnipotence [all powerful] and omniscience [all knowing], as well as of His love that surpasses human comprehension.

It is not being frightened of Him and wishing to hide from Him, as Adam when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. That fear was a torturing fear – one that led Adam to try to hide from God, so when God called him, he said to the LORD God: “I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was *afraid* because I was naked; and I hid myself” (Gen. 3:10 KJV, italics mine). There is a fear, or rather a fright, that makes a person want to hide from God, hoping that God will not see him.

This fear will lead people in a coming day to say to the mountains, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev. 6:16).

The fear of the Lord is always associated with love to the Lord, a love that makes obedience a joy and not a burden. This love casts away the wrong kind of fear (1 Jn. 4:18).

## Promised Blessings Of The Fear Of The Lord

The fear of the Lord has many precious results for the believer. We will refer to a few of them.

- **Wisdom.**

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom” (Ps. 111:10). “And unto man He [God] said, Behold the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” (Job 28:28).



- **Stability and Treasure.**  
“And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure” (Isa. 33:6).
- **Intimate Knowledge.**  
“The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him, and He will make them know His covenant” (Ps. 25:14 NASB). Consider the examples of Joseph and Daniel.
- **Confidence and Protection.**  
“In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and His children will have refuge” (Prov. 14:26).
- **Mercy from the Lord.**  
“But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children’s children” (Ps. 103:17 KJV).

### Its Effect In Daily Life

The fear of the Lord affects our behavior in every aspect of our lives. For example, it will make us say the truth without adding, exaggerating or modifying. It will prevent us from saying or hinting anything that touches the reputation of another who may have hurt our feelings. The fear of the Lord delivers us from the fear of man, selfishness, pride, immorality ... and the list goes on and on.

## Three Remarkable Examples

### 1. Abraham.

Abraham has been called the father of the faithful. We read: “By *faith* Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, *obeyed*; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:8-10).

After that, Abraham went through a severe trial of his faith when God called and said to him, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen. 22:2). Abraham went as he was told. He built an altar and laid the wood in order before he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar upon the wood. “And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham ... lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know

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that *thou fearest God*, seeing thou has not withheld thy son from Me” (vv.10-12). Abraham knew that obedience to God is the safest and most blessed way – this is the fear of God. Because he was strong in faith he knew the LORD would fulfill His promise that in Isaac would his “seed be called” (21:12).

## 2. Joseph.

Joseph demonstrated his fear of the LORD both when he was a slave in his master’s house and when he was an influential ruler in Egypt. In the first instance the fear of the LORD gave him victory over the temptation by his master’s wife, who tried to seduce him to commit adultery with her. His answer was “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin *against God?*” (See Genesis 39:7-9).

Later, when he became a ruler in Egypt and his brothers, except Benjamin, came to buy wheat, they did not recognize him, but he recognized them. In their defense against the accusation of being spies they mentioned that they had a younger brother at home. Joseph, whose heart was yearning to see his brother Benjamin, told them that he would believe them only if they brought their younger brother. He decided to let one of them go back with the wheat they bought and to bring their youngest broth-

er. The other ten would be kept in prison until the youngest brother was brought to Egypt, or else they would be considered as spies. “And he put them all together into ward [prison] three days. And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do and live; for *I fear God*” (Gen. 42:17-18). He then decided to keep only one in prison and let the other ten go home, because he had the fear of the LORD. The fear of the LORD delivered him from being harsh even to those who did not show any mercy to him.

## 3. Nehemiah.

Please read Nehemiah 5:14-19. It was Nehemiah’s privilege by the Persian Emperor’s authority to have financial rewards (called “bread of the governor”) in addition to “forty shekels of silver,” like the rulers that were before him. But Nehemiah did not do that “because of the *fear of God*” (v.15). The fear of the Lord protects us from the love of money and makes us more sensitive to the needs of others.

Abraham, Joseph, Nehemiah and innumerable other children of God testify to the fact that the safest and most blessed road is the fear of the Lord! “Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in His commandments” (Ps. 112:1). **GT**

# WHAT THE FEAR OF THE LORD DOES FOR US

by Roger Penney

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” —Proverbs 1:7 KJV*

The more we learn, the more we grow; and the more we grow, the more we learn. This applies to the Christian life for the more we learn about God and His plans for us as seen in His Word, the more we are in awe of Him, respect Him and fear Him. This healthy and godly fear has a very profound effect on our lives for good, saving us from foolish behavior that leads to danger. Not to fear God is folly. It is a sign of ignorance and leads to prejudice, disobedience, unbelief and anarchy.

## Fear As A Process

When the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, we fear the wrath of God and turn to Him in repentance. As we grow spiritually we learn more of this healthy fear which persuades us to walk in His paths. This is a learning process. “Gather the people together,” God com-

manded Moses, “... that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law” (Dt. 31:12). God instructed Moses to explain the importance of this to succeeding generations. The effect of one generation’s living in godly fear would be a very powerful influence: “And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it” (v.13).

Knowing that God is love we may wonder why we should fear Him. It is natural to question difficult matters. Clear teaching by elders and more experienced Christians can be helpful for our understanding. For this purpose the writer to the Hebrews drew an analogy between the heavenly

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and the fleshly, and the spiritual and the natural. He wrote: "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:9-10).

Through the weakness of our flesh and the subtlety of Satan we are prone to mislead ourselves. To fear God and submit to correction is wise. To do so is clearly for our good even when we are not fully aware what that "good" is in God's eyes. Only God knows the future and the dangers surrounding us.

### Fear With Trembling

The word "reverence" as used by the writer of Hebrews is one aspect of fear. In the *Dictionary of New Testament Words*, W. E. Vine explains that the original term has a variety of meanings in English, such as respect, deference and regard. In the Old Testament we find the word for reverence also translated "fear," with related words of "trembling" and "terror." Such a connection is perfectly proper.

We may come face to face with God in a variety of ways. My own experience as a young man was

of being in grave danger one day through my own folly. Later a dear, elderly Christian lady to whom I used to give a ride to the assembly meetings, asked me if I had been in danger at a certain time. It came as a severe shock that God would move this dear old lady to pray at any time of the day or night for me or for any of His dear saints. I was truly filled with fear that God was watching me so closely. This experience has never left my thoughts for very long.

We see this aspect of fear displayed when the apostle John had his vision of the risen Lord about to judge His churches, Israel and the world. John wrote, presumably with fear and trembling: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last" (Rev. 1:17). Moses too, when God called to Him out of the burning bush, "hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God" (Ex. 3:6).

We can perceive some of the emotions felt by the participants in these graphic accounts of God's people. This is one of the wonders of the Bible: It is written not only so we may simply go by the words; but we also see emotions and sense the feelings of those portrayed.

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## Godly Fear And Obedience

At this point we can observe how godly fear may motivate obedience in the most trying situations. Abraham was “the friend of God” (Jas. 2:23), yet God put him through some very serious and challenging trials and testings. One example of this is when God instructed him to take Isaac, his only son, to Mount Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering. When the Angel of the LORD stayed his hand and directed him to the ram caught in a thicket, He said to Abraham, “For now I know that thou fearest God” (Gen. 22:12).

In this story of Abraham and Isaac we see the discipline and testing which God will put us through that we might grow to be like His Son, the Lord Jesus. As we grow we are given more responsibility, and then we are tested. We go on knowing that true wisdom is to follow God’s directions – walking by faith and not by sight, for “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). So we come to a clearer understanding of the awesome and terrifying greatness of God’s power, justice, judgment and righteousness.

As our understanding grows we are challenged to put what we have learned into practice. Indeed we cannot learn unless we

already possess a willingness of mind. “If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine” (Jn. 7:17). True wisdom is found when we find the courage and have the motivation to put God’s will for us into practice. Often we fail in this, but God is gracious and patiently bears with us, granting us repentance and more opportunities to serve Him.

The question is: “Whom do we fear – God or the world?” Certainly “the fear of man bringeth a snare” (Prov. 29:25). Isaiah gave us sound advice when he wrote: “Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread” (Isa. 8:13).

## Fear Of The Lord And The World

We have thought about the fear of the Lord mainly in the Christian context. There is a much wider field to observe how this can work to the benefit of the world. Also, the lack of the fear of the Lord works to the detriment of the world, ultimately to the very destruction of this world system over which Satan rules.

The whole world lies in the wicked one (see 1 John 5:19). This being so, it is more likely that the inhabitants of this world and world system will hate God rather than fear Him. The Lord Jesus said to

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His brethren, “The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil” (Jn. 7:7). Abraham saw this after the sordid incident when he denied that Sarah was his wife. He excused himself, saying, “Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife’s sake” (Gen. 20:11). We can see from the Bible account of the time of Abraham that the Middle East was in an anarchic and lawless state. Frequent wars between the nations are well documented in Scripture and secular accounts.

We may argue with conviction that the fear of the Lord makes for a settled and peaceful society. The lack of it leads to disruption, anarchy and lawlessness – precisely the world situation at this present time, with only the expectation that conditions will get worse. The personification of wisdom warned that “the fear of the LORD is to hate evil.” He then went on to declare, “By me kings reign, and princes decree justice” (Prov. 8:13,15). Here we see again that wisdom is associated with the fear of the Lord.

Showing how the fear of God can be corrective in a society, we see that Nehemiah rebuked the nobles and others for taking usury from the people and otherwise exploiting them. When the people complained to him of the injustice by the rich and powerful, he recorded: “And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them ... Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God ... but so did not I, because of the fear of God” (Neh. 5:6-9,15).

Clearly what was required was a strong governor and popular support for just legislation, with the law being strictly enforced. Lawlessness will flourish, but when people are motivated by the fear of the Lord, things may change. The fear of the Lord is a powerful corrective against anarchy and prevents evil from flourishing – whether in our hearts, gatherings or nations. **GT**

**The more we learn about God and His plans for us as seen in His Word, the more we are in awe of Him, respect Him and fear Him.**



# WHAT DOES



# THE FEAR OF THE LORD

## MEAN FOR THE BELIEVER TODAY?

by Alfred Bouter

**T**he exact phrase “[the] fear of the LORD” – transcribed from the Hebrew as *Yirath YHWH* – occurs fourteen times<sup>1</sup> in the Hebrew Bible, of which ten are found in Proverbs. Including other forms, we have 14 occurrences in Proverbs. Remarkably, the same book mentions the fear of man only once: “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe” (29:25). The Hebrew uses a different word here, for trembling or anxiety instead of true fear. Indirectly, this verse gives an important key to understand Proverbs, for the fear of the LORD is linked with faith in Him, trusting Him.

After the fall, Adam said, “I was afraid” (Gen. 3:10) – from the same Hebrew root “fear.” “The fear of the LORD” does not mean to be *afraid* of God, but it is to have a reverential awe in view of His greatness. It implies respect, confidence, dependence,

trust and a walk in fellowship with the Lord.

Reading verses about the fear of the Lord brings great comfort and encouragement while challenging us to continue in His ways according to the perfect example of our blessed Lord. This kind of fear is embedded in, or an essential part of, a close relationship between God and His own. It is marked by respect, love and obedience with the desire of pleasing Him.

Psalm 19:9 indicates that the fear of the Lord is “clean” or “pure,” in perfect harmony with God and with what is right, true and just. This psalm links the wonders of God’s creation to the wonders of His written Word. It then connects them to the psalmist’s desire to be in tune with God – in a personal, transparent relationship with his great God. The fear of the Lord is part of an intimate relationship between the Creator God, who is the Redeemer, and His redeemed

ones whom He loves. God's Word produces a harmonious bond between Him and His own. Such fellowship needs to be well nurtured, as expressed in David's prayer, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer" (Ps. 19:14 KJV). Consider Job's comment: "To man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding'" (Job 28:28). Surely this is wise counsel, from what is probably the oldest book in the Bible!

## The Fear Of The Lord In Proverbs

As we consider the fourteen verses in Proverbs about the fear of the LORD we see that they are usually built on the concept of parallels, the second part elaborating on the first part of the verse. "And" indicates a similarity between the first and the second part of the verse, whereas "But" indicates a contrast. Sometimes a comparison or connection between the parts of the verse is of a different nature, communicated through other means, for instance in Proverbs 14:27.

Verse	First Part	Middle	Second Part
1:7	The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,	But	fools despise wisdom and instruction.
1:29	Because they hated knowledge	And	did not choose the fear of the LORD.
2:5	Then you will understand the fear of the LORD,	And	find the knowledge of God.
8:13	The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way	And	the perverse mouth I hate.
9:10	The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,	And	the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
10:27	The fear of the LORD prolongs days,	But	the years of the wicked will be shortened.
14:26	In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence,	And	His children will have a place of refuge.
14:27	The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life,	To	turn one away from the snares of death.
15:16	Better is a little with the fear of the LORD,	Than	great treasure with trouble.

15:33	The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom,	And	before honor is humility.
16:6	In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity;	And	by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.
19:23	The fear of the LORD leads to life,	And	he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil.
22:4	By humility and the fear of the LORD	Are	riches and honor and life.
23:17	Do not let your heart envy sinners,	But	be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day.

## Fearing The Lord In Proverbs

The verb “to fear” is derived from the same Hebrew root as the noun “fear” and occurs eight times in Proverbs:

Verse	First Part	Middle	Second Part
3:7	Do not be wise in your own eyes;	Fear	the LORD and depart from evil.
3:25	Do not be afraid of sudden terror,	Nor	of trouble from the wicked when it comes.
13:13	He who despises the word will be destroyed,	But	he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.
14:2	He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD,	But	he who is perverse in his ways despises Him.
14:16	A wise man fears and departs from evil,	But	a fool rages and is self-confident.
24:21	My son, fear the LORD and the king;	Do not	associate with those given to change.
31:21	She is not afraid of snow	For	all her household is clothed with scarlet.
31:30	Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing,	But	a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

We should note that the expression “Be not afraid” or “Fear not” is from the same Hebrew root and occurs 40 times in the singular,

addressed to one individual or group. It is found 38 more times in the plural addressing two or more individuals. All different

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forms, derived from the same Hebrew root, occur 437 times in the Old Testament, besides other words and terms not discussed in this article. In the Greek New Testament, the equivalent noun *phobos* and its related verb-forms occur 77 times in the Gospels, 21 times in Acts and 60 times in the other books. Of this total of 158, about 47 are linked with the admonition *not* to be afraid.

### A Few New Testament Examples Of The Fear Of The Lord

“The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. His delight is in the fear of the LORD, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears” (Isa. 11:2-3). This Old Testament prediction was fulfilled in the Lord Jesus as He walked on this earth, even after His death and resurrection. We see this quality in the many saved ones, taken from among Jews and Gentiles, who now represent Him in this scene, waiting for His return (1 Th. 4:14-18). The New Testament speaks of the fear of the Lord first in relation to the Lord Jesus, as in the quote from Isaiah, and secondly in connection with the believers

who follow the footsteps of Christ. Despite tremendous opposition from various sides, the work directed by the glorified and exalted Lord Jesus in heaven continued irresistibly – and does so today.

Luke provided seven reports in Acts describing and summarizing this progress, of which the third is found in Acts 9:31: “Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.” It gives the conclusion about the remarkable increase that took place despite all kinds of opposition, and it follows the dramatic conversion of the persecutor Saul of Tarsus. The mention of the fear of the Lord and the believers walking in it shows that they were closely following Jesus’ example. It also explains the secret of the progress they made, both numerically and spiritually. The greatest opponent of this progress, Saul of Tarsus, became a devout follower of the despised Jesus of Nazareth even though the Jewish majority still rejected Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God – like today. The believers to whom Saul was joined represented all kinds of differences, but they were kept in unity as they walked in the fear of the Lord. At the same time, God the

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Holy Spirit was working on earth in happy harmony with the Lord Jesus Christ, who was directing this work from heaven – something He continues to do now.

Let's conclude with James 3 and the wisdom from above (v.17). In James 1:17 we read about the Father of lights and the resources believers have in their relationship with Him as they walk in the fear of the Lord. James 2 shows that the Lord Jesus in heaven is the Lord of Glory and that the believers are to represent Him here on earth. We learn that Abraham, who loved God, was ready to give Him his own son. The same chapter shows that Rahab abandoned idolatry and prostitution, for she came to love God and His people. Because of this love, she was ready to denounce her own people. The resources needed to do this, in the fear of the Lord, are described in

James 3:17: “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” The Lord Jesus used this wisdom as He walked here on earth in the fear of the LORD, displaying these seven wonderful qualities. Those who walk in the fear of the Lord can learn them, but only in the school of God. These seven things are to be displayed for His delight in a world still opposed to Him – the same world that crucified Him.

May our eyes be turned on the Lord Jesus to follow His example! Indeed, may we walk in the fear of the Lord while waiting for His promised return. **GT**

<sup>1</sup> In Ps. 19:9, 34:11, 111:10; Prov. 1:7, 2:5, 8:13, 9:10, 10:27, 14:27, 15:33, 19:23, 22:4, 31:30; Isa. 33:6.

**“The fear of the LORD is clean,  
enduring forever;  
the judgments of the LORD  
are true and righteous altogether.”**

—*Psalms 19:9 NKJV*

# A FEAR WORTH HAVING

by *Martin Girard*

**D**o you ever feel afraid? There are many reasons why fear can be experienced. Fear is typically considered to be a sign of weakness, and we can feel ashamed of admitting that we are fearful. However, there is one kind of fear that need not make us ashamed: “the fear of the Lord.” What makes this “fear” different?

The Bible says “the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever” (Ps. 19:9 KJV). It is not a temporary fear. We are also told that it is “the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 9:10). This fear is never found in the ungodly. In his analysis of such individuals, Paul concluded, “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:18). Believers today often find themselves surrounded by ungodly people who have no fear of God.

## Instances

The first time that fear is mentioned in the Bible is in the

Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve hid themselves among the trees of the garden because they were afraid (Gen. 3:8-10). They had disobeyed their Creator and felt ashamed of facing Him. Years later the nation of Israel stood beneath Mount Sinai as God communed with Moses. The thunder and lightning, the cloud, the earthquake and the trumpet’s blast filled the people with fear. Like Adam, they did not want to face God or hear His voice (Ex. 19:16, 20:18-19).

Although these are Old Testament incidents, God has not changed. The Lord Jesus said that God is to be feared because of His awesome power by which He can “cast into hell” (Lk. 12:5). But when we think about “the fear of the Lord,” we must not think of being afraid. This God, who is “a consuming fire,” wants our service. In order to serve Him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, we need grace (Heb. 12:28-



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29). “Fear of the Lord” is not therefore a cringing fear that drives us from Him, but it is reverence for One who is so great. With this godly fear we can serve God acceptably.

Frequently in Scripture fearing the Lord is contrasted with the worship of idols. The people of Israel were to “fear the LORD” and serve Him rather than the gods of the surrounding nations (Dt. 6:13-14). Idols are the product of man’s imagination and are unable to help anyone. Instead, Israel was to “trust in the LORD” – the One who was “their help and their shield” (Ps. 115:4-9). Fearing the Lord is therefore closely connected with trusting in Him, and it results in experiencing His blessing (vv.11,13).

### **Fear Required**

Shortly before his death, Moses reasoned with the people of Israel and summarized the divine requirement this way: “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Dt. 10:12). In his final words at the end of his reign, David declared that a king ought to display this fear of God as he ruled (2 Sam. 23:3). The writer of

Ecclesiastes (believed to be Solomon) concluded his book with the words that “the whole duty of man” was to “fear God, and keep His commandments” (Eccl. 12:13).

Preachers who proclaimed God’s word to His people frequently stressed the importance of fearing the Lord. Joshua, in his closing address, reminded the Israelites of God’s goodness and challenged them to “fear the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth” (Josh. 24:14). Samuel exhorted the people similarly, to “fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart” (1 Sam. 12:24).

### **The Way To Blessing**

“The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear Him” (Ps. 147:11). Indeed, every one who fears Him is declared “blessed” (128:1). We are assured that “it shall be well with them that fear God” (Eccl. 8:12). The Hebrew midwives who “feared God” rather than Pharaoh, refusing to kill the newborn baby boys, experienced God’s blessing (Ex. 1:15-21).

In the New Testament we read about Cornelius, a devout man whose earnest prayers were answered through Peter’s visit and the accompanying blessing of God that came to his household. All this can be traced back to the

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fact that he “feared God” (Acts 10:2). Truly “the secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant” (Ps. 25:14). We read in Scripture of many individuals who enjoyed close fellowship with the Lord and were given a special revelation of His purposes because they feared Him.

Shortly after Saul’s conversion God was blessing the Church and building up His people because they were “walking in the fear of the Lord” (Acts 9:31). God-fearing believers can rejoice in the near presence of the Angel of the LORD and experience His deliverance (Ps. 34:7).

It is certain that the only way to know the Lord’s blessing is to fear Him. His great desire is that His people might fear and obey Him, “that it might be well with them” (Dt. 5:29).

### Results Of Fearing The Lord

We have already noted the connection between fearing the Lord and obeying Him. A number of other results of fearing the Lord are described in God’s Word. One is **praise**. When the people of Israel saw how the LORD had defeated the Egyptians at the Red Sea, they “feared the LORD” (Ex. 14:31). Moments later we find them breaking forth into a song of praise to celebrate the LORD’s

mighty triumph over their enemy (Ex. 15:1).

Another feature resulting from fearing the Lord is **unity in fellowship**. The author of the longest Psalm was obviously a God-fearing person, for he wrote: “They that fear Thee will be glad when they see me” (Ps. 119:74). Those who truly fear the Lord are glad when they meet other believers who fear Him too. Godly Nehemiah was motivated by “the fear of God” and recognized its importance in the fellowship of God’s people (Neh. 5:9,15). He entrusted Hananiah with a special responsibility because he knew that he “feared God above many” (7:2). At the close of the Old Testament the LORD took special note of those who feared Him, thought upon His name and spoke often to one another about Him (Mal. 3:16). How necessary it is today to seek the fellowship of like-minded believers who fear the Lord and are intent on pleasing Him.

If we want to obey God we will be careful to **avoid the things that do not please Him**. Joseph feared God (Gen. 42:18) and therefore refused the seductions of Potiphar’s wife. To accept her immoral invitations would have caused Joseph to “sin against God” (Gen. 39:9). It was the fear of the LORD that kept him from

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sinning. This is another result of fearing the Lord, and Joseph's example illustrates well the exhortation: "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil" (Prov. 3:7).

### Very Practical

Joseph's experience shows us that fearing the Lord is not merely something to think about. It has profound effects in our lives. This kind of reverent fear caused Noah to take God at His word and build the ark, thus providing a means of salvation for his whole family (Heb. 11:7). The fear of the Lord is important in our own service too. From the days of his youth, Obadiah had "feared the LORD greatly." As a result he cared for the endangered prophets of God and provided food for a hundred of them who were hidden in two caves (1 Ki. 18:3-4,12).

Those who fear the Lord are patient and ready to wait for God's time. When David was presented with an opportunity to kill Saul, his enemy, he would not. Saul was still "the LORD's anointed" and David recognized that God would remove him in His own time (1 Sam. 24:4-6).

The practical nature of fearing the Lord should be seen in the workplace where employees obey their employers and serve them well, "fearing God" (Col. 3:22). Daily employment must be carried out in the conscious awareness that the Lord is watching what we do, and all our work must be done as unto Him (v.23).

### Much More

As God's children we need to learn constantly about "the fear of the Lord." It will affect our speech and our behavior, keeping us from the paths of sin and leading us in a right way that pleases the Lord (Ps. 34:11-14). Interestingly, this same psalm speaks of the LORD delivering His people from all *their* fears (v.4). The words of Tate and Brady's famous hymn that begins "Through all the changing scenes of life" might be a fitting conclusion:

*"Fear Him ye saints; And you will  
then have nothing else to fear;  
Make you His service your delight,  
Your wants shall be His care."*

**GT**

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**How necessary it is today to seek the fellowship of  
like-minded believers who fear the Lord and are intent on pleasing Him.**



The purpose of this column is to help you study the Bible on your own. Look up the Bible references and think about them before writing your answers. Do not send this study to us, as this is not a correspondence course.

DISCOVER WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT  
HAS TO SAY ABOUT

WISDOM

THE EPISTLES

By Alan Groth



“From where then does wisdom come?  
And where is the place of understanding?”

—*Job 28:20 NKJV*

“For the LORD gives wisdom;  
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.”

—*Proverbs 2:6*

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all  
liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

—*James 1:5*

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God or is God-breathed. In 2 Peter 3, Peter reveals some of the wisdom given by God to him and then, at the end of the chapter, mentions the wisdom given by God to Paul. Read about the wisdom of God given to Peter and Paul.

### Read 2 Peter 3

1. Why did Peter write his two epistles? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What two groups of speakers were they to be mindful of? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who asked a question? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What was the question? \_\_\_\_\_
5. They argued, saying, “All things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.” Did Peter agree? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What did Peter say about these scoffers? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What great event in history does he describe in verse 6? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The heavens and the earth which exist now are reserved for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
9. Describe how God looks at a day. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What characteristic of God does Peter write about in verse 9? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. God is not willing that any should \_\_\_\_\_ but that all should  
come to \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Which two days are revealed in verses 10-13? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
13. One day will come as a \_\_\_\_\_.
14. What manner of men ought we to be? \_\_\_\_\_
15. What is God's promise to us? \_\_\_\_\_
16. How should we be found by Him? \_\_\_\_\_
17. What does Peter have to say about Paul? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. What kind of people twist Paul's writings? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Peter concludes with a warning and an encouragement. What are  
they? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
20. To whom is glory ascribed? When? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Next month we'll conclude our studies on what the  
New Testament has to say about wisdom.*

## Some Practical Instruction ...

# On Selfishness

by Alfred T. Schofield (adapted)

In this *Series* we propose, with God's help, to take up some besetting sins. These are ones that seem to tempt from all sides repeatedly, to which Christians, young and old, are liable. "To be forewarned is to be forearmed," and these articles are written in the earnest hope and prayer that they may be practically used in guarding against those sins and failings. Such things often ruin a walk otherwise consistent and bring reproach upon the name of Christ. It is by our actions in small matters that the world judges us – not by the amount of our knowledge of scriptural principles, but by our application of them in daily life.

### Selfishness Is Unchristian

Let us briefly consider the obvious sin of selfishness. We call it "unchristian" because it is expressly recorded of Christ our Lord that He "pleased not Himself" (Rom. 15:3 KJV). This immediately strikes at the root of the matter, for when

we read that we ought to walk as Christ (1 Jn. 2:6), remembering these are the words of God, and then turn to the Scripture just quoted, we must at once see that all selfishness is truly unchristian. If, however, example is not enough, we have the precept as well: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth [or good]" (1 Cor. 10:24). "Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4 NKJV). Most touching of all, perhaps, to the heart that has tasted the love of Christ, to whom He is precious, is 2 Corinthians 5:14-15: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; ... He died for all, that they which live should not hence forth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (KJV).

### A Sign Of The Last Times

Selfishness is shown in many and various ways. As one of the signs of the last days it is said, "Men



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shall be lovers of their own selves” (2 Tim. 3:2), or in other words, “selfish.” This is the root from which every variety springs. The selfish man seeks his own things, not the things which are for others or even for Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:21), as the apostle so touchingly writes to the Philippians complaining that this sin was a great and crying evil in his day.

It is found everywhere, even among believers, although it is a vice so repulsive in its nature that the man of the world outdoes the Christian in despising it when shown flagrantly. Only the Christian, however, can know what it is to be truly unselfish in spirit in all things. We feel ashamed when we consider how often the foul spot of selfishness blights our best actions.

### Self The Object

Pleasing ourselves, directly condemned in Romans 15:1, is a common form of seeking our own. It is seen in great and little things – in our choice of work for the Lord, residence, companions, dress, occupation and in many petty ways in which we daily indulge – all done instead of denying ourselves. Sit and think of our dreadful self-pleasing in little things, always looking out for “number one.” So contrary are we in spirit to our beloved Lord.

### Seeking Our Own

Another phase of seeking our own is in eagerly pursuing some worldly advantage, being unscrupulous in moneymaking or keen in moneysaving. All this becomes much worse, terribly worse, if in any way hypocrisy comes in to aid our selfishness. Is it not fearful to think how the name of Christ is despised by men of the world because of those who should be His “letter” selfishly seek for their own good?

Though he may be selfish enough himself, the worldly man knows very well that Christians should not be selfish. Paul was not like this – “Not seeking mine own profit” (1 Cor. 10:33). This line of conduct is powerfully described in Isaiah 56:11: “They all look to their own way, every one for his gain.” Surely it is a sign of the last times when one professing Christian is heard urging another to raise himself in the world by pushing others down. There may not be many bold enough to give such fearfully unchristian advice, but are there not hundreds following it practically?

Another form is seeking to be in a higher rank or better position than others. Such selfishness was displayed in Matthew 20:20-21 and gently rebuked by Christ. It is often seen, sadly, in spiritual as well as worldly matters, and many have been part of the bitter

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parties or factions that developed from this form of selfishness. Let us judge ourselves as to this, seeking neither the chief seats in synagogues nor the greetings in the markets (Mt. 23:6-7).

### Not Caring For Others

Neglecting the poor (1 Jn. 3:17) is a flagrant form of selfishness strongly condemned by the Word. Often it arises simply from a habit of considering ourselves instead of others. In some cases selfishness may give to the poor to get rid of annoyance, but it can never give with true sympathy. That rare and tender plant of Christian growth cannot thrive in the same atmosphere as self: “Finally, be all of one mind, sympathizing, full of brotherly love, tender hearted, humble minded” (1 Pet. 3:8 JND).

In many cases we do not intend to be selfish. But being careless in following Christ and having naturally ourselves instead of Him as our object, this vice shows itself in little ways in almost all we do. We trust that to many of our readers a word will be enough to point out this sin, which, perhaps unknown to themselves, has been undermining their Christian life and taking away from the power of their words to others. If we look at one of the characteristics of “love” in 1 Corinthians 13:5, “seeketh not her own” (KJV), and

then turn and quietly look at our own lives in the light of the Word, we can recognize the petty selfish deeds that have so spoiled the “tender grapes” of our spiritual life (See Song of Solomon 2:15).

### The Remedy

What then is the remedy for selfishness? One might answer, “To think of others, as in the parable of the good Samaritan.” This is a good and Christian habit – to find a neighbor in every one whom I can serve and love as myself. It is important to acquire a habit of thinking of the comfort, convenience and wishes of others on all occasions and seeking to please my neighbor at all times for his good, including spiritually. But there is a more excellent way, and that is for Christ to become the center of my thoughts instead of myself, so all my actions naturally have reference to Him. In this way I not only become truly unselfish, but I become like Christ.

Dear fellow believer, this is the sort of Christianity which is understood among men and brings true glory to God. When a man gives up voluntarily the best place to which he has an undoubted right, when he foregoes his own advantage and to his own loss goes out of his way to show kindness to others, when he not merely gives of his abundance

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but becomes poor for the sake of Christ's people whose needs he provides for, and when he not only spends but is spent for others, *then* he becomes a letter of Christ known and read by all men. None can pass without taking notice of such a man in whom

the brand of selfishness has been obliterated by the fresh brand of Christ (Gal. 6:17).

Oh, may His love constrain us to live to His glory! **GT**

*Look for more practical instruction in next month's edition!*

**O**ne thing especially impressed my mind when the Lord was first opening my eyes: I never found Christ doing a single thing for Himself. This is an immense principle. There was not one act in all of Christ's life done to serve or please Himself. An unbroken stream of blessed, perfect, unfailing love flowed from Him in spite of the contradiction of sinners. It was one amazing and unwavering testimony of love and sympathy and help. It was always others, and not Himself, that were comforted. Nothing could weary it, nothing turn it aside.

The Christian is to "put on Christ." He went about doing good all the day long; there was not a moment but He was ready as the servant in grace toward the need of others. Let us not suppose that this cost Him nothing. He had nowhere to lay His head. He hungered and was wearied; and when He sat down, where was it? It was under the scorching sun at the well while His disciples went into the city to buy bread (Jn. 4). And what then? He was as ready for the poor, vile sinner who came, just as if He was not hungry, faint and weary. He was never at ease. He was in all the trials and troubles that man finds himself under the consequences of sin. Look at how He walked: He made bread for others, but He would not touch a stone to turn it into bread for Himself!

—John N. Darby, *Christian Friend* (adapted)



# MOSES' CHOICE AT THE AGE OF FORTY



by G. Andre

When Moses had reached the age of forty it came into his heart to visit his brethren. He went out to them, looking on their burdens. Certainly he had not learned at the court of Pharaoh that these despised Hebrews were his brethren – still less that God had made promises about them (Gen. 15:13-14). However, the teaching received from his parents was still deep-rooted in his heart.

The day of decision arrived. It seems when he was to be officially called “the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (Heb. 11:24 JND), Moses refused! Moses’ decision involved immense loss in terms of an honored position, material advantages, riches and many pleasures.

Similarly, we live in a day when we must be able to say “no.” Joseph’s action in Genesis 39:10 illustrates this. In a situation where a wholehearted decision to cling to the LORD was required in order to refuse, break off and go away from temptation, he triumphed by God’s grace.

Even if we are never called to

give up all that was refused by Moses, we can be sure that we will face tempting circumstances. Some material advantages of this sinful world will have to be declined so they may not stand in the way of our fellowship with the people of God – even if such a decision involves a measure of self-denial.

This takes more than the negative side of renouncing or rejecting. Moses “chose.” What did he choose? He chose “to suffer affliction along with the people of God” (Heb. 11:25). Although our level of decision may not reach to that of Moses, we also will find many opportunities to choose in favor of those whom the Lord loves.

The Word says that the pleasures of sin are only for a time, “but he that does the will of God abides for eternity” (1 Jn. 2:17). Moses’ renunciation and choice would later confer on him the authority necessary to ask others, especially his own people, to do the same in their measure.

Hebrews 11 gives us some insight into the heart of Moses and

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reveals to us the secret that prompted his faith. He did not choose by sheer force of will or through self-denial, but because he “esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.” That which pertained to Christ (although no doubt only in figure) had more value for Moses’ heart than everything else. It was a greater treasure!

Moses thought that his brethren would certainly admire his devotion to their cause. He supposed that they would understand that God would deliver them up through his hand. What terrible disappointment! They did not understand (Acts 7:25). The very Israelite whom he was reproofing for wronging his neighbor pushed him away. What was the good of having “refused,” “chosen,” and “esteemed” if this was the result?

Fearing Pharaoh, Moses fled to Midian and sat down near a well. There the most bitter reflections must have weighed on his mind, but he did not lose courage. As he witnessed the mistreatment to which the daughters of Reuel were exposed, he did not remain engrossed in his own pain but came to their help. Thus he remained in character both a deliverer and a servant.

How was all that possible? Hebrews 11:26 reveals it: He was looking to the reward. His eyes

were not focused on the immediate future with its lost advantages and ongoing afflictions. Even at the well of Midian and in the depth of distress, his actions proved that faith was enduring in his heart. He was looking farther ahead and higher up. In fact, the path which he had begun to walk was to lead him to the song of triumph at the Red Sea, the revelations of Sinai, the glory reflected on his face, the intimate relationship with the LORD on Pisgah and finally the glorious appearing on the Mount of Transfiguration.

**There is another side to this account.** Before going out the first time to his brethren in Egypt *he did not consult the LORD*. The LORD’s time had not yet come for the people or for Moses. It was in *his own* strength that Moses was going, and this way did not exclude the fear of men. On the contrary, “he turned this way and that way” (Ex. 2:12).

However, in Midian under quiet conditions and alone with God, he was trained as a shepherd just as Jacob and Joseph had been trained before him and as David would yet be trained. Moses’ faith was real and deep, but he needed to pass through God’s schooling to serve for His glory. **GT**

*(Adapted from “Moses, The Man Of God,” available from Believers Bookshelf USA.)*

## Q&amp;A

**How did Moses get direction and help as he led the people of Israel through the wilderness?**

**H**ebrews 3:5 presents Moses to us as a faithful *servant* over the house of God. This passage refers back to Numbers 12:6-8 where God says that unlike other prophets to whom He would speak in visions and dreams, He spoke plainly, face to face, with Moses. Yet Moses is pictured as a servant in contrast to Christ who is far, far greater, being Son over God's house.

Whether in Egypt, on top of Mount Sinai, from the entrance to the tabernacle, or wherever it might have been, God spoke directly to Moses and through him to the people. This was God's purpose, for Moses was to be a type of Christ through whom God has spoken to His people.

But Moses felt himself insufficient for the task entrusted to him and in need of human help. In contrast to Christ, he had some helpers. The first one mentioned was Aaron, his brother, whom God appointed as his spokesman when he complained that he was not eloquent (Ex. 4:14-17).

In Exodus 17, Amalek attacked and Moses put Joshua in charge of the fighting men while he him-

self went up to the hilltop with the rod of God to pray. But Moses' hands, unlike Christ's, got heavy. Aaron and Hur put a stone under Moses to support him while he prayed and they supported his arms uplifted in prayer.

Joshua seems to have been with Moses practically from the exodus out of Egypt. He was one of the two men over 20 years old when Israel came out of Egypt who ultimately entered the land of Canaan. Joshua made a few mistakes that Scripture notes, but as Moses' servant he doubtless learned much from him. God later chose Joshua to lead His people into the Promised Land.

To lead a people numbering more than 600,000 fighting men plus their wives and children, along with a mixed multitude of tag-alongs, was a tremendous undertaking for God's servant Moses. Early on their wilderness journey, in Exodus 18, Moses' father-in-law Jethro brought Moses' wife and sons to him and stayed for a brief visit. Seeing Moses spend the day from morning till evening judging the people, Jethro suggested that Moses

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lighten his load by only intermediating between God and the people and teaching the people what God wanted them to do. He also suggested that Moses appoint faithful, able, God-fearing men over the people as rulers of thousands, hundred, fifties and tens to judge small matters. Only major matters would then be brought to Moses' attention to bring before God. Moses welcomed this suggestion and sought to implement it.

We find this account in Exodus 18, and it is apparently this that Moses refers to and elaborates on in Deuteronomy 1 as he reviews the events of the wilderness journey with the people shortly before his death. It is interesting to see that while he and Israel had accepted his father-in-law's counsel, good advice from the standpoint of human wisdom, we never find it referred to as coming from God nor do we ever find instances of its being successfully implemented. On the contrary, at least a year later when God had led Israel on from their long encampment at Sinai, where they had built the tabernacle and its furnishings, we find the people continuing to complain.

The second instance of complaints, in Numbers 11, caused Moses to complain bitterly to the LORD (vv.11-15). He told God, "I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is

too heavy for me." God then told him to gather seventy men of the people of Israel, elders and officers over them, to stand with him at the tabernacle of meeting. God said that He would talk with Moses there and that He would take of the Spirit that was upon Moses and put it upon these seventy, that they would bear the burden of the people with him. This was done, and these men prophesied. But in the final analysis we do not find them lightening Moses' load or that, by God's putting of the Spirit that was on Moses on these seventy, there was any multiplication of the Spirit of God. Indeed, we can well say there was now more machinery and greater complication, but no more of God's Spirit!

God still spoke to Moses, giving him direction. God's servants doing God's work at God's direction will always find God's grace to be sufficient for them. He may well be pleased to give them help, for fellowship in His service is a sweet and encouraging grace. But help that His servants try to find or devise for themselves will never attain to God's gracious provision for them. May we learn to lean hard on Him rather than depend on human wisdom or resources!

—Answered by  
*Eugene P. Vedder, Jr.*

# From A Prayer Of David

by Alfred Bouter

## Introduction

Two psalms, 17 and 86, are entitled “Prayer.” The word “prayer” (Hebrew: *tephillah*) is used 77 times in the Hebrew Bible.

In his prayer of Psalm 17 and by faith, David placed himself in the presence of the LORD, asking Him to listen to him and intervene to plead his cause. David recognized God’s righteousness and holiness, and he submitted to His standards because he wanted

to be right with God. In contrast to the actions and ways of men and of those who oppose God, David tried not to deviate from God’s path, either in word or action. He called on the LORD, confident that God would answer him. David prayed that the LORD would protect him as the apple of His eye and keep him under the shadow of His wings, away from those who oppose him. These were violent, arrogant people, contrasted by those who have the qualities of true disciples (see Matthew 5:3-9). In his distress, David asked for God’s intervention, keeping his trust in Him and confident that one day he would be satisfied with the LORD’s presence in the world of resurrection.

## A Key Verse

In the middle of this prayer we find verse 7, consisting of only six words in the Hebrew. These words are like pearls representing great riches. Compare two translations with the Hebrew text:

New King James Version	New American Standard Bible	Hebrew text
Show Your marvelous	Wondrously show	Wondrously show
loving-kindness	Your loving-kindness	Your loving-kindness
by Your right hand,	O Savior	You who save
O You who save	of those who take refuge	those who trust [in You]



those who trust in You	at Your right hand	from their adversaries (literal: from those who rise up [against them])
from those who rise up against them.	From those who rise up against them.	with [or, "at"] Your right hand.

In the third column, the English words in each box are translated from one word in the Hebrew text.

### A Few Considerations

Let's ponder a few thoughts as we consider this wonderful verse, using the Hebrew text as a guide.

I say "wonderful" because David's prayer "Show Your marvelous loving-kindness" is closely linked to the Hebrew word for "wonderful" that may also be translated as "marvelous." The Scriptures use it only in relation to God. The root of this word occurs 98 times (or 7 x 14) in the Hebrew Bible, in several forms. It is one of the names of the LORD and of the Messiah and is contained in the English words of miracle, marvelous, wonderful and admirable. David's prayer implies the desire that God would show Himself in a marvelous way, according to who He is and expressed in His name "Wonderful" (Isa. 9:6; compare with Judges 13:18).

The second Hebrew word

implies a connection between what God *does* and what He *is*: God is good and His goodness expresses who He is. God wants those who believe, His children, to reflect His goodness (or steadfast love) in their actions, words and attitude. Biblically, the Hebrew term *Chasidim*, meaning pious or holy ones, represents believers reflecting the goodness of God. Of course there is always a difference between God and those who reflect something of Him, but what is implied is the link between the Holy One, who is good, and His holy ones.

The third word in the Hebrew text addresses *the One who saves*. There is a close connection between Jesus as the One who saves, the Savior (Mt. 1:21), and the fact that He is the Messiah, God (Emmanuel, v.23). The Jews consistently reject both points, but the gospel of John reconfirms their importance: "These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of

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God” (Jn. 20:31 NKJV). Saul of Tarsus, immediately after his conversion, affirmed that these two great truths are inseparable one from another: Jesus is the Son of God and He is the Messiah (Acts 9:21-22). Wonderful Savior! “I, even I, am the LORD, and besides Me there is no savior” (Isa. 43:11).

“Those who trust [in You]” represents those who have been saved and are marked by the fact that they have learned to put their trust in Him. They learned this from the Man Christ Jesus, our perfect model, who as a man on earth always put His trust in God (Ps. 16:1). Here are a few of the 42 times that this verb is used:

- “... under whose wings you have come for *refuge*” (Ruth 2:12),
- “Blessed are all those who put their *trust* in Him” (Ps. 2:12, total of 25 times in Psalms),
- “He knows those who *trust* in Him” (Nah. 1:7), and
- “I will leave in your midst a meek and humble people, and they shall *trust* in the name of the LORD” (Zeph. 3:12).

The release from those who oppose the faithful, or “who rise up against them,” is something only God can do, as the end of the psalm suggests: “Arise, O LORD” (Ps. 17:13). “Arise” is one form of the verb “to oppose” or “to rise.” So David’s prayer involves the

thought that God may rise up against those who oppose or rise up against His people. Faith realizes that God is its only remedy.

“Your right hand” is a personification of God Himself, sometimes represented by His “hand” or His “arm” (Isa. 53:1,10). “Your right hand, O LORD! has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces” (Ex. 15:6). “Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, upon the Son of Man whom You made strong for Yourself” (Ps. 80:17). “The right hand of the LORD does valiantly” (Ps. 118:15). “Your right hand shall teach You awesome things” (Ps. 45:4). Finally, “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Ps. 16:11). The right hand or arm implies power and represents a position of favor (Gen. 48:18; Ps. 110:1,5).

## Conclusion

This short verse of six Hebrew words (Ps. 17:7) displays wonderful points on the person and work of the Lord Jesus and of our God and Father. May His Spirit, who dwells in us, produce in us similar desires as we see in David in this beautiful psalm and verse, realizing that we live in the age of grace.

To Him be the glory both now and forever! **GT**



# ISAIAH

by Leslie M. Grant

*“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”*

—Isaiah 52:7 NKJV

Isaiah, meaning “save Thou, Jehovah,” stands fittingly at the head of the prophetic books of the Old Testament, being most remarkable for its stirring gospel themes. Like the epistle to the Romans, it begins with the stern and faithful uncovering of man’s guilt (Israel’s guilt in the case of Isaiah) and uses conditions then present to typify its prophecies of future conditions and judgments.

The first 35 chapters show God’s dealings in a general way with Judah, Israel and the nations in allowing no cover-up or excuse for sin. In pure truth, they expose sin.

Then chapters 36-39 are occupied with history, illustrating both the faithfulness of God in the preservation of His people and the failure of the people to right-

ly value the marvels of His grace.

The ministry of sovereign grace begins with chapter 40. From here on the remedy for Israel’s condition is presented in its various aspects. The following note from F. W. Grant is most helpful here: “From chapter 40 to 48 Israel is seen as the servant, and unfaithful; then from chapter 49 to 60 Christ is the Perfect Servant, and standing under the load of the sins of others; and finally, from chapter 61 to 66, the remnant (of Israel) is now seen and accepted as the servants” (*Numerical Bible*).

This book, though expressed in Old Testament language, will help us to gain a right perspective of the blessed gospel of God’s grace. **GT**

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*This column is taken from the book “The Bible, Its 66 Books In Brief.”  
It is available for purchase from Believer’s Bookshelf USA ([www.bbusa.org](http://www.bbusa.org))  
and Believers Bookshelf Canada ([www.bbcan.org](http://www.bbcan.org)).*

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– *Jebba, Nigeria*

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– *Eket, Nigeria*

Sin separates you from God: “Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you” (Isa. 59:2). If you die without repenting of your sins you will be separated from God and under His wrath forever. The Bible is very clear on this: “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (Jn. 3:36).

### Change!

Maybe you have allowed Satan to deceive you into thinking there is no hell. The Bible says Satan is “a liar” (Jn. 8:44). Jesus tells the truth: Hell is a place of “everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels” (Mt. 25:41). Who are you going to believe? Trust Jesus as your Savior and you gain the peace and joy of knowing you are saved from hell’s fire.

Do you fear that if you trust Jesus you may have to make some changes in your life? This may be true, but He says

it is far better to make those changes than for “your whole body to be cast into hell” (Mt. 5:29-30). For example, He tells us about an ungodly rich man who died. Even though his body was buried, in hell his spirit was still able to see, speak, remember, suffer and plead for a little water to cool his tongue because he was “tormented in this flame” (Lk. 16:19-31).

### Trust!

If you want to argue about hell, your argument is with God, not me. Whatever you think about hell now, the moment you die and awake in its fiery torment you will be convinced. But then it will be too late!

Jesus died on Calvary’s cross for your sins – to save you from falling into everlasting destruction. If you confess your sins and ask Him right now to be your Savior, you will have His assurance that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16).

**GT**

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# A Friendly Warning



by Fred W. C. Wurst (edited)

## Danger!

What if you saw a blind man walking straight for a cliff but felt too embarrassed to warn him? When you saw his mangled, lifeless body at the bottom of the cliff, would you feel bad?

This is the kindest way I know to warn you that unless Jesus Christ is your Savior, you are headed for something much worse than a fall from a cliff! Each day moves you one step closer to a meeting with God, which you cannot avoid: “It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27 NKJV).

## Listen!

Like that blind man nearing the cliff, you may not even realize your danger. The Lord Jesus, who wants to be your Savior, said, “If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” (Jn. 8:24). Please listen to Him!

—continued on inside back cover

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