

---

# Words of Truth

---

## “Fear Ye Not Me?”

By: Brian A. Yeager

The children of Israel had reached a state of apostasy wherein it was very difficult to find any faithful among them (Jeremiah 5:1-21). During that time period, teaching had become ineffective. The Scriptures state this: *“Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy”* (II Chronicles 36:14-16).

When things get that bad, among God’s people, there is obviously more than one problem that exists. This article is going to focus on one of the problems that caused the children of Israel to get so far away from their relationship with God. What we are going to see is that the children of Israel were no longer afraid of God. Then, we are going to consider why man should fear God. I am not suggesting that fear alone will save anyone. There is much more to a faithful relationship with God than fear. Faith, hope, and love is the lasting glue that keeps man faithful (I Corinthians 13:13). Yet, when fear doesn’t exist; wickedness abounds. So, let’s jump into our study by seeing how Israel’s fear of God was gone.

### They Did Not Fear God

Jeremiah wrote: *“Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I*

---

*not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof” (Jeremiah 5:22-31)?*

From the early days of the nation of Israel, God demanded that they fear Him (Deuteronomy 28:58). They should have been afraid of His righteous judgments (Psalms 119:120). It makes no sense that a people, whom had known the might of God, did not fear Him (Jeremiah 10:7). The how and why might just be best described in this Psalm: *“The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil” (Psalms 36:1-4).*

When you read the book of Lamentations, you see that God’s judgment on Israel at this time was severe. He caused death, destruction, famine, captivity, etc. to come upon Israel (Lamentations 4:9, Lamentations 2:1-7, Lamentations 5:1-10, etc.). Because they had forsaken God and refused to adhere to His word, He brought slaughter upon them (Jeremiah 19:1-15). Their lack of fear lead to their destruction. What can we learn from that?

### **Let’s Not Forget To Fear Our Maker**

Again, fear should not be our only motivator or even the main motivation for our faithfulness to God (Mark 12:28-34). However, we are told to fear Him (Psalms 112:1, Proverbs 16:6, Ecclesiastes 12:9-14, Acts 9:31, Hebrews 10:26-39, and I Peter 2:17). We are told to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). When is the last time you went outside and looked at all the things the Lord has created (Isaiah 40:18-28, Acts 14:15-17, and Acts 17:24-29) just by speaking them into existence (Genesis 1:1-31, Psalms 33:6, and Hebrews 11:3)? When is the last time you considered the wording of the Scriptures concerning everlasting Hell (Matthew 25:31-46, Mark 9:42-48, and Revelation 21:8)? Considering the might of the Lord, have you considered what it means when we read terms like this about the Judgment Day: *“...flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ...” (II Thessalonians 1:7-9)?*

### **Conclusion**

Fear is the starting place for knowledge and wisdom (Psalms 111:10 and Proverbs 1:7). That fear is one that is not carnal or temporary, but godly and not fleeting (Hebrews 12:22-29). Don’t be like Israel and complacently forget to fear our Lord! Like with them, lacking fear will lead to apostasy (Jeremiah 3:1-10 and Malachi 1:6-14).