

GNITN

#201

Fear Is Here

Fear Is In The Air

As I perused the news I noticed a lot more fear and apprehension in it than normal. I am fully aware of the journalism adage that if it bleeds it leads and that fear is a part of that formula, but my instincts detected more than a little more of fear in the media atmosphere. There are the usual fears that permeate our psyche such as the fear of death, the fear of loss, and the fear of rejection that most people can identify with and then are the seemingly endless list of phobias. It's not a spiritual source, but I found this quote from musical artist *Mackenzie Scott* that really captured the fear that is in the air:

A collective dread has been mounting. Everyone I know is having a brawl with the universe, with themselves...wars, climate catastrophe, a pandemic, the worldwide regression on human rights, the political hellscape — it affects everybody, and I know we're all feeling it in waves of varying degree all the time. I think it's really important that we find a way to get our hopes back up. I'm here to try to help light the way if I can. Most days I really believe humanity will find a way. But there's a nagging anxiety that maybe that won't happen. One has to wonder if it's a self-fulfilling prophecy that a species that believes it's doomed will doom itself.

Scott might be onto something, however this fear I'm sensing is a special breed and it made me dig a little deeper into it to see if it might be more supernatural than natural.

God Answered Me

Of course I asked God about this and He told me that we live in an age that is more prone to this fear than any previous generation because we live in the information age. I thought about it and I began to see what He was saying. While I don't want to get in the habit of blaming everything on Satan, I certainly am not below giving him his due. The devil can and will use fear if it serves his purpose and he will take advantage of fears we create as well. As *Scott* briefly alluded to, we may be our own worst enemies in all of this. Many people have mused about the angst we are feeling as a self-fulfilling one where the more we think we're doomed the more likely it will happen. I'm not prepared to go down that road, but I think it could contribute to this trepidation in some way. I don't think it's the actual foundation of it, though it could be aided and abetted by it. But I think the point God was making is that things that cause fear are more readily known now and can impact us faster and in more amounts than ever before. Interestingly enough, the 24 hour and instant news cycle may be dooming us unlike in any other generation.

Is This Fear In Prophecy?

And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Luke 21:25-26, NKJV)

If we go to the Greek for the definition of the word for "fear" here we read that it is *phobos* (*fob'-os*) and means *panic flight, fear, the causing of fear, terror*. And in context, it is exactly what both our secular artist and the Bible talk about. We see all of these events happening all around us and our hearts get weak to the point of failing. Going back to the Greek for the

meaning of another word in this verse, the word “failing” we find what happens to the hearts. It is the word *apopsuchó* (ap-ops-oo'-kho) and it means to *leave off breathing, faint, I faint, breathe out life, die, am dismayed*. Put together these events that we see raining down on us can and will deprive our faith of the oxygen it needs to live. And Satan is more than willing to help it happen.

The Enemy Is In The Fear Business

Going all the way back to the Garden Of Eden, a tinge of fear that God was holding out on Eve was used as strategy to get her to sin. It wasn't the entire basis for the temptation, but it played its part. And it points to a plan by the accuser of the brethren to attack and weaken or outright destroy our faith. Fear is a fatal element in that process and we need to see it for what it is. When you doubt God in any way, you will begin to believe He won't do what He promises in both big and small ways. Unfortunately it is the small amounts of disbelief that Satan will pounce on like he did with Eve to blind her to the truth. In her case, the truth would have done more than set her free, it would have kept all of mankind free, but as they say, hindsight is 20/20. The Bible will lose its power if even in slow ways when we realize that God isn't able to be the God we've been told He is.

Should We Be Like The Ostrich?

Can we keep from being fearful and doubting our faith in God by just ignoring all the things in our headlines? Should we just put our heads in the sand and hope that things will go away if we can't see or know about them? If we don't know about the possibility of WWII or that an asteroid could hit the earth at anytime and there's nothing we can do to stop it, or that a deadly virus could sprout up that can kill all of mankind, or terrorist sleeper cells will cause mayhem and death, or the sun will spew out a solar storm that takes out our electrical grid, or, well you get the point. Add what some would call catastrophes of biblical proportions as those actually mentioned in **Luke 21** and you have the recipe for the level of fear many are facing now. No, just by ignoring current events will we avoid the subsequent fear and doubt that can come from them. We must face them but face them with faith of Biblical proportions.

Dealing With Prophetic Fear

There is no fear in love [dread does not exist], but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! For fear brings with it the thought of punishment, and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection]. (1 John 4:18, AMPC)

I'm sure you are more familiar with the King James rendering of this, but to fully grasp what is being said here by the Apostle John we need to put verse 18 in context by reading verse 17:

In this [union and communion with Him] love is brought to completion and attains perfection with us, that we may have confidence for the day of judgment [with assurance and boldness to face Him], because as He is, so are we in this world. (AMPC)

It is the fear of judgment and the punishment it brings mentioned in **Luke 21** that is cast out or expelled. And that perfect love is needed the closer we get to the end of the end time to keep us from falling into the trap of doubt and cold faith. Rather than our hearts failing us for fear, it will be sustained by the certainty that God loves us and that love covers and protects us.

This Fear Didn't Come From God

I like how the web site [gotquestions.org](https://www.gotquestions.org/perfect-love-casts-out-fear.html) (see <https://www.gotquestions.org/perfect-love-casts-out-fear.html>) explains it:

The Bible says that nothing can separate the believer from the love of God in Christ (Romans 8:38–39). God's love does not wax and wane; it is not a fickle, emotional sensation. God's love for sinners is why Christ died on the cross. God's love for those who trust in Christ is why He holds them in His hand and promises never to let them go (John 10:29). That divine love should take away our fear: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

It goes on to note that this fear doesn't have its origins with God:

"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV). A spirit of fearfulness and timidity does not come from God. Sometimes this "spirit of fear" overcomes us, and to overcome it we need to trust in and love God more completely.

"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18). If, as a child of God, we still fear God's punishment, we have not yet reached the point of maturity in love. To help us be complete in love, God has liberally sprinkled encouragement against fear throughout the Bible. God tells us not to be afraid of being alone, of being too weak, of not being heard in our prayers, or of being destitute of physical necessities. These admonishments cover many different aspects of the "spirit of fear."

What Is The Key To Opening Faith And Locking Up Fear?

We read more about this in the same article cited above:

The key to overcoming fear is total and complete trust in God. Trusting God is how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced the fiery furnace without fear (Daniel 3). Trusting God is how Stephen stood before his killers fearlessly (Acts 7). To trust God is to refuse to give in to fear. Even in the darkest times, we can trust in God to make things right. This trust comes from knowing God and knowing that He is good. Once we have learned to put our trust in God, we will no longer be afraid of the things that come against us. We will be like the psalmist who said with confidence, "Let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you" (Psalm 5:11).

That folks is a great place for an amen!