

- The two types of fear found in the Bible
- How the Israelites, David, and Paul responded to fear

There are two types of fear found in the Bible. The first fear benefits us and the second type of fear harms us. The fear that benefits us is the fear of the Lord. This fear leads us to have reverence for Him, for who He is, and to be in awe of His power and glory. Proverbs 19:10 tells us that this kind of fear is the beginning of wisdom.

The second type of fear that harms us occurs when we do not trust God in our circumstances. We try to solve our problems in our own strength. It is this second type of fear that we will look at in lesson two.

Every believer has experienced being fearful to some degree sometime in their life. We often find ourselves being so overwhelmed by our circumstances that we forget God is always with us and He is in control! Our focus is on ourselves and our circumstances rather than God. We try to solve our problems in our own strength. We forget to apply God's Word and trust in His will. Being fearful is connected with worry. We will look at worry in lesson three. Remember, as a believer we never need to be fearful!

In our lesson we will do three things: (1) we will consider the ways we can be fearful. This is your time for self-examination; (2) then we will learn from a situation in Israel's past; and (3) we will look at some scriptures that will encourage us to not be fearful.

**Question #1: A.** Think about those things in life that make people fearful and list them below.

**B.** Look at your list and identify the things that make you fearful.

Let's examine a time in Israel's history when fear overwhelmed the Israelites. The Lord was ready to take Israel into the land of Canaan. He told Moses to send a ruler from each of the 12 tribes to search out the land and report back to the people. The first part of Numbers chapter 13 lists the 12 tribes and the rulers sent out. We call these 12 rulers the "12 spies" who spied out the land of Canaan. We will see that two of these twelve spies disagreed with the other ten spies on whether or not Israel should go in and take the land promised to them by God. And we will see the reaction of the Israelites to the report of the 12 spies. Begin by reading Numbers 13-14:10 to get the full story, then we will break it down with questions below.

**Question #2:** A. Read Numbers 13: 23-27. Summarize the report of the 12 spies of the land.

B. Read Numbers 13:28-33. (1) What did the majority of the spies (10 of the 12) say about taking the land of Canaan?

C. Read Numbers 14:1-5.

(1) How did the Israelites respond to the report from the spies?

(2) Why do you think the spies (10 of the 12) and the Israelites reacted the way they did?

D. Read Numbers 14:6-9. Remember, 10 of the 12 spies said they should not enter into the land of Canaan. But two spies disagreed and said they should enter into the land.

(1) Who were these two spies?

(2) Summarize what these two spies said Israel should do.

**Question #2 continued:**

E. Fill in the blanks from Numbers 14:9:

"Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither \_\_\_\_\_ ye the people of the land; for they are  
bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ us: \_\_\_\_\_  
them \_\_\_\_\_" (Numbers 14:9).

F. How can you apply what Caleb and Joshua understood about fear to those things that make you  
fearful? (recall your list in Question #1)

**Question #3:** Read 2Timothy 1:7. What does this teach us about fear?

**Question #4:** Each passage of scripture tells us something about not being afraid and trusting in God.

A. Read Romans 8:28-39 slowly, carefully considering each verse.

(1) Summarize the main point of this passage (Romans 8:28-39).

(2) In what ways does this passage encourage you about the trials in your life and your fears?

B. Read Psalms 27:1

(1) What does David say about fear?

(2) Who is the source of David's strength?

C. Read Psalms 34:4. Who delivered David from his fears?

D. Read Psalms 56:3-4. What did the psalmist do when he was afraid?

Being fearful does not mean that you do not have enough faith. In the course of life we will encounter circumstances where our first reaction is to be afraid. The key is to not remain fearful. Take your fears to God in prayer knowing it is not His will for you to be fearful. He is faithful and He will comfort you in your fear and make you strong.

Our apostle Paul is our example "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample" (Phil 3:17). Even our apostle Paul was fearful at times. In Acts 18 we learn that after Paul preached to the Jews, who refused to believe Jesus was the Christ, he turned to the Gentiles. He went to Corinth and the Lord appeared to Paul in the night by a vision and encouraged him "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10). Another example is found in 1Corinthians 1:3 where Paul tells the Corinthians "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

Paul understood that victory over fear is found in turning to God for strength and to have our focus upon Him. In Ephesians 6:19 Paul asks for prayer so he will be bold (and not afraid) when he speaks "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel."

Christian pastor and author, Albert B. Simpson (1844-1919) said the following "Fear is born of Satan, and if we would only take time to think a moment we would see that everything Satan says is founded upon a falsehood".

**Question #5.** After you consider the examples we have studied and the scriptures on fear, what is your plan for confronting fear in the future? Look at the list you made in Question #1 and think about how you will handle these fears. Take this time to pray about your fears now with God.

**Optional Challenge:** Select one scripture verse from this lesson and write it on an index card, or a post it note, and place it somewhere where you will see it each day. This will help you not only to remember the verse but will encourage you when you see it.