

# Fear God

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*[Deuteronomy 10:12-13] “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to **fear the Lord your God**, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?”*

*[Luke 12:4-5] And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: **Fear Him** who, after He has killed, has the power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, **fear Him!***

*[Revelation 14:6-7] Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— saying with a loud voice, “**Fear God and give glory to Him**, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”*

## 1. Reason Why We Must Fear God

Lord Jesus explained to His disciples why they must fear God in a very plain manner. The Israelites in Jesus' era feared the Roman military soldiers, King Herod's servants, and the officers of the chief priest, who were oppressors of the people in various ways. Lord Jesus, however, told the disciples not to fear these men who could only kill them, but rather fear God, the Creator of heavens and the earth, who has the authority to throw souls of men and women into hell after their deaths.

In modern days, people in most countries are afraid of the police. When a policeman stops your car on a roadway, most people become afraid because the policeman has the official authority to possibly arrest you and to put you into prison for a charge. We may go to prison for a few years and come out free. But, God has the power and authority to throw us into the eternal fires of hell and to keep us there, and our souls will not be consumed for eternity. There will be no end to suffering there. Should we not fear such a God? That was the reason Jesus cited why we must fear God.

Revelation chapter 24 describes the time toward the end of the end-time seven-year tribulation period, just before the second coming of Lord Jesus, when an angel will be proclaiming the gospel of final grace, calling the remnant on the earth for the final chance to repent before the Judgment Day comes. He will cry out, “*Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.*” There will not be any Christian to proclaim this gospel message because all living Christians will have been raptured to heaven before this time. So, only an angel can proclaim this message of the final grace of God before the coming of Jesus Christ to execute His awful wrath. “The hour of His judgment has come!” What a terrible message that will be! It will be a solemn message that proclaims that all unbelieving souls will soon face the judgment of eternal damnation. When Noah, his family, and the selected animals that came to the ark have entered through the ark entrance and God has shut the door from the outside, the opportunity of avoiding the coming great flood of total destruction of the earth was now gone forever. Likewise, when the angel proclaims the gospel of the final grace, there will be only a short time left before the day of the Lamb's great wrath comes upon the unbelieving humanity.

Therefore, it is the most critical wisdom before the end-time arrives or before our end-of-life comes upon us, that we fear God who has the power to send any of us to the eternal destiny of hell for rejecting God and refusing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many so-called scholars, philosophers, teachers speak and write about various kinds of wisdom that are supposed to help us to live a better, fruitful, and satisfactory life. However, such wisdom is limited to this short life on earth and is of no use beyond our deaths. Their words of wisdom are of temporal significance and usefulness. Scripture tells us that true wisdom and knowledge can be gained ONLY when we humble ourselves in fear of the Almighty God as the Creator of heavens and earth.

## 2. The attitude of Those Who Fear God

What attitudes do those who fear God have? Let us find our answer to this question by examining the examples of such persons in the Bible. First, take Noah for an example. We are all descendants of Noah after the great flood although Adam was the first man on earth.

*[Hebrews 11:7] By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*

In Noah's era, there was no rain anywhere on earth due to the different environments. Noah, however, believed God's word when he heard of God's plan to destroy all living creatures unless people repent, some 120 years before the flood because he feared God. He preached God's message of the flood warning diligently and began constructing a large boat, the ark, according to God's instruction. Although he had never seen the rain coming and had never built a ship, he began to build the ark, which he believed would be the vessel for saving himself and his family from the coming great flood. People must have derided him, "Hey dude, for what purpose are you building such a large boat? To save yourself from a flood? You must be kidding. It has not rained for over 1,650 years since the creation!" And none would join him with the ark construction except his own family because joining Noah would be regarded as a foolish act. Yet, Noah kept on building the ark because he feared God and respected His instruction. Thus, he left a model example for those who came after the flood, including us who are living close to the end-time era. We can also be like Noah and be faithfully doing the mission given to us by God, despite derision, misunderstanding, and sometimes enmity.

Next, we consider the example of Lord Jesus. Jesus is God the Son in essence but He chose to humble Himself before the creation that He would become the Lamb of God who would come down to earth as a human, to live and to die as the sacrifice for the sins of humanity.

*[Hebrews 5:7-10] who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. 9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, 10 called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek,"*

We read about the Lord's anguished supplications of sweat and tears in the garden of Gethsemane during the night of His betrayal and arrest. And we come to have a question: If Jesus is God, why was it necessary for Him to make such tearful supplications to God? The answer is written above, "*though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered [v. 8].*" Although He was a God-person of the Holy Trinity, Jesus humbled Himself before His Father, served to fulfill God's salvation plan in fear, and gave Himself wholly for this noble goal. Then, just before He breathed His last, He said, "*It is finished* [John 19:30]." He fulfilled His role as the Lamb to be slain for our sins. After He rose from the dead, He ascended to heaven, where He received the glory reserved for Him, sat at the right hand of God the Father, and became the High Priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Some believers say that it is difficult to love God when we have to fear Him. However, in Deuteronomy 10 we read above, it says we are "*to **fear the Lord your God**, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes.*" Whereas this command was given by Moses to the people of Israel, Lord Jesus remarked that this command is the essence of all laws of God. Therefore, this command pertains to the people of the New Testament era as the most important commandment of God.

In this verse, we read "the Lord your God" twice. Those who fear God love Him also because God is their God. For this very reason, they love and serve Him with all mind, soul, and strength. Do you love God and serve Him with all your mind, soul, and strength? Doing so is a privilege and not an obligation when we fear and love Him. In my generation, we used to fear and yet love our father because he loved us as his children. He worked hard

to support the family, and we saw love and devotion in his dedication. This beautiful order ought to exist in every Christian family.

### 3. God's Commandment to Rulers – Govern the People in Fear of God

King David left words of advice to his descendants including the most important virtue of a ruler of people as in the following verse. He emphasized that this word is from God and not of himself.

*[2 Samuel 23:3] The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me: 'He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.'*

This verse delineates the principle about a ruler's guiding principle for governance: A ruler in the kingdom of God must be just, meaning impartial and fair, and govern the people in the fear of God. This principle applies not only to leaders of a nation but also to those of churches. Leaders in Christian churches must be those regarded as just in their values. He must be exemplary in personal behaviors, in governing his family, and in affairs of the church through wholesome fear and honoring of God in all aspects.

Most problems in modern churches arise because those who have been put in leadership positions do not fear God, do not know why they must fear God, and do not understand how their fear and respect of God can be expressed in the church governance. If a church has a serious problem, the leaders must first examine their hearts to see if they have been fearing and honoring God properly instead of focusing on how to grow the church and how to take personal honor and glory in the world instead of honoring God's name and authority at the very forefront of all things the church does. Exemplary forefathers in the Bible humbled themselves and put God first in their governance. On the contrary, despite the marvelous temple he constructed, Lord Jesus regarded Solomon's glory as inferior to that of a wildflower [Matt 6:29]. Today's church leaders, as we face the Lord's second coming, must remember this important attribute: be humble and fear God!

The second psalm was written some 3,000 years ago as a prophetic warning to the present-day leaders of the gentile nations, that is, all nations except Israel. It is not addressed to the rulers before Christ, but all rulers of nations in the New Testament era. The psalm presents a serious warning to the rulers that they must come in humility and fear of God before the second coming of Jesus Christ to avoid being subject to His severe wrath.

*[Psalm 2:1-12] Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a [c]vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have [e]set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " 10 Now, therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 **Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.***

Today many nations in the world are predominantly Christian nations. Also, most nations are under the economic, cultural and technological influence of Christian western Europe and America. However, many Islamic nations and socialist nations are trying to be free of such influences as if they are bondages and restrictions placed on their freedom. In truth, however, if it was not for the sacrificial role that the western European nations and the U.S. did in the First and the Second World Wars, these nations would be under the bondage of Fascism and Communism today. We are acutely aware, at the same time, of the currently ongoing extreme debacle between the politically right group and the extreme left in the U.S., that the leftists are pushing socialist/communist agenda on the nation and attempting to oppress and coerce the right to lose the inherent freedom and rights as provided in the constitution of the nation. I believe the writer of Psalm 2 foresaw today's picture of the world when he wrote it as inspired by the Spirit of God some 3,000 years ago.

In verse 4 we read that God is looking down on such foolish rulers and laughing at them in anger. And He will trouble them and drive their endeavors to naught. Their efforts will come to failures and their goals frustrated in the end [v. 12]. And God has declared, "I have chosen the King of kings who will rule all nations of the world. This King will make all gentile nations as His domain and crush all rulers who oppose Jesus Christ as if breaking pottery vessels." The prophecy of Psalm 2 was repeated in the Book of Revelation some 2,000 years later by the apostle John as follows.

*[Revelation 19:15-16] Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

The apostle John foresaw the second coming of Lord Jesus to this world and that He will strike the nations with a sword, and rule them with an iron rod. He saw the Lord would destroy the rulers of the nations who persecute the Christians and take actions against God's word and principles. John foresaw how Lord Jesus would tread the winepress of His wrath so that the blood of all enemies of God, including unbelievers and oppressors, will flow out to the Gulf of Aqaba and make its waters red. Lord Jesus will rule the whole world for a thousand years as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, with His capital in Jerusalem. No country or territory in the world will be outside of His dominion. And this prophecy will be fulfilled with all certainty.

God's warning goes out to all presidents, prime ministers, cabinet members, generals, judges, governors, and mayors of all nations in the world – they must fear God before the Day of Judgment arrives suddenly. They must govern the peoples in fear of God by God's principles and laws. God expects that the rulers of nations follow His precepts in their acts of governance and in establishing the rules and systems of governance because He is looking down on each of their acts now. As they fear God, they would want to stand on God's side when Judgment Day comes. That will be possible if they kiss the Son of God today [v. 12], protect and care for the Christians, and they ensure that the Kingdom of God is preserved within their dominions.

God's day of grace and mercy is yet continuing but not for long. Before the fearful ending of His grace and mercy, I encourage all rulers of this world to pay careful heed to this warning that has emanated from the throne of God a long time ago and wisely put into action the admonition of Psalm 2. Amen.