

## Failure to Fear the Lord

In 1 Kings we see the transition from King David to his son, King Solomon. From King Solomon to successive kings who came after him, a variety of governments tried by these kings *failed*. They all failed to *include* God in the process of ruling over the people of Israel because each king failed to *fear* God, or to exercise *profound reverence*.

One of the main points of 1 and 2 Kings is that no matter how a king might rule over the people, if God is deliberately ignored or pushed out of the picture (due to a lack of fear of Him), failure is guaranteed. This also applies to the lives of Christians today, yet how often do we hear this subject?

In the book *The Outlined Bible* (1921), author Robert Lee has pointed out the following trajectory taken by the kings in **1 Kings**:

- Establishment of the Kingdom
- Glory of the Kingdom
- Disruption of the Kingdom
- Decline of the Kingdom

and **2 Kings**:

- Jehovah Ignored
- Jehovah Derided
- Jehovah's Anger
- Jehovah's Compassion
- Jehovah's Great Anger
- Jehovah's Fierce Wrath

Lee also states:

*(1 Kings) is written to show the causes of the establishment and decline of the kingdom. It points out that, when loyal to God, Israel flourished, but when Israel departed from God their morals and their kingdom declined. The vision (22:19) is very important. God sat as Sovereign on His throne dispensing mercy and grace to the penitent and obedient, but punishment and chastisement to the sinners.*

The tragedy of these truths is not simply seen in Israel. In fact, while there is no connection between the USA and Israel (as some would have us believe), the fact remains that what God has shown us about Israel in Holy Writ is exactly what happens to *every* nation/empire due to a lack of fearing God.

While the USA began as somewhat of a "Christian" nation (though many of our founding fathers were actually Deists, not Christians), in that biblical principles were used to create our Constitutional Republic, it began moving off that path very early on. Is it any wonder that the USA is now being destroyed from within? Because of all that continues to be acceptable and pushed to the front within the United States, it appears, based on history, that God has very little recourse except to allow this nation to proceed to judgment.

I'm not really sure how anyone can logically disagree with this because of the many examples provided in Scripture regarding the nation of Israel and other nations as well. Israel removed herself from God's kindness, compassion and loving care through disobedience, idolatry and ultimately, outright rebellion - all due to a lack of *profound reverence* for Him and His ways.

Even though Solomon was given tremendous wisdom and insight, allowing him to rule Israel with compassion and strength, he was still willing to do the things that God had forbidden. Solomon married the Egyptian Pharaoh's daughter though he was already married (1 Kings 3:1; cf Exodus 23:31-33, 34:12-16, and Deuteronomy 17:17). Beyond this, Solomon also seemed to collect horses (1 Kings 4:26), which he also should not have done.

Why did Solomon do these things? It is because wisdom, in and of itself, does not necessarily provide a God-ordained sense of *profound reverence* (fear) for and of God. If that was the case, Solomon would never have moved away from God throughout his entire life. It is the same with Moses and anyone else who represented God. Moses sinned by striking the rock because he, at that point, did not fear God *enough*. God had become too familiar. The fear - in that moment - was gone. Moses paid a price for it.

The same exact thing applies to each and every Christian. We sin because we lack the appropriate fear of God.

I believe Solomon's failures to fear God came back to haunt him later on and ultimately created two nations from one: the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. In spite of Solomon's tremendous wisdom granted by God Himself, we see that Solomon chased after this, that or the other thing in attempts to find "fulfillment" and "peace" (Ecclesiastes), though Solomon does finally arrive to the correct conclusion at the end. What it proves is that wisdom itself is not the key to finding and enjoying God. Wisdom may well shine the light on God's existence and our ability to understand that God can be known, but what is needed *before* wisdom is a firm and profound reverence (fear) for and of Him and His ways. Do you have that? Are you developing that?

*The **FEAR of the Lord is the BEGINNING of wisdom**: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10 KJV; emphasis added)*

Let's be clear here. Without a proper and abiding fear of God, we will never truly know God at all. It all starts with *fear*. While the Christian should *never* fear God's judgment or wrath - we have been saved from that - God *will* chastise His wayward children and He does so out of *love*. Fear, a truly deep and abiding profound reverence for God, will keep Him from

having to chastise us because it will be that fear that continually moves us toward Him in humility, keeping us from offending Him.

Dr. Thomas Constable says that Solomon's method of governing Israel was *oppressive*. Once Solomon died, Rehoboam tried a different approach, which was *autocracy*. This actually created even *more* of a burden for the people and they chafed under it. Jeroboam, the king of the Northern Kingdom after the split, chose a new method of governing the people there; a form of democracy. Unfortunately, while there were some positives to this method, it ultimately gave birth to *idolatry* that hounded Israel for generations.

Of course we can see the problem with all of these methods as they all involve the same root problem: *failure to fear God*.

But what about authentic Christians who are alive now? My wife and I were discussing this the other day. It is as though there is but a true "remnant" of authentic Christians who exercise a growing desire to have only what God wants and endeavor to follow Him in all things. These folks are characterized by their love and devotion to God stemming from a growing and **profound reverence (fear)** for Him.

There is a tragedy occurring today that many Christians seem completely unaware of as they live their daily lives. There is no **fear** of God in them. None.

Dr. Michael Lake ("[The Shinar Directive](#)"), bluntly states that Christians today live with a "Snippet Theology," meaning we grab onto a verse here or there and build our theology from it. Because of this, when I speak of our need to "fear" God, someone is likely to come back with a "snippet" of Scripture like, "*But perfect love casts out all fear*" (1 John 4:18). However, there is absolutely no contradiction with that truth and with the truth that each Christian must have a true fear of God now. I have no reason to fear God's judgment or wrath, but I should have a great fear of failure to obey Him.

That is the exact point that John is making in that verse. *We should* fear being disobedient. *We should* fear failing to bring Him glory. *We should* fear becoming arrogant and too worldly. *We should* fear taking it easy on ourselves where sin is concerned. But we should *not* fear His judgment or wrath because we will never experience that.

Too many Christians appear completely unable to see and understand the entire concept of godly fear. I am one of them, but by God's grace, that is changing.

When did Job come to the end of himself? When did YOU or I come to the end of ourselves? Have YOU? Have I?

*Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. (Job 40:4 KJV)*

Job had heard God and had absolutely no answer to God's queries. None. Job was left realizing how utterly vile he was and had no ground to ask or demand from God any

answer to any question. This was Job's start of true wisdom because he had finally come to a point of understanding what it meant to truly *fear* God.

As righteous as Job may have been prior to all that occurred in his life, I believe it was at this point Job finally came to the end of himself and stopped relying on his own strength. He saw that he was utterly bereft and any righteousness he had was due only to the fact that God imputed it to Job based on Job's faith. Yet, Job's faithfulness was not a substitute for having an ongoing profound reverence for God; a reverence that silences us before His grandeur, splendor, justice and perfection. a reverence that removes all excuses and all our own machinations.

If any of us saw or heard God today, don't you think we'd fall over onto our faces as though dead? The majesty, awesome unlimited power, omniscience and eternal character of God compared to our puny, limited, ability should cause us to react in horror at our own sin and failure. It should remove every question or word from our heart and lips as we fall prone before Him endeavoring to do nothing but worship Him.

Are we too familiar with God? Are we too satisfied with His love?

I'm beginning to understand why the angelic host will sing "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God" or something similar (Isaiah 6:2-3; Luke 2:13-14; Revelation 5:8-11; etc.), continuously. God's character is never fully understood by any of His created beings. We will spend eternity discovering Him and singing His praises. We will never come to the end of our praise of and for Him. We can and should start now, in this life. That can only happen as we begin to understand what it means to fear the Lord.

In every generation God has kept for Himself a remnant (1 Kings 19:18; Romans 11:5), and that is the case today. While Paul in Romans was specifically referring to the remnant of believing Jews, those believing Jews since the inception of the Church are hidden within the Body of Christ. But this also applies to all authentic Christians who are to be bearers of light and truth in every age of darkness; the remnant of believers.

Our days are growing very dark. I believe if we learn to properly *fear* God, we will be that much more obedient and sure-footed here and now. The problem is that we do *not* fear Him enough. We actually fear the world and its satanic system *more*, don't we? Be honest. I know that is true with me and it *must* change. By His grace and strength, it *will* change.

A crossroad is before us. Which way will you go? Will you seek to have a growing fear of God (a profound reverence)? Do you understand that this is where wisdom and knowing God actually *starts*? Or, will you be content focusing solely on His love, as though that excuses Christians from having to be obedient because of "grace"? We need *both*. One without the other creates a very unbalanced Christian.

Fearing God is the only path to Him. We fear hell, so we reach out to Him for salvation. However, too often, we are done. We should just as much strive to learn to fear Him because fear keeps us from disappointing Him *after* we become Christians. Every sin in the

lives of God's people can be traced back to one thing: *a complete lack of profound reverence (fear) for Him.*

When will our sin and disobedience be enough? Fear God in all things.