



## No Growth - Fear

**For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**

*2 Timothy 1:7*

**Fret** - 1 Samuel 1:6

**Ears/Eyes** - Exodus 1:17, Exodus 20:20

**Access** - 1 Peter 2:8

**Restless** - Matthew 2:3

Fear is a feeling experience that overwhelms a person in a moment, which may stem from a personal matter, a visual occurrence, listening to headline reports, or hearing disturbing conversations through family, friends, neighbours, co-workers, and nearby strangers during commute, and associates. This scary condition is a form of hindrance and torment that can damage a life from living freely and not having the potential to enjoy what God has given.

What is fear all about? There are two sides to this word: the physical side is the first. Fear can arise through concern (which is a positive way of phrasing it). However, it is better known to cause anxiety or worry. Fear may generate doubt, panic, or cause someone to be scared. It can also be generated from suspicion. On the other hand, the beginning of the theme verse, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear," as in Second Timothy one, verse seven. Therefore, this tells believers that there is a spiritual side to fear that can hinder and torment if we allow it.

The other side is the spiritual one. "A sound mind" is similar to self-control. The Holy Spirit works, in those to whom it is given, power, or

strength, to fight the fight of God, power, not only patiently to endure, but also to strike good blows for Christ: the power, for instance, of steadfastness in resisting temptation which guides other weaker ones along the narrow way "of love." It works, too, in those to whom God gives the blessed gift, that strange, sweet love for others which leads to noble deeds of self-surrender. The love that never shrinks from a sacrifice, which may benefit the friend or even the neighbour. And lastly, the Spirit works in us "self-control" is that power which, in the man or woman living in and mixing with the world, and exposed to its varied temptations and pleasures, enables them to regulate and to keep in a wise subjection, passions, desires, and impulses.

Fear involves those who fret. Fret can cause people to fuss, fume, and even grieve. Any one of these fearful actions can harm a life and those associated with that person. Hannah from First Samuel chapter one, had no children of her own for Elkanah, her husband. In verse six, "And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb." The adversary, in other terms, is her opponent, the other wife, Peninah, for Elkanah. The adversary is better known as the devil in First Peter five, verse eight. However, Satan can use anybody who stirs their heart to do wrong against another, such as even to tease a person, which seems like it, with Peninnah to Hannah. Fretting can cause a person to be upset and even lose their appetite.

"And as he (Elkanah) did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat," as in verse seven.

In verse eight, "Then said Elkanah, her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" Hannah's fretting is now affecting her husband, while Peninnah, the other wife, provokes her.

For believers, even though she was in the state of bitterness, even though she was weeping, because it hurt so much, she started praying, as in verse ten." And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore." Hannah's experience of

barrenness, frustration, shame, and waiting was a trial of her faith. Although God had withheld children from her, as in verse five of First Samuel one, the desperate intercession it produced prepared the way for her miracle to come forth and for God's prophetic plan to be birthed. All believers should do what Hannah did: take our unbearable situation and pain directly to the Lord and wait upon Him.

Fear can hinder, and torment may come from what we hear and pay attention to on any given day. The verse from Romans ten, verse seven, begins, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

However, fear is hearing, and hearing the bad or negative, which attracts that scary feeling in the mind. Jacob had an upcoming encounter with his brother Esau at the beginning of Genesis thirty-three. However, the chapter before in thirty-two was the preparation to meet him.

Jacob was fearful and distressed as he approached Esau's territory. He sent messengers to Esau in verse three, only for them to return to him in verse six, "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him." This made Jacob greatly afraid, already assuming the worst, planning with family strategies of escape, preparing in case something bad happens, leading to the encounter with Esau. Jacob also prayed to God concerning this meeting, in verses nine to eleven.

Jacob's fear could have suddenly come upon him due to the previous tricks Esau had done, tricking his brother by selling him his birthright for food. The other incident of stealing Esau's blessing is that he was in line to get from Isaac, their father, with the help of Rebekah, their mother. Recollecting those experiences, cheating his brother would cause Jacob to be hesitant in seeing Esau.

Fear can be created by vision. Seeing something that may appear to be a threat to safety. For Goliath's appearance seemed to be dangerous to Saul and the people of God in verse ten of First Samuel seventeen, "And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." In the next verse, "When Saul and

all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid."

Goliath was a champion of the Philistines. A helmet of brass on his head, a coated armour on his body for protection, brass on his legs, brass between his shoulders, a heavy-duty spear and shield for protection. The height of Goliath was six cubits and a span. For a person to witness such a man of war could create fear in anyone. The response at the beginning of verse twenty-five, "And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up?"

Fear can affect a person's well-being due to admission. People who struggle with being fearful are the result of what they allow through their senses: what they see, what they hear, and what they say. For believers, it becomes so important in their relationship with God not to allow ungodly activities to contaminate their godly environment. Saul, the former king of Israel, allowed things to happen to him through bad choices, affecting his relationship with God to the point he was not hearing from Him at all.

In First Samuel twenty-eight, verses five through seven, "And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor." Saul went from being a great king to a bad and ungodly situation that led to his tragic end. To access a familiar spirit that is an abomination to God is definitely a careless thing to do after knowing and experiencing God for himself. All he had to do was repent, but he had no fear of God. However, fearful now for his life, based on the wrong decisions he made on his own. Fear can cause a person to become restless. No peace to the point of thinking wrong, doing wrong, and living wrong. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king," as in Matthew two, verse one, he was troubled. Herod, the king, who had everything, wanted to know the place where Jesus would be born. Herod was afraid,

because he dreaded the overthrow of his throne; the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Herod had obtained the kingdom by great crimes and by shedding much blood. He was easily alarmed by any remarkable appearances, and the fact that this star appeared, and that it was regarded as proof that a King of the Jews was born, alarmed him. Besides, it was a common expectation that the Messiah was about to appear, and he feared that his reign was about to come to an end. He therefore began to inquire in what way he might secure his own safety and the permanency of his government. Fear makes the person unstable in mind, and the feeling of insecurity. It is not natural, but a spirit that will overwhelm anyone from the inside out. It can encounter a person through vision or hearing. Fear can gain full access to a person's life through something. Fear can also make a person bring harm to others, and that is what fear is all about.