**Fear: Nehemiah 6:1-13**

**02-07-21**

Nehemiah was the Governor of the Persian territory of Judea. He had sought this position in order to restore the city of Jerusalem. Ironically, he was also likely a eunuch, which meant he was forbidden from presenting himself in the temple (Lev. 21:20). He had many enemies who were constantly trying to intimidate and threaten him. In Nehemiah 6, he receives a threat and a false request to help. The temptation was this: his enemies wanted to scare him into hiding in the temple, which was a sin. Nehemiah understand that they wanted “***that I should be afraid and act that way and sin”.*** He did not act in fear.

Fear of worldly things is dangerous. It could have cost Nehemiah much to give into his fears. When we fear worldly things, It can provoke us to act sinfully, as did the man of a single talent in Matthew 25:24-30, who declared “I was afraid and went and hid your talent”. Fear of worldly things confuses us as to what we need to fear; Jesus warned us “*do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*” In Matthew 10:28.

Let us consider for a few moments those things we fear that we ought not, and that one thing which we ought to fear.

**Fear Of Death**

*Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*. Hebrews 2:14-15

Fear Of Death is a common fear of people. But those in Christ need not fear death. Those in Christ (as all men) will die, but death is a matter of victory (Philippians 1:21). Ironically, many turn from Christ in this fear when He is the only solution.

**Fear Of Shame**

*So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself*.“ Genesis 3:10

Fear Of Shame is powerful. Since sin is shameful, we want to hide our sins rather than deal with them. Yet all sin and fall short of God’s glory. The problem is that too many times we wont admit it, and therefore cannot be forgiven (1 John 1:9). Ironically, many turn from Christ in this fear when He is the only solution.

**Fear Of Suffering**

"*Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life*.” Revelation 2:10

Fear Of Suffering is something we share with even animals. Many of us fear suffering and hardship. But we know everyone suffers. As Christians, we are told that our suffering offers the opportunity to glorify God (1 Peter 4:16). But some of us flee our responsibility to God when it gets hard. Ironically, many turn from Christ in this fear when He is the only value in it.

**Fear Of Ridicule**

*All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, “He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him*!“ Psalm 22:7-8

We fear being mocked or derided. We hate the idea of being falsely accused of evil or of foolishness. But this is the promise in Christ, that the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world, and that the world will see us as evil to its own righteousness. We are told not to fear these things (1 Peter 3:14). Ironically, many turn from Christ in this fear when He is the only righteousness and wisdom.

**God’s Reaction to Fearful Action**

In the parable of the talents, the master (God) confronted the fearful servant in Matthew 25:26: “*You wicked and lazy servant*”. John warns us in Revelation 21:8 that “*the cowardly….shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death*.” Fear is not the sin; acting in fear creates the sin. In fact, fear is a test of our faith: *Is your trust greater than your fear*?

But there is a fear that is necessary: The Fear Of The Lord. "*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 power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him*!” Luke 12:4-5

Jesus said to Fear God and nothing else. This “Fear of the Lord” is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10). It is manifested when we hate evil and depart from it (Job 28:28). It is a fountain of life (Proverbs 14:27). Consider the fear of the Lord in Acts 9:31: *Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied*.

What did the Fear Of The Lord bring them? They had peace and they were edified. The were comforted by the Holy Spirit. They were multiplied.

Do not fear the things of this world. That fear will only lead to ruin. Fear God, and enjoy the benefits of that action.