

# What Is The Fear Of God?

also called the time of 'Jacob's trouble,' will be a time of panic, terror and terrible distress for the modern-day descendants of ancient Israel. Men will be so scared to death, that they will hold their loins like a woman in labour, and their faces will turn pale (*Jer 30:5-7*). During the heavenly signs, nations will be perplexed and in anguish, and men will faint because of the terrifying events that will shake the whole earth! (*Joel 2:30-31; Mt 24:29; Mk 13:24-25; Lk 21:25-26; Rev 6:12-17*). But the most terrifying, earth-shattering events of all, will occur during the Day of the Lord, where God will display His awesome power to the world, through seven trumpet plagues, followed by seven last plagues (*Rev 8-11; 16*). He will demonstrate who really is in charge! The rich and mighty men will be terrified and flee to the caves and dig holes in the ground, to attempt to escape the Lord's majesty and power, when He arises to shake the earth! Human pride and arrogance will be brought low. Men will be greatly humbled, and throw away their idols of gold and silver; and the Lord alone will be exalted! (*Is 2:10-22*). The great day of the Lord, will demonstrate that in the day of wrath, wealth will not save; but righteousness delivers from death (*Pr 10:2*). With pride comes shame and destruction. Just before destruction, a man's heart is very proud (*Pr 11:2; 16:18*). The wicked, through proud and arrogant words, disregard God's righteous judgments, including His omnipotence, omnipresence & omniscience. (*Ps 139:1-4; Jer 23:23-24; 32:17; Rev 14:7; 19:6*). But God will deal with them accordingly! (*Ps 10:11; 17:10; 36:1-4; 55:19*) (Read tracts: 'Signs Of The End Of The Age' & 'Heavenly Signs: Introduce The Day Of The Lord').

## Scriptural References:

Exodus 20:20  
Deuteronomy 5:29  
Deuteronomy 6:13  
Deuteronomy 10:12-13, 20-21  
Joshua 4:23-24  
2 Kings 17:25  
Psalm 25:12-14  
Psalm 31:19  
Psalm 33:8, 18-19  
Psalm 34:7-14  
Psalm 61:5  
Psalm 66:16-20  
Psalm 76:7-12  
Psalm 85:9  
Psalm 86:11-13  
Psalm 90:11  
Psalm 112  
Psalm 115:11, 13  
Psalm 128  
Psalm 145:19-20  
Psalm 147:11  
Proverbs 1:7, 29-33  
Proverbs 3:7-8  
Proverbs 8:13-21  
Proverbs 9:10-12  
Proverbs 10:27  
Proverbs 14:27  
Proverbs 16:6  
Proverbs 19:23  
Proverbs 28:14  
Ecclesiastes 12:13-14  
Isaiah 33:13-16  
Isaiah 66:4  
Jeremiah 2:19  
Jeremiah 5:20-31  
Jeremiah 44:10-11  
Malachi 3:5  
Acts 10:1-2, 22, 34-35  
2 Corinthians 6:14-18  
Hebrews 10:31  
Revelation 14:6-7  
Revelation 15:3-4

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What is the fear of the Lord? Are we to fear God? Does God command us to fear Him? If so, why and what kind of fear are we to have, and what does it lead to? What are the benefits of fearing the Lord? What does the Bible teach?

Fear is either a positive or negative emotion. It's crucial that we know and understand the difference between right and wrong fear, and put the correct fear of God into practice. The 'Parable of the Talents,' illustrates the difference between the right and wrong kind of fear. The purpose of the parable, is to show that being lazy and doing little to nothing in God's service, will not prepare one for the return of Christ and rulership in the Kingdom of God (*Dan 7:27; Mt 25:14-30; Rev 5:10*). We cannot sit on the sidelines and play it safe. We must respond in faith. If we are faithful in small matters, God will put us in charge of more elaborate ones. We must be good stewards of our finances. When we have the reverential fear of God, we will be zealous and active in doing His will that produces results, with the skills, gifts and talents bestowed upon us, and resources that have been entrusted to us (*1 Cor 12:4-11; 2 Cor 9:6-15; Titus 2:11-14*). As Christ's disciples, we are God's workmanship, and chosen for a special purpose—to serve Him, doing good works which He has prepared in advance for us to do (*Eph 2:10*). God has given us a Spirit of power, love and self-control; and not of fear (*2 Tim 1:7*), therefore we preach the word of God, including the gospel ("good news") with holy boldness (*Acts 4:31; 2 Tim 4:2*), and bear fruit in every good work (*2 Cor 9:8; Col 1:9-12*), as we abide in Christ (*Jn 15:1-17; Heb 13:20-21*).

### **There are two kinds of fear in the Bible:**

**1. Godly Fear:** is a healthy fear of God. Deep reverence and awe toward God, with a trembling at His word (*Is 66:2*). Respect and honour, combined with wonder. God wants us to have a wholesome fear, which is the foundation for all godly living (*1 Pet 1:15-17*), and is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge (*Pr 1:7; 9:10*). Loyalty to God is also an expression of our gratefulness and appreciation for the great wonders He does for us (*Pss 40:4-5; 75:1; 136:4*). Fearing the Lord, means that we hate and avoid evil; and love what is good (*Pr 8:13; 16:6; Amos 5:15; 1 Th 5:21-22*). It keeps us safe from trouble and danger. The Lord is faithful to us, and promises to strengthen and protect us from all evil (*Jn 17:15; 2 Th 3:3*). He who trusts in the Lord: **1)** is kept safe, and the evil one cannot harm him (*Pss 32:10; 115:11; Pr 29:25*), and **2)** will prosper (*Pr 28:25*).

It's crucial that we understand how to worship God. He desires true worship from the heart. We worship and serve Him, according to His nature, which is Spirit, and in sincerity, love and truth (*Jn 4:24; Eph 6:24*). Truth is associated with Christ. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Only through Him can we approach the Father (*Jn 14:6*). He is the only way of salvation (*Acts 4:12*). Truth is also connected with obedience to God's commandments. We worship God according to His word; not human tradition (*Mt 15:8-9; Lk 6:46-49*). We must do the will of God, which is to: **1)** obey His commandments (*Mt 7:21-23; 19:16-19; Jn 14:15; 15:10; 1 Jn 2:3-6*); **2)** live a holy and transformed life—pure in thought and will, which leads to spiritual growth and maturity. Not conformed to the corruption and evil in this world (*Rom 12:1-2; Gal 1:3-5; 1 Pet 1:15-16*); **3)** be sanctified, which means set apart and made holy for God (*1 Thes 4:1-4; 5:23-24*). Only when we are sanctified, can we be ready to serve God (*2 Tim 2:15, 21-22*); **4)** always pray and give thanks to Him (*1 Thes 5:17-18*).

**2. Worldly Fear:** Is a cowardly fear that holds one back from drawing close to God, or compromises godliness, by accepting false teachings and conforming to the ways of this world. One with this kind of fear, doesn't stand up for Biblical values, nor does he expose or speak out against evil, because he's afraid of the opinions of others, and refuses to stand out from the crowd (*Rom 12:2; Eph 5:11-13; 1 Tim 4:1-2; 2 Tim 4:3-4; 1 Jn 2:18-23; 1 Jn 4:1-3; Jude 1:4*). We are to fear God; and not the enemies of God (*Is 8:11-13; Mt 10:28; Rev 14:7*). The conquerors will inherit eternal life (*Rev 21:6-7*). The place for cowards is the lake of fire (*Rev 21:8*).

### **Who/what feared God in the Old Testament:**

\* Abraham - *Gen 22:12*.  
\* Jacob - *Gen 28:17*.  
\* Joseph - *Gen 42:18*.  
\* Moses - *Exo 3:6*.  
\* Israel feared the Lord - *Exo 14:31*.  
\* People feared the Lord - *1 Sam 11:7*.  
\* Widow's husband feared the Lord - *2 Ki 4:1*.  
\* Israel feared God - *2 Chr 6:33*.  
\* The fear of the Lord came upon all the cities about Gerar - *2 Chr 14:14*.  
\* Nehemiah feared God - *Neh 5:15*.  
\* Hananiah feared God - *Neh 7:2*.  
\* Job feared God - *Job 1:1*.  
\* Mortals fear the Almighty - *Job 37:24*.  
\* When God blesses His people, all the earth will revere Him - *Pss 67:7*.  
\* The waters were afraid - *Pss 77:16*.  
\* Every man shall be afraid - *Is 13:6-8*.  
\* God's divine judgment will bring fear upon Egypt - *Is 19:16*.  
\* Hezekiah feared the Lord - *Jer 26:19*.  
\* King Darius decreed that men should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel - *Dan 6:25-27*.

\* When Daniel saw the angelic vision, he trembled. Daniel was a humble prophet who feared God - *Dan 10:11-12*.  
\* Israel shall be in awe of God - *Hos 3:5*.  
\* Jonah feared the Lord - *Jonah 1:9*.  
\* The sailors feared the Lord - *Jonah 1:16*.  
\* The nations shall be afraid of the Lord - *Mic 7:16-17*.  
\* Levi revered the Lord - *Mal 2:4-5*.

### **New Testament:**

\* Disciples Peter, James, and John expressed awe at the splendour of the Lord - *Mt 17:1-7*.  
\* The centurion and those who kept watch over Jesus, were terrified - *Mt 27:54*.  
\* The disciples feared exceedingly - *Mk 4:41*.  
\* Overwhelming fear of the angel of the Lord fell upon Zechariah - *Lk 1:11-12*.  
\* Crowd was filled with amazement and glorified God - *Lk 5:25-26*.  
\* Pilate was afraid - *Jn 19:8*.  
\* Fear and awe came upon everyone - *Acts 2:43-44*.  
\* Great fear came upon all the church - *Acts 5:11*.  
\* Cornelius, a centurion, was a devout man who feared God - *Acts 10:1-4, 22*.  
\* Jesus, Himself, reverently submitted to His Father - *Heb 5:7*.  
\* Noah feared God - *Heb 11:7*.  
\* Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake" - *Heb 12:21*.  
\* Survivors of a great earthquake will come to a terrifying realization that Jesus is the true Lord of all the earth - *Rev 11:13*.  
\* God of the universe will receive worldwide recognition. Everyone will acknowledge Jesus Christ is Lord - *Rom 14:9, 11; Php 2:9-11; Rev 15:4; 19:5*.

**Benefits of fearing the Lord:** According to the Bible, fearing the Lord has numerous benefits in our personal lives. Here are a few examples:

**1) We will attain wisdom and knowledge.** Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. (*Pss 111:10; Pr 1:7; 9:10*). Humility leads to wisdom (*Pr 11:2; 13:10; 15:33*).

**2) Leads to holiness.** Reverential fear of God means respect for His will, which is godly living, and leads to eternal life (*Rom 6:22-23; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 4:24; 1 Thes 4:7; Heb 12:14*).

**3) Those who trust in God, will lack nothing good** (*Pss 34:8-10*). God will provide all our needs, when He is first love and first priority in our lives (*Mt 6:33*). Fear of God is a loving and reverential trust in God, that includes submission to His Lordship, and commitment to His will, as revealed in His word (*Pr 3:5-6; Ecc 12:13; James 4:7*).

**4) Enjoyment and satisfaction** (*Pr 12:14; 19:23; Ecc 2:24-26*). Only in God do we find our true purpose in life. Life has true meaning when we search for the answers to these questions in God's word: Why are we born? Why are we here? We will discover that it is to fear God and obey His commandments (*Ecc 12:13*). We are to serve God, do good deeds, and prepare others and ourselves for the return of Christ (*Mt 25:1-13, 14-30*). God's chosen ones are in training for rulership positions in His Kingdom here on earth (*Rev 1:6; 5:10; 11:15*). Acknowledging and revering God, leads to true pleasure. He will make us abundantly satisfied (*Pss 36:8*).

**5) We will see good days when we love and do good; and hate and shun what is evil** (*Pss 34:14*). We pursue peace; and depart from evil. Those who love God's commandments, and keep their minds fixed on God, have abundant peace (*Pss 119:165; Is 26:3*).

**6) Health, when we fear the Lord, and depart from evil** (*Pr 3:7-8; 16:6*). Reverential fear and trust in the Lord, and having nothing to do with evil, results in health to the whole body.

**7) Long life** (*Pss 36:9; 91:16; Pr 9:10-11; 10:27; 14:27*). God is the source of all life. Reverential fear of the Lord prolongs our lives. God grants us a long life and will display His salvation (*Pss 91:16*).

**8) Riches and honour and life,** when we have reverential fear of God and humble obedience to Him (*Pr 7:2-3; 10:22; 19:23; 22:4*).

**9) Protection and confidence** (*Pss 91:14; Pr 14:26; 19:23*). Fear of the Lord is strong confidence. Name of the Lord is a strong tower, where the righteous run into and are safe (*Pr 18:10*). God's name is an expression of His character, attributes and qualities. He is the faithful God who desires our complete loyalty to, and trust in Him (*Ex 3:12, 14-15; 34:6-7*). We are also kept safe from our enemies (*Pss 61:3*).

**10) Rescue.** The righteous are rescued from trouble (*Pss 91:15; Pr 11:8; 12:13; 2 Pet 2:9-10*).

**How will the fear of the Lord impact people in the prophesied 'Great Tribulation,' 'Heavenly Signs' and 'Day of the Lord'?** The signs of the end of the age are mentioned in *Matthew 24; Mark 13; & Luke 21*. Great Tribulation,