

PARABLES

Bringing Hidden Things to Light



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 2.9.1

Series 2 of the Parables Bookshelf contains a variety of writings covering a wide range of topics related to the Kingdom of God. These writings originally appeared as posts on the Heart4God website, or the Parables Blog, both of which are the websites of Bible teacher Joseph Herrin.

Endurance



Endurance - Part 1
Joseph Herrin
(10-27-08)

I believe that if we wait patiently upon the Father that we can expect Him to speak to us and make things clear. This has certainly been one of the lessons the Spirit of Christ is teaching at this time. When we act hastily we often fail to discern the mind of the Father. He would have us to slow down, to

wait upon Him, and to have an expectation as we do so that He will truly speak to us. The Father has been faithful to guide and direct me as I have waited upon Him during this season on Jekyll Island.

I want to share with you a very profound witness I have received from the Spirit in the past several days. A couple days ago I set out to ride my bicycle around the island, and I really felt a need for the Father to put all things in context that I might know what He is seeking to communicate to me. Sometimes we need a reference point, or a certain framework to understand the events we are experiencing. As I began my ride I confessed to the Lord that I knew He was quite able to speak to me, and I truly wanted

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to hear His voice. I told Him that as I rode around the island that I was listening, and I invited Him to speak. Before I asked, He had already sent the answer.

Isaiah 65:24

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

The previous night the Lord spoke to me clearly and told me to read again the book *Endurance - Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*. I had noted a few things in the book that I had not seen before, but I had not yet discerned why the Father directed me to read this again. Upon finishing my bike ride I received an e-mail, and while answering a sister's question the Father brought understanding. The Father showed me that this book provides the framework needed to know what He is speaking in this season.

For those of you unfamiliar with this book, I will provide a little background. Just before I left the employment of the Rescue Mission last February I was putting some donated books on the shelf at the Mission's thrift store when this book caught my eye. The Spirit spoke to me and indicated I was to purchase this book and read it.

I found the book profoundly moving as it chronicles the expedition led by Sir Ernest Shackleton to cross the South Polar Continent in 1914. A group of 28 men set sail from South Georgia Island to begin their trek. Their ship, *Endurance*, never made it to the continent. It became locked in ice in the Weddell Sea, one of the most forbidding places on earth. Before long the mission changed to one of survival, and all plans to cross the continent, or even

reach it, were abandoned.



Shackleton's goal became that of getting his men back home alive, and the storms and severe cold and desperate conditions they endured are simply incredible to read about. For nearly two years these men survived in this frozen wasteland, and when all was said and done, Shackleton got all of the men back to safety without the loss of a single life. That the men were transformed by the experience was quite evident.

When I read this book about 9 months ago the Father was indicating that He was calling me out from the Mission to begin preparation for the ministry that lay ahead. This would be a ministry to the church in the wilderness. It would be a call to shepherd the people of God through very difficult days, and the Spirit indicated that **endurance** would be needed to make it through. This was the main lesson I derived from the book at that time.

As I have re-read the book the Spirit has been revealing some much more specific things. We

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are on the verge of great judgment falling upon the nations. A time of calamity is at hand. People's lives are about to become very difficult, and it will require much fortitude, courage, faith and endurance to get through these days. Yet the Father does have a provision for His people, and though they will be tried, those who trust in Him will not suffer any real harm. All who pass through this trial will be transformed in profound ways.

The Spirit spoke to me as I read the book, and a particular detail leapt out at me. The arduous trek of these men both began and ended on South Georgia Island.



The Lord then asked me to consider where it was that He had brought me to at this season. I am on a South Georgia Island. Jekyll Island is located on the southern coast of the state of

Georgia. The Spirit spoke to me and said, "This book provides the framework for you to understand the things you are experiencing." What happened the next day confirmed this very clearly.

It began to rain that night and the rain continued for 36 hours. I had set-up a new tent, and before I left Fort Wayne I had bought several cans of water repellant to spray on the tent. From previous camping experience I knew this would help out considerably. Before the rain began I sprayed down the tent with water repellant, and I took all normal precautions to keep the water out, closing all the windows on the tent.

The following day the rain continued, and it was heavy at times. In the afternoon I thought to look inside the tent to see how it was holding up. I had been sleeping in it, since it is much more roomy than my van, and quite comfortable. I considered that I had taken what normal precautions I could, so I did not look inside the tent. At bedtime I went to get in the tent and I found that the rain fly had sagged slightly in the center and was making contact with the tent fabric. Where they touched water was seeping through and it was dripping directly onto the bed, wetting the sleeping bag, and my pillows. Since they were soaked, I decided to sleep in the van, which has a bed in the back.

I had also taken normal precautions in the van. I closed the windows on either side of the bed, and where there was a water leak from the roof AC unit I kept a bucket underneath it and emptied it periodically throughout the day. When I went to get in the bed in the rear of the van I saw that it too was soaked. Water had built up in the window track and had run down

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the wall where the thick comforter I used had wicked up the moisture. The comforter and the foam mattress below it were both wet, as was my pillow.

I began to get frustrated and was about to complain to the Lord when He stopped me. I understood that He had caused this to happen for a reason, and He wanted me to see something in it. I resigned myself to sleeping in the captain's chair at the front of the van, which was really not too bad, and the next day I dried everything out as the rain had stopped.

The next night I was back in the tent and I was reading further in the book *Endurance* when I came across a section that described the conditions the men met with on a daily basis. The ship was lost after having been crushed in the ice, so they set up camp on an ice floe.



Storms would blow through regularly, pushing snow inside the tents, and the ground inside the tents would warm up causing the ice to melt, soaking their sleeping bags. For most of the time the men were stranded in this region they slept in damp, or even wet, sleeping bags. Yet the men adjusted to every new discomfort, and were remarkably optimistic about their experiences.

One thing that is noted throughout the recounting of this epic adventure, is how truly adaptable man is to difficult circumstances, and how great a role attitude plays in survival. Shackleton is hailed as an extraordinary leader of men, and perhaps the greatest thing he did was to foster a positive outlook among his men.

When the Lord led me back here to this South Georgia Island less than a week ago, one thing I noticed was that the state had erected a new road sign on the causeway leading to the island. The road had always been referred to as "The Jekyll Island Causeway." This was all I had known it by from as far back as 1977 when I first lived on the island. The new sign identified the road as Georgia 520.

When I saw the sign I immediately noted it, and wondered what the Father might be speaking through it. I had called and made reservations at the campground, telling them I anticipated being there for a month. The monthly rate during the off-season is much lower than paying daily, or weekly. I was told by the manager of the campground that he could give me a much better campsite if I was willing to move partway through my stay. I told him that was quite alright with me.

When I arrived they put me in a very spacious site at the back of the campground. It really is a very nice spot. They told me it was available for 20 days, and they would only charge me for the time I was in that site, and when I moved they would charge me again for any remaining time I stayed with them. This allowed me to get the monthly rate while paying for only 20 days. The person doing the registration told me the rate would come out to \$15 a day, whereas it is \$25 per day when paid daily. 15 is 5+5+5, signifying a fulness of grace.

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When I heard that the site would be available for 20 days, the Spirit reminded me of the road sign. He said that God was allowing me 20 days of grace on this South Georgia Island before I must leave and begin this ministry which would require much endurance.

I do not believe these things will occur until sometime after I leave Jekyll Island, for the difficulties Shackleton and his men encountered came after they departed South Georgia Island. These things are coming quickly, however.

The Spirit has comforted me with the thought that He has been preparing vessels for the day which is at hand, and they will stand in the time of trouble for He has not been stinting in qualifying them for the days ahead. He has reminded me of all of the trials He has brought me through, and though I have been brought to the breaking point, and considered giving up on occasions, He has held me to the course and not allowed me to shrink back.

Back in the 1990s, when the Lord brought me to encounter the very first prophetic word I had ever received, He spoke the following, "I have put steel in your backbone." He has brought this back to mind of late, and it has led me to confess that truly the only reason I have stayed the course thus far is that God has held me to it. Like Joseph of old I confessed, "It is not in me." God alone is able to make us to stand, but He has promised to do just that.

Jude 24-25

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and au-

thority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

It is a time to place all confidence in our God, and none in the flesh. The arm of man will not save or deliver the people of God in days ahead. But those who manifest faith in God will do exploits.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

Endurance - Part 2

Joseph Herrin (10-29-08)



I want to share with you a second message the Father is bringing forth through the book *Endurance*, and through the experiences He has been bringing me through of late. The story of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his voyage with 27 other men to the South Pole is clearly a parable of this last hour and the wilderness journey

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that the church must go through. In my second reading of the story I have paid much more attention to the details of the story, and they are clearly infused with divine symbolism.

The ship *Endurance* was 144 feet in length from bow to stern. This is a number pertaining to the overcomers in Christ. Shackleton was 40 years old when he began this trek, and forty is a number relating to trials and testing, being the same number of years that Moses led the people of God through the wilderness, and the number of days the Lord spent fasting in the wilderness (a symbol of putting the flesh underneath the spirit) and being tempted of Satan.

In the previous post I mentioned that it was 522 days from the time Shackleton left South Georgia Island until he returned. This indicates grace (5) and flesh cutting (22). When Shackleton left South Georgia Island, he did so in a ship 144 feet in length. When he arrived back he did so in a much smaller open boat which was 22 feet in length, and six feet across. This again points to flesh (6) and flesh cutting (22). Not only this, but there were six men in the boat that made this perilous crossing, while 22 men of the crew were left behind on Elephant Island to await Shackleton bringing back a ship to rescue them.

After Shackleton arrived on South Georgia Island with six men, he left 3 of them on one side of the island, while he and 2 others attempted the perilous overland crossing of the island, a feat that had never been accomplished before, and has been done only one time since. Amazingly they made the trek successfully, and it is one more heroic account of endurance in this epic story.



Upon arriving at the whaling village on the island, Shackleton arranged for a ship to be sent around to pick up the 3 men left on the far side of South Georgia Island. Appropriately, the name of the ship sent after the three men was the *Samson*. The *Samson* arrived back with the 3 men on May 22nd, which once more brings forth the testimony found in the numbers 5-22. Only God could have orchestrated all of these details with such perfection.

I would like to look at another great challenge that confronted Sir Ernest Shackleton throughout this incredible expedition. This is something that the Spirit is bearing witness to, which will play a tremendous role in coming days. This is the challenges that arose from the personalities of the men who were all participants in this struggle for survival.

In reading the book *Endurance*, it becomes evident that dealing with the men on the voyage was a very major concern and weight upon the shoulders of Shackleton. For the most part, the men maintained very good attitudes, but there were a few trouble spots that had to be guarded constantly. Two men in particular, the

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ship's carpenter, a 56 year old Scottish man named McNeish, and a man with the last name of Orde-Lees, who was the most physically powerful man among the crew, but also the laziest, caused Shackleton to have to remain ever vigilant against rebellion and insubordination.

Throughout the book one discerns that McNeish was an exceptionally skilled ship's carpenter. His services were widely needed, and everything he did was done well. Yet at the same time, being the oldest member of the crew, and having served on ships a long time, he considered himself something of a sailor's lawyer. He had the worst attitude of any crew member when it came to murmuring and complaining. The thought of this murmuring spirit influencing the other members of the crew, so alarmed Shackleton, that he had McNeish share a tent with himself and two other trouble makers. Although Shackleton had no fondness for these troublesome men, he wanted to keep them away from the others, and therefore accepted their presence in his own tent.

This was perhaps one of Ernest Shackleton's greatest weaknesses. In choosing his crew mates, we are told that he had over 5,000 applications for the 27 positions on his crew. The beginning of the book speaks of his approach to choosing crew members, and it seems to have been very capricious. We are told that there is no evidence that he spent more than five minutes in interviewing any of the crew members. This seems to have been a glaring deficiency, especially knowing that they were to face perilous conditions, and even risk their lives. With so much at stake it would have been prudent to be very cautious in the selection of crew members.

Some of Shackleton's choices came back to bite him. He very much rued the selection of cer-

tain individuals whose character became known when the trek became difficult. After one particularly grueling experience where McNeish became very insubordinate and intransigent in his behavior, Shackleton wrote in his journal that he would never forget this man and the trouble he caused him. I am reminded of Paul's words to Timothy concerning Alexander the coppersmith.

II Timothy 4:14-15

Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.

I have entreated the Lord to reveal to me that which He wants me to discern concerning these things. The Spirit bears witness that He wants me to consider deeply this matter of the trouble that lies ahead which will be caused by difficult people when they are cast into times of trouble. God has reminded me of Moses as he led the people of God through the wilderness.

Back in April the Lord spoke to me about Moses being a symbol and pattern of those who will lead His people through a wilderness experience in days ahead. God had led me through two forty day periods of camping in the wilderness under extreme conditions some four years earlier. He showed me that this was a pattern of those who would be called to lead His people through the wilderness in the approaching days. Like Moses, the first experience was for their own humbling, and emptying of all reliance upon the power of the flesh. The second wilderness experience would contain its own trials, albeit somewhat different for those who were entering upon a second experience.

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If you are familiar with Moses' experience of leading the people of God, you will certainly recognize that his greatest trial was not with the physical elements, but with the difficult, complaining, murmuring, fearful, and often rebellious spirit of the people he was guiding. The Spirit is testifying that this is also that which His appointed leaders will have to contend with in coming days.

Consider the following. There has perhaps been no day in which the church has grown more sensual, soft, lazy, and selfish than in this present hour. It will be members from this church who are cast into the wilderness experience ahead. Any who are appointed to shepherd and guide such ones will find the experience fraught with many vexations. A people whose faith is weak, and whose fear is pronounced, will be cast into a time of great trial. A people who are materialistic, and who know almost nothing about "suffering hardship as a good soldier of Yahshua Christ" will be called upon to endure hardship. A people who have been undisciplined and self-directed will enter into a time when to fail to discern and obey the leading of the Spirit will prove very costly.

Those who must lead such people through the wilderness will need not only the mind of Christ, but His character as well. Christ at times expressed exasperation at the slowness of His own disciples, and He picked them out by hand. Moses did not get to choose his companions in the wilderness, and to a large degree I do not believe those who are called to be leaders in these approaching days will get to choose their companions either.

I have asked the Lord, "Why are you showing me these things? Are you suggesting that I avoid all people whom I discern to be potential sources of trouble in the days ahead? Am I to

not permit certain ones to walk with me if they express a desire to do so?" I have not heard any answer in the affirmative.

In this I see that I cannot refuse to accept as traveling companions those whom God has appointed for me to walk with. The selection must be left in God's hands. He is indicating that He will not put us together only with those who are easy to get along with. He will yoke us to some who will make our way difficult, even as Moses' way was made difficult.

Moses had to deal with the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On. Moses had to deal with the criticisms of his own brother and sister concerning his Midianite wife. Moses had to contend constantly with murmuring and complaint over living conditions and food and water. Moses had to contend with people who lusted after the things of Egypt that they had left behind. Moses had to contend with a people who were fearful and often churlish and unjust in their accusations against him. And so must the leaders God has appointed for this coming hour.

People of God, especially those called to be leaders in the coming days, are you prepared for the trials of coming days that will be the result of men's own poor behavior? The Father spoke to me through something as simple as a prize in a bag of Cracker Jacks. Inside my bag was a small picture of Abraham Lincoln. You could fold it one way and see Lincoln as a small boy. When folding it another way you could see him as a man with a beard and stove pipe hat.

Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States, and he served during what was arguably the most difficult period of the nation's history. Brother was set against brother, and

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more were killed and wounded in that great conflict than all of the other wars of the nation combined. Yet one thing that stood out to me concerning the legacy of Abraham Lincoln is that he refused to vilify the one whom he fought against.

Lincoln was urged on numerous occasions to demonize the people of the South, but he refused to do so, knowing that one day they must all be united again as brothers in one nation. After the war was won, many urged him strongly to punish the South by making them pay reparations, and even denying them the right to vote. Again, Lincoln would hear nothing of the sort. He said that they needed to treat the citizens of the Southern States on an equal footing, and to move quickly past the hurts and wounds of the war in order to foster a United States of America where the citizens truly felt as if they were all members of one nation.

Tragically, Lincoln was assassinated, and those who replaced him were not so generous or forgiving. The South was plundered by Northern carpetbaggers, and her citizens were demonized in the press and by various politicians. When I received this picture of Lincoln, his attitude towards those he had a long struggle with was what came to mind. I believe the same attitude must be adopted by the children of God in this hour. Although we will certainly have conflicts, and in some cases will be called upon to manifest great resolve to see things through to an appropriate end, we must be careful to not demonize those against whom we struggle.

Certainly Moses manifested this same spirit. Although he was often the recipient of the people's poor behavior and unjust charges, when God spoke of destroying them and beginning

anew, Moses interceded for the people. He went so far as to entreat the Lord to destroy him as well, of he were to destroy the rest of Israel. We must remember that the principle of Christ is to love even our enemies. Even while being crucified the Son of God proclaimed, "Father, have mercy on them, for they do not know what they do."

If our prayer is for vengeance upon our enemies, rather than for mercy, then we have not yet discerned the Spirit of Christ. We are like James and John when they asked the Lord if they should call down fire out of heaven to destroy the cities that had rejected Yahshua.

Luke 9:55-56

"You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

I would recommend the book *Endurance* to any who have not yet read it. The Spirit is testifying that it contains many messages for the coming hour. The copy I have is written by Alfred Lansing and has a Foreword by James Dobson.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

Fear—The Enemy Within

Fear - The Enemy Within

Joseph Herrin (01-04-09)

Genesis 3:10

And he said, I heard Your voice in the garden, and ***I was afraid***, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

One of the greatest themes in the Bible is mankind's struggle against fear. The first mention of fear in Scripture comes in the third chapter of Genesis, immediately after the man and the woman had sinned. In the verse above we observe Adam's words when God found him hiding in the Garden. It must have been a strange and terrible thing for Adam to experience fear for the first time. He must have wondered what was happening to him. What was this pounding in his chest? What was this pressing desire to flee? Why was his mind, which had formerly known an abiding calm, now so filled with raging waves of panic? Obeying the demands of this monster within, Adam's body responded with flight, seeking somewhere to hide from the One whose presence had formerly elicited only feelings of peace, love and joy.

It was a hideous victory that Satan achieved that day. Man's mind had been free from the ravages of fear. Adam had from the day of his creation been able to calmly survey his life, reasoning with a great peace of mind and placidness of spirit. No terror had ever gripped him. No fear had ever been found within his breast. No panic had ever before set him to flight. By inducing man to sin, Satan had loosed all of these evils upon man, and mankind would have to struggle against them for hundreds of generations to come.

We see a progression and a pattern revealed in Scripture as it relates to fear.

- S i n b r i n g s f o r t h f e a r .
- When fear is allowed to reign, faith is absent.
- Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Perhaps you have never considered fear to be an enemy of righteousness. You may not have considered fear to be something every Christian must wage an unrelenting war against, refusing to be dominated by its tyranny. You may have not understood that God wants to free His children from all fear just as surely as He wants to free them from lust, or envy, or hatred. A Christian cannot lead a life that is pleasing to God if they do not rule over fear in their life.

Some may ask, "Why disparage fear? Is it not something common to all mankind, and am I not simply a victim of fear? Do my fears really have any impact upon others? Will allowing fear to go unconquered really keep me from living a life pleasing to God?" These are some of the questions that will be addressed here.

Mankind's struggle with fear is revealed in the first book of the Bible. It continues all the way through to the last book where we read of God's judgment upon those who do not rule over fear.

Revelation 21:7-8

He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. , and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars,

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John had just described seeing a new heaven and a new earth. He had seen the holy city, the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven, let down as a bride adorned for her husband. He then states, “he who overcomes will inherit these things.” What is it that the saints must overcome? The list of character types that follows provides the answer. The first type of people identified are , therefore fear must be overcome. Being the first in this list indicates the importance God places upon overcoming this evil. The fearful are mentioned before the unbelieving, before murderers, before immoral persons, before idolaters and liars.

Few Christians would have arranged these transgressions in the order in which they appear. In truth, if most Christians were asked to draw up a list of those who would be cast into the lake of fire, ranking the list in order of priority, they would have put homosexuals, or child abusers, or murderers at the top of the list, and the fearful would not have made the list at all. Yet the Holy Spirit inspired John to record this list of transgressors in the exact order in which they occur. Why is being fearful (some translations say “cowardly”) considered such a great evil that the fearful would be mentioned first in the list of those cast into the Lake of Fire? We can begin to answer this question as we examine the things revealed in Adam’s actions and words after he sinned.

After sinning Adam heard God calling Him in the Garden of Eden. Adam then confessed that he was afraid and he hid himself. Sin immediately produced fear, and this fear began influencing, even dictating, Adam’s actions and words, leading to further transgressions and wickedness.

Genesis 3:10-12
And [Adam] said, "I heard the sound of Thee

in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" And the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."

There is much that is devilish in these words of Adam. Satan is called “the accuser of the brethren” and here we see him using Adam as his instrument of accusation. Adam accuses both God and Eve. He lays the blame at their feet in a desperate attempt to avoid the consequences of his sin. A normal response (one not influenced by fear) to being asked “Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” would have been, “Yes. I willfully transgressed against your command and did eat of the fruit.” If fear were not present, this is how Adam would have responded. However, Adam gave a much different response, for he was under the influence of fear, and his fear prompted him to respond in a diabolical manner.

By seeking to shift the blame for his actions onto his wife, Adam was demonstrating how far he had fallen in such a short space of time. God had created Eve as a helper for Adam, and she was perfectly suited for him. Eve was formed from a remnant portion of Adam’s own body. Upon seeing Eve for the first time Adam had declared, “This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.” There was no other created being upon the earth who was a better companion and mate for this man. They were truly one flesh and Eve was a delight unto her husband. The apostle Paul tells us:

Ephesians 5:28-29
He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes

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and cherishes it...

Nourishing and cherishing are acts of love. Blame shifting and accusation are acts of the Devil. The Scriptures declare that woman is a weaker vessel than man, yet Adam hid behind his wife, exposing her to punishment that he might be spared. Adam thought to protect himself by sacrificing Eve. This was a treacherous thing, and that which drove him to such an act was the new found fear that had appeared in his being. As we see how wickedly Adam acted in turning against his wife, exposing her to judgment to save his own skin, we begin to see the great hideousness of fear. When fear is allowed to rule, man's relationship with God and with other people always suffers.

We can readily observe the influence of sin by comparing/contrasting the lives of Israel's first two kings. King Saul was a fearful man whose words and actions were often dictated by the cowardly impulses within. David, however, was bold and courageous and he found great favor with Yahweh. We read the following concerning Saul:

I Samuel 9:2

[Kish] had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome man, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people.

Physically, Saul was a powerful man of great stature. Yet his physical attributes did not translate over to his soul, for he was a fearful man. When the prophet Samuel called all Israel together to choose a king for them, Saul was chosen by lot. Saul, however, could not be found. As all of Israel was desiring to look upon this man whom God had chosen to be

their first king, Saul was frightened and had hid himself. Samuel had to inquire further of the Lord to determine Saul's whereabouts.

I Samuel 10:22

Therefore they inquired further of Yahweh, "Has the man come here yet?" So Yahweh said, "Behold, by the baggage."

The root word for "hiding" is the same Hebrew word "chaba" that was used to describe Adam when he hid from the presence of God after he had sinned. This was not a very auspicious beginning for one who was chosen to rule over God's people. Saul's fear was tremendous, and he had not learned to rule over it.

A profound thing is revealed as we look at the very next occurrence of this word "chaba" in Scripture. The man who chose to hide himself found that those under his leadership exhibited the same behavior when they were frightened. When Saul later led the armies of Israel to fight against the Philistines we read:

I Samuel 13:6-7 When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were hard-pressed), in caves, in thickets, in cliffs, in cellars, and in pits. Also some of the Hebrews crossed the Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead. But

Trembling leaders will have trembling followers. Some time later, Saul had his first encounter with David, the son of Jesse, and we see a great contrast between these two. Saul was a full-grown man who had daughters old enough to be given in marriage, while David was a mere youth. Saul was from the shoulders up taller than any man in Israel, yet at this time David was described as "but a youth." The

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greatest contrast, however, was within, and not without. Saul was fearful while David was courageous.

In the seventeenth chapter of first Samuel we read of the armies of Israel once more being confronted by the armies of the Philistines. For forty days the armies had faced one another across a valley, and for each of these forty days the Philistines sent out their champion, the giant Goliath, to challenge any Israelite warrior to face him in single combat, promising that the loser's people would become the slaves of the winner. David arrived on the fortieth day to witness this spectacle, and he observed the following:

I Samuel 17:24

When saw the man [Goliath], they fled

King Saul was a seasoned warrior. He was in the prime of his adult life. He was from the shoulders up taller than any other man in Israel, and he was their leader. He should have been the one to take up the challenge of Goliath. He should have stepped forward in boldness knowing that he was Yahweh's anointed, and he should have slain this pagan who was defying the armies of the living God. Saul, did none of these things, however, for he was afraid. Following his example, his men were also afraid and fled from the presence of Goliath. What a contrast to the fearfulness of Saul we see in David.

I Samuel 17:32-37

Then Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth." But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the

flock, I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him. And Saul said to David, "Go, and may Yahweh be with you."

I can sense the confidence of David as he stood before Saul and declared that he would fight Goliath. There was no double mindedness in David. There was no hesitation. He knew that Yahweh would give him the victory, and he was not afraid to rise to the challenge. There was a fearlessness about this ruddy and handsome youth that stood before Israel's king. Those with eyes to see could understand why a day would come when this youth would be king in place of the fearful man who occupied that position.

What shame was Saul's that day. Here was a mere youth who declared a willingness to face the giant that Saul's own heart feared. Saul, called to be the hero and protector of Israel, willingly allowed a boy to be sent out to do a man's work. Saul should have responded by saying, "I am ashamed at my hesitation. I will go and not allow a mere youth to fight the battle I have been called to fight. Yahweh forgive me for my unbelief. Strengthen my heart and fill me with boldness." Instead, he remained incapacitated, unable to rise to the battle, for fear had robbed him of his strength. Saul sent a youth to face the warrior who brought terror to his own soul.

There was neither faith nor love in Saul's conduct that day, yet David excelled in these qualities. He loved Yahweh and the people of Israel. His compassion was revealed in his words to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail on behalf of [Goliath], I will go and fight him." His faith was also apparent. As David stood before the giant he boldly proclaimed:

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I Samuel 17:45-47

"You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. This day Yahweh will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that Yahweh does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is Yahweh's and He will give you into our hands."

It is obvious in examining this event that . . . When fear is conquered, then faith arises and great exploits are done to the glory of God. This is one of the reasons all saints must conquer fear in their lives. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Fear and faith are contrary to one another. Fear also leads men and women to despicable behavior, even being willing to sacrifice those they should be protecting.

We are told of others who acted in fear on this day when David slew Goliath. David had been sent by his father Jesse to check on the welfare of his brothers, and to deliver a gift to them. David's brothers did not share his faith, and they had been influenced by the fear of Saul. When David showed no fear of Goliath, his oldest brother began to treat him rudely, for his fear was exposed.

I Samuel 17:28

Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for

you have come down in order to see the battle."

We are not told what David's relationship with Eliab was like prior to this time, but as an elder brother Eliab should have demonstrated love toward David, seeking to lift him up in front of the other men. Instead, we observe Eliab falsely charging David with irresponsibility, insolence and wickedness in a very open manner.

We have no evidence that Eliab was a morally impure man, nor that he was an idolater, nor a man given over to abominations. What is evident is that he had much fear. Eliab had never come to a place of ruling over this fear. His fearful nature gave rise to the very rude reception he gave to his young brother. When fear is not overcome in our lives, it leads to hateful behavior, false accusations and slander. Fear can drive men and women to treat their closest loved ones in a manner devoid of love.

As we compare/contrast the lives of David and Saul further we observe that fear can even lead to murder. Saul observed the popularity of David, and he began to fear that David would take the kingdom from him. David had been Saul's most loyal subject, and had done the kingdom great good, yet because of fear Saul sought to put David to death.

I Samuel 18:11-12

Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from his presence twice. . .

A man who walks in the integrity of his heart before Yahweh need not fear. If Saul had been an honest man and had faith in God, he would

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not have feared losing his kingdom. He could have trusted Yahweh to do what was right. He would not have allowed fear to drive him to attempt murder. David, when faced with a similar circumstance exhibited faith and turned away from murder. Twice while David was living in wilderness places due to Saul's endless pursuit of his life, Yahweh placed David's enemy in his hands to do with according to what was in his heart. On both occasions the men with David urged him to strike Saul and kill him, but David would not do so. David would not allow fear to drive him to commit murder, or to lift his hand against God's anointed. David had such faith in Yahweh that he let his pursuer go free, trusting that God would continue to be his protector and vindicate him at the proper time.

In these things we observe that a great test came to both Saul and David. The test revealed whether they would be ruled by fear, or would rule over fear. Saul failed the test, while David came forth as an overcomer. The same test is being given to the children of God today. Many have sold out loved ones because of unconquered fear in their heart. Such experiences are unpleasant to be on the receiving end of, yet, when we entrust our lives to Yahweh's care, He will deliver us and fight for us. When we are on the receiving end of someone else's fear, we must always meet their fear with faith. To meet fear with more fear will only lead to disaster.

Before I leave this examination of Saul and David, I would like to observe one more event from their lives that is highly revelatory. Both men experienced a time when they were confronted by a prophet because of a grievous sin they had committed. Both men once more responded in very opposite ways.

I Samuel 15:19-21

"Why then did you not obey the voice of Yahweh, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh?" Then Saul said to Samuel, "I did obey the voice of Yahweh, and went on the mission on which Yahweh sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction...."

II Samuel 12:9, 13

"Why have you despised the word of Yahweh by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon... Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against Yahweh."

These events form a perfect parallel to one another, and to Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden. In Adam we saw that fear led to blame shifting as he answered God's question by hiding behind his wife, exposing her to God's judgment that he might be spared. Saul, whom we observed hiding among the baggage as Adam hid among the trees of the Garden, is also ruled by fear and he seeks to shift the blame of his sin onto others, hiding behind the very ones he was appointed to protect. In contrast to these men we see David, courageous even when facing the judgment of God, accepting the blame, and not seeking to hide behind another.

Consider the opportunity that David had to cast blame on another. David was innocently standing on the roof of his palace when he saw Bathsheba bathing herself. She was naked and

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bathing in the open where she could be viewed plainly from the palace roof. Neither did Bathsheba resist David when he sought to have sexual relations with her. She willingly submitted to his overtures. David could have sought to shift the blame to her. He could have said that she tempted him, even as Adam sought to lay the blame at Eve's feet. Yet David did not do so.

Though David had acted wickedly in committing both adultery and murder, he refused to compound his guilt by failing in honesty and love when confronted with his sin. He had taken Bathsheba as his wife, and a husband nourishes and cherishes his wife. He does not throw her to the wolves. When God's judgment demanded that the child born to them die, David was grieved for his wife. He did not act with bitterness toward Bathsheba, blaming her for his judgment, but he accepted the blame and sought to comfort his wife and restore her joy by giving her more children.

II Samuel 12:24

Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her; and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon.

What a contrast there is between those who walk in fear and those who rule over fear. The former will turn against the ones they are closest to as they are driven by fear, while the latter will seek to protect, and shelter from harm, those they love. The former will sacrifice others to save themselves, while the latter will sacrifice self to save others.

Christ revealed in His own life which of these behaviors reflects the character of God, for He bore our punishment that we might be saved. The second Adam (Yahshua the Messiah) did

that which the first Adam failed to do. Christ died to secure a bride for Himself, while the first Adam sought to protect his own life even if it meant abandoning his bride. David also sought to protect his bride by bearing the blame for both of them, never mentioning Bathsheba's transgression to God or to man. He would not present himself to Satan to be used as an accuser. Only by ruling over the fear in his life was he able to escape from the enemy and respond in a manner pleasing to God.

As we look at the consequences of Adam's, Saul's and David's actions, we see another stark contrast. Because Adam and Saul responded in fear, not acknowledging their guilt, their judgment remained. David, however, ruled over fear, confessing his guilt, and his sin was forgiven. Look at that which is revealed in the following words:

Genesis 2:17, 3:19

"From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for ... By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

II Samuel 12:13

Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against Yahweh." And Nathan said to David, " "

Consider now a verse from the New Testament that bears upon what is spoken here.

I John 1:9

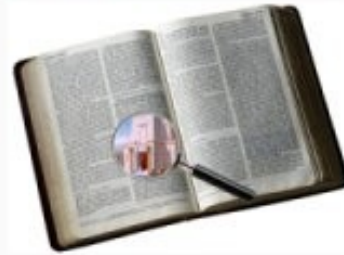
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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Because of fear Adam did not confess his sin, and death resulted. Because of fear Saul did not confess his sin, and he lost a kingdom. By ruling over fear David gained a kingdom, and, when he confessed his sin, his sin was taken away and he was spared the judgment of death. In light of these things, does any Christian want to proclaim that fear is an innocent thing, or dare they conclude that it need not be ruled over?

Though fear itself may not appear to be sin, it leads men, women and children to commit actions and to speak words that are detestable to God. Fear drives out faith. Fear leads to gross failures of love. Fear can drive a person to cover over their sin, or to shift the blame to another, resulting in a forfeiture of the grace and forgiveness that could have been theirs. For these reasons, and more to be enumerated, the fearful will have first place in the Lake of Fire, which is the second death.

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Charles Haddon Spurgeon - Bible Devotion

"He shall save His people from their sins."

— [*Matthew 1:21*](#)

Many persons, if they are asked what they understand by salvation, will reply, "Being saved from hell and taken to heaven." This is one result of salvation, but it is not one tithe of what is contained in that boon.

It is true our Lord Jesus Christ does redeem all His people from the wrath to come; He saves them from the fearful condemnation which their sins had brought upon them; but His triumph is far more complete than this. He saves His people "from their sins."

Oh! sweet deliverance from our worst foes. Where Christ works

a saving work, He casts Satan from his throne, and will not let him be master any longer.

No man is a true Christian if sin reigns in his mortal body. Sin will be in us—it will never be utterly expelled till the spirit enters glory; but it will never have *dominion*. There will be a striving for dominion—a lusting against the new law and the new spirit which God has implanted—but sin will never get the upper hand so as to be absolute monarch of our nature. Christ will be Master of the heart, and sin must be mortified. The Lion of the tribe of Judah shall prevail, and the dragon shall be cast out.

Professor! is sin subdued in you?
If your *life* is unholy your *heart*

is unchanged, and if your heart is unchanged you are an unsaved person. If the Saviour has not sanctified you, renewed you, given you a hatred of sin and a love of holiness, He has done nothing in you of a saving character.

The grace which does not make a man better than others is a worthless counterfeit. Christ saves His people, not in their sins, but *from* them. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." If not saved from sin, how shall we hope to be counted among His people. Lord, save me now from all evil, and enable me to honour my Saviour.