

Overcoming False Fear

By

Elder Enoch Ofori Jnr

Fear is Nonexistent

If God has exhorted us over sixty times in His word ‘not to fear’, then fear among His people must be particularly loathsome to Him. In fact, if we see as God sees, fear is nonexistent; there is no basis for fear! And we must see as God sees, for we are His dear children (Eph. 5:1).

I have labeled fear “false fear” not because fear does not exist in life; it does exist, but then, in Christ we have no basis to fear! In Christ and in God, fear has no basis because there is nothing that can ever overcome us:

“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”
(Rom. 8:31).

Fear has been Conquered and Captivity taken Captive

Just before His conquest of death by His death on the cross, Christ comforted His disciples “... be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Christ meant He had overcome the world of problems and troubles including demonic principalities and powers.

Conquering the world of sin and problems as well as Satan and death was the accomplishment of His cross:

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
“And deliver them who through FEAR OF DEATH were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. 2:14-15).

Christ at His resurrection gave the spirit of captivity a death blow taking ‘him’ captive:

“Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

“(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)” (Eph. 4:8-9).

The word “captivity” in the text has a double meaning. It’s a metaphor for Satan and at the same time represents his captives. Before the victory of Christ on the cross, Satan held all humanity in the bondage of death, sickness, poverty and misery. Satan is the embodiment of fear, captivity and death. But Christ made the captives of this captor His captives by

conquering him (Col. 2: 15) and gave the rescued converted men spiritual gifts of grace (see v. 7).

As a sign of His victory over death, the Gospel of Matthew reports that, at Christ's death "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Matt. 27:52-53). On witnessing the earthquake and the splitting of rocks at the death of Jesus, the Roman centurion and those with him remarked, "Truly this was the Son of God" (v. 54).

From His sanctuary in heaven, the LORD looked down on mankind and was moved to intervene in our plight:

"For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;
"To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;
"To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;
"When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD" (Ps. 102:19-22).

His salvation extends to all the earth; the LORD will cause the release of people in the prison house of Satan in all nations:

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22).

The people who Walk in Darkness have seen a Great Light

The LORD has resolved that never again will those who trust in Him walk in darkness:

"But [In the midst of judgment there is the promise and the certainty of the Lord's deliverance] there shall be no more gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time the Lord brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time He will make it glorious, by the way of the Sea of Galilee, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: those who dwelt in the land of intense darkness and the shadow of death, upon them has the light shined.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

"Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:1-2, 6-7 *Amplified Bible*).

The "great light" that has shone on those who walk in darkness in "the land of the shadow of death" is the Lord Jesus Christ. He appeared on this earth – "the land of the shadow of death" – as "the light of the world:"

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have THE LIGHT OF LIFE” (John 8:12).

The light is synonymous with life! The Light gives life. Just before He raised Lazarus from the dead, the Lord Jesus revealed to Martha, the sister of the dead man:

“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead [in the land of the shadow of death], yet shall he live” (John 11:25).

In fulfilment of the prophecy that a “great light” would flood the land of the shadow of death beginning from the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, Jesus headquartered His ministry in Capernaum located in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali:

“And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

“That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

“The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

“The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up” (Matt. 4:13-16).

In verses 23-25 we learn of how the people of Galilee were the first to witness “the great light” of Christ before others were attracted to it:

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

“And His fame [light] went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

“And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.”

Historically, the land of Zebulun and Naphtali had suffered great oppression under the Assyrians (2 Kings 15:29). But the Lord caused His great light to shine forth from this area to show that where there had been the greatest distress there His light would shine even more!

In the pitch darkness of “the valley of the shadow of death”, the LORD will light our darkness (Ps. 23:4; 18:28). Halleluiah!

Satan has been Stripped of Power

By His victory over the devil (Col. 2:15), Christ removed the only true source of fear – Satan and his demons. A people who had lived under the shadow of his fear all our lives are now declared to be “more than conquerors” through Christ (Rom. 8:37).

After His sound defeat of Satan in his own backyard – Tartarus – all power became Christ’s”

“ALL POWER is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18).

In Rev. 1:18 He reaffirms:

“I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades] and of death.”

Now the good news is, Christ shares this power and great authority with all true believers who are as He is in heaven where He is seated on the right hand of God (1 John 4:17):

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19).

Though a pre-Calvary declaration, believers’ power over the devil was already foreordained and at work. Satan had already fallen by the power of the gospel: “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke 10:18).

And the cross sealed his defeat:

“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.
“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me” (John 12:31-32).

As believers, our victory and power reside in the cross – for by it Christ defeated the devil:

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18; cf. Gal. 6:14).

Satan, Subject to the Power of Believers

The power of God believers wield over Satan puts to death our fear of him. He cannot harm us at will. In fact, we have the authority to tread on him and whatever power he purports to have! The tables have turned!

Christ, the Conqueror of fear, who by His great Calvary victory has also made us overcomers of fear, is in us, and He is greater than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4).

What is more, He has imparted to us His Spirit of power so as not to be frightened of situations that would ordinarily induce fear:

“God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7).

As His Spirit-led people, we “have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father” (Rom. 8:15).

As the adopted children of God, we are no more in the grip of Satan or in his bondage, which, of course, would have given us a legitimate reason to fear! Satan prowls like a “roaring lion” but we are not to be found on his hunting grounds (1 Pet. 5:8-9). Living under the power of God, it’s Satan who flees from us, not we from him. We have been given power to successfully resist him (Jam. 4:7).

Fear takes flight from us! When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him (Isa. 59:19). King David says in Ps. 27: 1:

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

The Lord Himself urges us not to have fear, for He is with us even if we feel as helpless as the worm:

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.

“Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.

“Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.

“For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

“Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 41:10-14).

Because He has already redeemed us and nothing after the fact can change that which He has accomplished by His power (Num. 23:19-20; 1 Chron. 17:27; Ps. 89:34), God assures us in Isa. 43:1-2:

“But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine.

“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee [because I have redeemed thee]: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”

At a time many in the Kingdom of Judah were calling for an alliance with Assyria against the Kingdom’s aggressors, God urged the prophet Isaiah:

“For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying,

“Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid

“Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread” (Isa. 8:11-13).

Earlier, He had written off the coalition of nations which sought to come against Judah saying they would be broken in pieces; neither would their counsel stand as long as He, the Lord, was with Judah (vv. 9-10).

If even Satan, the greatest Terror himself, has been defeated, how much more human enemies! What can they possibly do to harm us?

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

“So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” (Heb. 13:5-6).

In Isaiah 51:12-13, the LORD, our Maker and the Maker of the universe assures us:

“I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;
“And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?”

The Lord laments our tendency to replace our fear of Him with fear of our human enemies who unlike Him do not possess eternity nor come anywhere near His infinite power as seen in His mighty acts of creation. He says the fury of the enemy (oppressor) will suffer a stillbirth; it will turn out to be just a bluff! The enemy neither has the power nor the longevity to implement his evil intentions. Thus we stand in fear of the enemy for no reason at all. Just because he is furious does not mean he has the power and control over time and space to bring his wicked devices to pass. The Almighty says, he puffs and hisses as if “he were ready to destroy” us, but where really does his fury come to?

“In righteousness shalt thou be established” says the LORD, “thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.
“Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by Me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.
“Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.
“NO WEAPON THAT IS FORMED AGAINST THEE SHALL PROSPER; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the LORD” (Isa. 54:14-17. Emphasis mine).

Our heritage is a heritage of victory over the enemy, every single weapon of whom has been doomed to failure by the LORD Who does not side with the enemy! All that He requires of us is the doing of His righteousness: “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever” (Isa. 32:17).

When we keep His righteousness, He lives among us as our King to secure our heritage of victory. Balaam, the sorcerer, who was hired by Balak, the King of Moab, to curse Israel testified:

“He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel: the LORD his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.
“God brought them out of Egypt; He hath as it were the strength of an unicorn.
“Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!” (Num. 23:21-23).

“What hath God wrought” will be to turn every curse the enemy tries to bring on us into a blessing. Concerning Moab, the enemy, God reminded Israel:

“Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Be’or of Pe’thor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.
“Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee” (Deut. 23:4-5).

The LORD has assured us that any curse pronounced on us out of malice – not because of any wrong we have done – will come to nothing:

“Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause shall not alight” (Prov. 26:2 NKJV).

Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God

When we come to possess the wisdom that is from Above – which comes from obedience to God’s commandments (Prov. 1:7; Ps. 111:10) – there should be no cause for fear. Fear is unwarranted!

The wisdom by which God founded the world will keep us safe and sound, even when we are sound asleep! To live under the protection of this SUPERNATURAL, WORLD-CREATING wisdom and still entertain fear is to have false fear:

“Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding;
“For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold.
“She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
“Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor.
“Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.
“She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her.
“The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens;
“By His knowledge the depths were broken up, and clouds drop down the dew.
“My son, let them not depart from your eyes – keep sound wisdom and discretion;
“So they will be life to your soul and grace to your neck.
“Then you will walk safely in your way, and your foot will not stumble.
“When you lie down, you will not be afraid; yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
“Do not be afraid of sudden terror, nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
“For the LORD will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being caught” (Prov. 3:13-26 NKJV).

Jesus Christ is the “wisdom” referred to in the above scripture. He is “the wisdom and power of God” (1 Cor. 1:24). It was by Him that God, the Father, created all things, the visible and the invisible, the physical and the spiritual (John 1:1-4; Col. 1:16-19; Eph. 3:9).

Christ as the Wisdom of God is celebrated in Prov. 8: 22:36. Any life, family, church or nation built on this Wisdom will never fall or suffer defeat (Matt. 7:24-25)! That is why Jesus mourned Jerusalem for rejecting Him, the Wisdom and Power of God:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!
“Behold, your house is left unto you desolate” (Matt. 23:37-38).

It’s only under the motherly wings of Christ, the Wisdom and Power of God, that we have security (2 Thess. 3:3). That’s when we are able to say with all boldness: “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man [or devil] shall do unto me”!

Our Strength is to Sit Still

Our strength is to sit still under the sturdy wings of the Lord and not seek help elsewhere behind His back (Isa. 30:7; 31:1-3). There is no help outside the Lord (2 Kings 6:27; Jer. 17:5, 13; Acts 4:12). It is against this background that the LORD expressed great astonishment at the folly of errant Judah in looking for help apart from Him, the ONLY HELP:

“For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.

“Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.

“Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD.

“For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:10-13).

Our help is in the name of the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth (Ps. 124:8). With Him is “the fountain of life” (Ps. 36:9). When we sit still under His protective power, we shall surely know that He is God (Ps. 46:10). When we are still before Him waiting for His salvation, He is swift to save. And we must “fear ye not”. Moses encouraged the Israelites as the chariots of Pharaoh charged on them, a band of defenceless, helpless former slaves of Egypt:

“Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

“The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace” (Ex. 14:13-14).

When a fearsome coalition of neighbouring kingdoms came against Jehoshaphat, the King declared a fast throughout Judah “to ask help of the LORD” (2 Chron. 20:1-6). To this outnumbered and ‘outgunned’ kingdom which sat still before the God was strength and victory granted by the LORD fighting the battle Himself! Speaking through Jahaziel, a Levite by the anointing of His Spirit, the LORD allayed the fears of the nation:

“Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.

“To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.

“Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you” (2 Chron. 20:15-17).

And the LORD did fight His battle! When Jehoshaphat led the children of Judah in singing praises to God, “the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy another. And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped” (vv. 22-24).

In the LORD, there is no room for fear: “According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you: FEAR YE NOT” (Hag. 2:5).

According to the covenant of salvation Christ made with us when He rescued us out of the world (Egypt) to take out for Himself a people for His name (Acts 15:14), His Spirit remains among us – FEAR YE NOT!

Living Faith Conquers Fear

“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God” (2 Cor. 1:21 *NKJV*).

We have been called to a living faith, for we have been established and anointed in Christ to stand and to overcome!

Hebrews 11 celebrates the heroes of the faith who through faith overcame fear and more. Moses’ parents, for example, “were not afraid of the King’s commandment” to kill all Hebrew male babies and hid him for three months (v. 23). Other saints exercising fear-stopping promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, [and] turned to flight the armies of the aliens” (vv. 33-34).

For a group of four lepers in the days of Elisha, the prophet, their call of destiny at a crucial period in the history of the northern kingdom of Israel was to have faith and courage to overcome fear of death! Providence had placed in their hands the very survival of a besieged and starving nation if only they could overcome the fear of death which, unknown to them, did not even exist!

Between the option of dying by the sword of the Syrians encamped on the outskirts of the city of Samaria and the option of dying by famine in the city, the lepers reckoned they had no option at all. The **ONLY OPTION** they had was to overcome the fear of death! They conferred among themselves:

“If we say, We will enter the city, the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore, come, let us surrender to the army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die” (2 Kings 7:4 *NKJV*).

With this courageous, death-defying decision, the four lepers entered the camp of the Syrian army only to discover that they needed not to have feared in the first place – “to their surprise no one was there. For the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses—the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, ‘Look, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us!’ Therefore they arose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact—their tents, their horses, and their donkeys—and they fled for their lives” (vv. 5-7).

Fear is on the run! What the lepers feared God had put to flight! May we trust in God even when we fear (Ps. 56:3-4). And may He frighten off all our enemies in Jesus’ Name!

It is not mere make-believe. It was a miraculous experience the four starving lepers lived that day. Now, when they slipped into the deserted camp of the Syrians, fearing the worst, they did not find death but rather food and riches for themselves and their starving people in the city.

The lesson is that we should not let fear or any other obstacle keep us from destiny’s call. Nehemiah and his army of builders didn’t, when Sanballat and Tobiah and their associates sought to frustrate them in the rebuilding of the broken walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 4). When the enemies tried to make them afraid, Nehemiah prayed: “Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands” (6:9).

Conquering faith promotes a worry-free life. Since we are cast all our cares on Him (1 Pet. 5:7), we need not worry about what to eat or what to drink or what to put on, “for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things” (Matt. 6:25-32). Daily cares are a form of fear to overcome (v. 34).

That is why Philippians 4:6-7 urges us:

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds [from worry] through Christ Jesus” (NKJV).

Against all odds, in the face of our worst fears, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble:

“Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
“Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”
“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.
“God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early” (Ps. 46:1-5).

What an assurance! Yea, even in the valley of the shadow of death we should have no cause to fear evil, for He is with us (Ps. 23:4). Christ has conquered death and hades! Indeed, He has dealt with all our future fears: “the God of peace will crush Satan under our feet shortly” (Rom. 16:20) and keep us from “the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth” (Rev. 3:10).

Unless we believe – have living faith – we will not stand at all (Isa. 7:9). Fearful believers will come into divine judgment because they make God, Who cannot lie, a liar that His assurances of deliverance, protection, etc., are untrue (Rev. 21:8)!

At the mention of the name of Jesus, our Lord, every knee bows and every tongue confesses that He is Lord of all (Php. 2:9-11)! Fear has no place in His Presence. In Him all things are ours – whether life, or death, or things present, or things to come (1 Cor. 3:21-23). He has conquered all and made us conquerors of all:

“And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church,
“Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23).

What then is your fear, dear believer in Christ? For a thousand times and for eternity, FEAR YE NOT! Amen!