

LIVING VICTORIOUSLY

3. Over Fear

(Leader's Notes)



Introduction

All around us we see problems in the world – storms, sickness, poverty and so much more. People are filled with fear. What will happen next? However God does not want his beloved children to live in fear. He wants us to trust him, so we can live in victory.

The people of Israel faced a frightening situation. They had been miraculously delivered from slavery in Egypt, but now found themselves trapped on the shore of the Red Sea.

✠ What made the Israelites so afraid? Exodus 14:9-10

(Pharaoh's army had pursued them, and were closing in on them. They had no-where to go as the sea was in front of them!)

✠ How did the Israelites express their fear? How did it affect their thinking?

(First of all they cried out to the Lord, but then they began to blame Moses and say they regretted leaving Egypt. Their thinking was distorted by their fear.)

Fear had distorted or twisted the Israelites thinking. Although they had seen the mighty acts of God when he led them out of Egypt, they still felt helpless when faced with Pharaoh's army. Instead of trusting God to deliver them, they were overcome with fear, and rather than being grateful for their deliverance from Egypt, they now regretted it!

✠ How do you react when you face a fearful situation? Have you experienced times when your thinking has been distorted too, because of your fear?

✠ What did Moses tell the people to do? Exodus 14:13-14

(Moses addressed the problem immediately and told them not to be afraid, to stand firm and be still. Then they would see the salvation of the Lord.)

When Moses told the people to stand firm, he was really saying, 'trust God and do not give way to fear.' He assured them that when they did this, they would see God intervene on their behalf. Notice too he told them they would see the salvation of the Lord, if they looked to him, rather than the army approaching. Finally Moses told them to be still! This literally meant, 'be quiet'. Instead of complaining and blaming others, they had to keep quiet, as what they said was affecting others.

✠ Think about how you respond when you are afraid! What can you learn from these verses?

The Israelites were on a journey to the Promised Land, and there were many difficulties on the way. Sadly the majority of them continued to give way to fear, and failed to trust the Lord. Eventually this prevented them from entering the Land. See Numbers 14:1-4, 11. Isn't that sad?

Conclusion

Fear can prevent us from living in victory and entering into all that God has for us. Let's learn from what happened to the Israelites. When we face fearful situations, we need to call out to the Lord and keep our eyes on him, rather than the situation. Remember what God has done for us in the past and his wonderful promises. Be careful what you say, and what you listen to! Fear spreads very quickly. Stand firm, keep still and see what the Lord will do on your behalf. God is able, he is willing and he is faithful to his promises. Trust him!