

A BIBLICAL STUDY ON FEAR
LESSON SIXTEEN: GOD IS ON MY SIDE

by Sandy Harber

"The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" Psalm 118:6

The Psalmist tells us that he called on God in his distress (Psalm 118:5). The Hebrew word "metsar" translated "distress" in this verse means "something tight; trouble; distress; pain; strait." It is akin to "tsarab" which is translated "trouble" in Psalm 50:15 (see lesson 10). In Psalm 50:15 God tells us to call on Him in the day of trouble. Here in Psalm 118:5 that is exactly what the Psalmist does. He called on God. He was upset about something so he took his burden to God in prayer. And that's what we should all be doing. Not trying to resolve the problem on our own but take it to the Lord. Look to Him for guidance.

In verse 6 the Psalmist declares that the Lord is on his side. Personalize it. The Lord is on my side. God is my teammate. We are working together. He is helping me.

If God is on my side then I have no fear of mankind. God, Who created man, is working with me so what can mere men do to hurt me? What can man do to me that God cannot overcome? God is in control. Man can have no power over me unless God allows it. And, anything God allows is for my benefit.

In Psalm 27:1 the Psalmist asks, "Whom shall I fear?" and "of whom shall I be afraid?" The word translated "fear" is the normal word used 150 times in the Old Testament, meaning "afraid; frighten." The Hebrew word translated "afraid" means "startled." The obvious answer to the Psalmist's question is: no one. I fear no one. I am afraid of no one. Why? Because God is my light, salvation, and strength. Light reveals. It dispels the darkness and brings that which was hidden out into the open. It removes fear of the unknown. God's Word is light (Psalm 119:105). It reveals God's way and provides guidance as we walk in His paths. It shows us the Truth (John 17:17) so that we cannot be deceived. Fear can be triggered by ignorance or a misinterpretation of the facts. Jesus is light (John 8:12). He dispels the darkness of evil. Faith in Him eliminates the fear of death, judgment, and the future.

God is our salvation. Through the blood of Jesus He delivers us from the penalty, power, and presence of sin (Ephesians 1:7). Fear of hell is removed by faith in Jesus, our Redeemer (Romans 6:23). God provides deliverance in the physical realm, as well (James 5:16). He provides healing and protection when we need it (Psalm 91:11-12). We fear physical pain and suffering. We fear persecution. Jesus tells us not to be afraid in these situations (Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4; Revelation 2:10). Pain, suffering, and tribulation are all temporary. Though unpleasant they are limited in scope. But the promises God has made to those who have accepted His free gift of salvation will reap eternal rewards (John 3:16). Jesus was our example: He endured the temporary agony of the cross because it provided eternal benefits (Hebrews 12:2). The apostles, likewise, endured temporary beatings and persecution because they understood that they would reap eternal rewards (Acts 5:40-42).

God is the source of our strength. He is what makes us strong. With the power of God in us, what do we have to be afraid of? With God on my side the darkness is dispelled and the Truth revealed, I am delivered from physical and spiritual dangers, and I have the power of God in me to overcome whatever I may face. I have nothing to fear.

"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage; and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." Psalm 27:14