

A BIBLICAL STUDY ON FEAR
LESSON FOURTEEN: TRUST IN GOD

by Sandy Harber

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." Psalm 56:3

The Bible commands us to trust in the Lord. That is, have confidence in Him. Believe that what He says He will do He will do. Have faith that He will keep His promises. When we let fear creep into our lives we show a lack of trust. We demonstrate that we are just not sure (confident) that God will deliver us from or protect us through whatever trouble has grabbed hold of us. Oh, we don't doubt that our all-powerful God has the ability to rescue us. What we doubt is His willingness to use that power on our behalf. Some of that doubt finds its roots in the knowledge of our own sinfulness. Why should God act on our behalf? We are not worthy of His intervention, we reason. It may even be our own actions that have brought this trouble into our lives. That adds guilt into the mix. And, so, we worry and are afraid.

David confessed to God, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." David was in a bit of a bind. King Saul was pursuing him with the Army of Israel. David took refuge in the territory of Israel's enemies, the Philistines. Unfortunately, the Philistines remembered only too well that David had once been at the head of Israel's Army, leading them to victory. David had killed their champion Goliath. The women of Israel sang songs in praise of David. Saul killed his thousands, they sang, but David killed his ten thousands of the enemy (aka them, the Philistines!). To persuade the Philistine King Achish that he (David) was harmless, David pretended to be crazy. The ruse worked. However, David had to keep up the charade because the Philistines were constantly watching him (I Samuel 21:10-15).

David penned Psalm 56 about this time in his life. In verse 3 he states, "What time I am afraid. . . ." Not if I'm afraid but when I'm afraid. Sooner or later fearful circumstances will arise in every life. It is inevitable. The Hebrew word translated "afraid" here is the same word that is translated "fear" 150 times in the Old Testament, including in Deuteronomy 31:6 (in lesson 13). Like David, you will have times in your life when fear comes upon you. The question is: what are you going to do about it?

David's answer was, "I will trust in God." It is a choice. It is an act of our will to choose to trust in God. The Hebrew word translated "trust" means "to have confidence in or be sure of." We can choose to have faith in God to help us in our fearful situation or we can choose to give ourselves up to fear. Scripture counsels us to put our confidence in God, not men or the government (Psalm 118:8-9). We can choose to believe that He can and will work out the situation to our benefit. We can put our confidence in Him. End of story. "I was afraid. Now I trust God. Whatever happens from now on is in His hands."

To trust in God means that we put ourselves entirely into His keeping. We have complete confidence that He knows what we need and what is best for us, and that He loves us and will only allow that which will benefit us into our lives. We have no doubt in His abilities or motivation. God is in control and I am at peace. This is the attitude we should strive for. But it isn't easy. The natural man in us wants to be in control. Giving control over to God is proof of our complete trust in Him. As someone said, "If God is your co-pilot, switch seats."

"As for me, I will call upon God and the Lord shall save me." Psalm 55:16