

## REGARDING THE WORD FEAR

*"Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men."  
– Isaiah 29:13.*

WE UNDERSTAND the word fear to be the same whether it is used in one connection or another. There are different kinds of fear, just as there are different kinds of berries, different kinds of wagons, different kinds of animals. Fear is fear, whatever its motive or mainspring may be. There is a proper kind of fear and a proper kind of dread. And the proper fear carries this dread with it. For instance, if you were acquainted with a king or an emperor, you would say, I would dread to do anything that would hurt or offend him. And so with us. We should dread to do anything that would displease the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus said, "Fear not them which kill the body; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear; fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in *gehenna*." This is a very important fear that we should have toward God. We should have a great appreciation of his highness and our own littleness. We should not go into his presence in prayer in any manner but the right one – the reverent one. We should have in mind that he [R4747 : page 24] is the great King. So in all of our dealings with the Lord, we understand that we should fear to do anything that would lessen this great reverence – taking heed that we do nothing that would do violence to this or grieve the holy Spirit wherewith we are sealed.

Coming back to the text under consideration – "Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men." We understand that the Lord is pointing out here through the Prophet that there is a false kind of fear. As we have heard some Catholics say: If I would be approved of God, I must pray to some of the holy saints first, and then ask them to intercede with Mary, and then ask Mary to intercede with the Son. They have a fear that the Father has not inculcated. It comes from the

precepts of men. They have taken away some of the precious things of God and have substituted some of the "doctrines of devils," as certain Scriptures point out.

## **THE LORD IS AT THE HELM**

In the text – "Say ye not, a confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, a confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid" (Isa. 8:12) – the *fear* here we understand to be some fear that would be leading people, especially leaders, to cry out for a Church Federation – that unless this took place, there would be great danger. The Lord's people know that he is at the helm and that he knows how to direct such matters and that they should not join such a Federation. The word Federation here might be understood to mean more than merely Church Federation, perhaps. We are to "fear not their fear"; that is to say, be not fearful as they are fearful. The Lord's people are to understand that their safety is not dependent upon human power, but that if they have given their hearts to the Lord they should seek to please him in all their ways, and to remember that he is able to make all things work out for their good.

Dreading they know not what, the Federation of Labor is led on by their fear of the Federation of Trusts. In this they are influenced by the dangers they fear. But the Lord's people are not to thus fear. They are to commit their ways and interests to him and to walk by faith and to recognize that he will make all things work together for good to them, giving them the necessary direction and instruction and encouragement to the end.

As to the attitude that we should take toward these Federations: sympathetically, we may see that Federation is necessary for the maintenance of these earthly institutions and thus there is a measure of excuse to those that would take this stand, along the lines of business or society or socialism. At the same time our sympathies should be regulated by the Divine Word.

It behooves all those who see the end to stand as clear as possible from all these entanglements, and to be helpful in respect to all who might be willing to receive their counsel. Their sympathy might lead them to say to labor unions, for instance, "We see your difficulty. We see that you have maintained a standing by means of your organizations. We sympathize with you in your position, to a certain extent; nevertheless, instead of averting the calamities, in the end your organization will help to involve you in trouble, no doubt, and will help to involve others in trouble."

The Lord's people know the Truth which makes free. They are to seek to stand up for the Truth in respect to God, his character, his brethren, doing good to all men as they have opportunity.

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