



ESCAPE THE CAPE OF FEAR

By Vincent M. Newfield

Were you afraid of anything when you were kid? You know...the kind of fear that makes your heart pound faster and faster, your skin become cold and clammy, your mouth dry and your hands sweat. There were many things that made me afraid, like snakes, wasps, large dogs, dark rooms, scary movies and the bullies at school. I hated being afraid, but I didn't know how to escape the cape of fear. It was like a *cloak* that seemed to cover me wherever I went...a paralyzing *peninsula* from which I could never leave.

Like a foul smell that fills the air, a spirit of fear can infiltrate and permeate every area of our lives. Fear is a master spirit that masquerades as many things, including doubt, worry, anxiety, insecurity, indecisiveness and even anger. The effects of fear on our soul—our mind, will and emotions—eventually show up in our physical body. Headaches, nerve disorders, insomnia, stomach problems and sicknesses of many kinds are often the fruit of a root of fear that has not been dealt with.

I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

—Psalm 34:4 KJV

As I grew older and drew closer to the Lord, I began to seek Him for freedom from the fears that were holding me hostage. I learned to meditate on specific scriptures and speak them out loud—powerful truths that stood strong in the face of fear and nullified its effects. In time I began to experience a new level of relief, but I eventually came to the point where there seemed to be a blockade. I couldn't totally shake the quake of fear.

I was doing everything I knew to do to break free from fear—speaking the Word and binding the spirit of fear—but nothing was changing. In desperation I cried out to the Lord. He spoke something to my heart about fear that I will never forget. He said, “You cannot bind what you are in agreement with.” In other words, you can't get rid of something you're holding onto.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

—2 Timothy 1:7 NLT

How was I in agreement with the spirit of fear? One of the biggest ways was watching movies that were full of fear. The Lord showed me that by watching these kinds of movies, I was *inviting* fear into my home and into my life—all in the name of “entertainment.” One night years ago, as I was flipping through the channels, I came across the movie *Predator*. Immediately, I was drawn to watch it. I wanted to see the monster... I wanted to see what was going to happen. Less than a minute had passed and I heard God's Spirit in me say, “Just as the enemy tempts you to lust, he is tempting you to fear—by watching this program, you're opening yourself *and* your family up to fear. If you don't want to fight with fear like you did before, turn it off.” Thankfully, I listened and turned it off.

I believe this is what the apostle Paul was warning us about when he said, *...I do not want you to fellowship and be partners with diabolical spirits...* (1 Corinthians 10:20). Again, in 2 Corinthians 6:14,15 he says, *...How can you make a partnership out of right and wrong? That's not partnership; that's war. Is light best friends with dark? Does Christ go strolling with the Devil? Do trust and mistrust hold hands?* (The Message).

Wow! What an eye-opening lesson. If you're battling fear in any form or experiencing the fruit of its root, I encourage you to seek the Lord. Ask Him to show you any areas where you may be *fellowshipping* with fear. God is faithful and loving, and He will reveal why you feel the way you feel... He will show you how to escape the cape of fear!

Take the Next Step

Deuteronomy 1:29,30 • Joshua 1:9 • Psalm 27; 91; 121 • Isaiah 41:10-13 • Habakkuk 3:19 • Romans 8:15 • 1 John 4:4,18

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