

“FEAR NOT--STAND STILL THEN SING”

“Be not afraid. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord...the Lord will fight for you...Sing to the Lord.” (Exodus 14:13-14; 15:1).

We live in an age of fear and uncertainty, mostly fear of the unknown. Yet there are known fears which we take into our consciousness. The emotion of fear is rooted in the portion of the brain called the amygdala which causes us to consider the options of flight or fight, and rushes blood and glucose to strengthen energy response levels. Another part of the brain, the hippocampus interprets the threat by considering the context, and the level of seriousness based on experience. Thus, we have two types of fear: implicit fear (fair ingrained in our subconscious) and explicit fear (learned fear) from our context and the social experience of others.

When the children of Israel saw the Egyptian chariots bearing down on them, their instant response conditioned both on context and experience was explicit fear. They had been conditioned by fear over their 400 years of bondage and the cruel lash of the Egyptian master, with tall stories passed down to children. Imagine the terror and thus the accusation. “Moses, why did you bring us here to kill us? We were better off when we were slaves”. Both their cognitive and emotional brains connected. Now, they could neither fight nor fly. They were in a state of total unpreparedness, with the sea in front and Pharaoh behind.

It is in times like these that God shines forth, and so the dark side of the pillar of cloud moved between them and the Egyptians bringing temporary respite. God uses adversity to prepare His people. We don't always have to “cut and run”. Sometimes, God calls us to ‘stand still’ and just “Be Quiet’. Faith casts out all fear, both implicit and explicit, for such faith leads to the action of trust--“standing still”, and being patient, for a better day is coming. Through “standing still” by faith, we give opportunity for God to work out His purpose—“Fear not, Abraham (Gen 15:1); “be not afraid of their faces (God to the child king Josiah, Jer 1:8). I am encouraged by these declarations.

We often rush in with our solutions, and leave no space for God to work out His salvation, for God works in mysterious ways. Moses could have complained about the terrible times and more. Sometimes, we will have the Red Sea of challenges ahead and Pharaoh's chariots behind. It is then we simply “just stop” and let the pillar of cloud move behind between us and the problems, so that we can cross over the Red Sea, and then sing.

What do you do when you've done all you can? We can repeat Exodus 15:1, “I will sing unto the Lord—the horse and rider he has thrown into the sea”. **Let us join Donnie McClurkin in ‘Just Stand’**. <https://youtu.be/odaF0NDIqWI>.

Bible texts—“Fear Not”

<https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?search=be+not+afraid&searchtype=phrase&spanbegin=1&spanend=73&version1=9>

