

The Distance



***“All the people were seeing the thundering and the lightning,
and heard the sound of the horn,
and saw the mountain smoking –
and when the people saw it they trembled with fear
and kept their distance.”***

(Exodus 20:18 net)

This scene in Exodus 20 took place during the time that God was giving Moses the Commandments for the Israelite people. Moses had come back down from the mountain to tell the people all that God had said. And I was thinking, how sad that these Israelites saw and heard the things of God, great and mighty things, and yet, their reaction was to have so much fear of Him that they kept their distance.

Moses' initial reaction was so different from theirs. Do you remember the story of the burning bush? In Exodus chapter three we find this story, “ Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So Moses said, ‘I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up.’” (Exodus 3:1-3 nasb)

Moses had to see for himself what the Lord was causing to happen. He didn't turn and hide in fear, he was inquisitive, and drawn toward the burning bush to “see this marvelous sight.” The fact that you are reading this would lead me to believe that you are a bit inquisitive too. Perhaps you're curious but you plan to keep a fair distance away because you inwardly fear what changes might take place if you get too close. Perhaps you have only heard about how fearsome God is, and think He is unapproachable.

Here's the deal, *God is indeed one to be feared.* He is all powerful and in full control of all things. BUT to one that belongs to Him, we find that He is our loving Heavenly Father, and when I say loving, I mean, loving with a self-sacrificial love that keeps on loving regardless of the response He gets from us. His love always seeks what is best for us, and because He knows all things, He knows what the best is. As His child we can be rid of the fear of His condemnation because we're told in Romans 8:1 that for those in Christ there is now no condemnation. Christ took the condemnation for our sin and having cleared the cost of sin with His death for us, we can now know God in a way we never could apart from Christ.

As His child, our fear of God is out of the respect and honor due Him, to live in reverence to Him. Today, don't be like the Israelites and see God working only to shy back and keep your distance, but instead, seek Him, draw close to know Him more. I can assure you that when you do, you will be blessed because He loves you, and wants only the best for you.

Father, thank You for Your love that knows what is best for us. A perfect love that casts out fear as Your word tells us. Help us to learn to know You so well that we can do no less than revere and honor You as our Creator God and Heavenly Father. You are faithful to bless us when we come to You, so help those today who have kept You at a distance to instead, draw close. You have so much more in store for us than living in fear. Help each one of us, Lord, to “see this marvelous sight” that You have planned for our day and run TO You to see just what You'd have us do. Thank You for Christ, who took our condemnation so that we could be with You, it's in His name I ask. Amen