



LOOKING FOR THE CHANGE

*Transformed by the Word
and the Spirit*

by Matt German

Our life as believers is all about change. In fact, ours is a lifestyle of change, of ongoing change. Rather than fearing or resisting change – the way many people in the world do – we need to be looking for it. It's not enough to want or desire change, or even hope for change; we need to be actively seeking it, expecting it – in ourselves and in others.

At the same time, we don't need to seek change for the sake of change. We need to seek change because we desire to be conformed more and more each day to the image of Messiah. We also need to recognize that that kind of change cannot be accomplished through our own will, strength, or efforts. True and lasting change can only come by the Word and the Spirit.

Gen. 1:1-2 "In the beginning Elohim (prepared, formed, fashioned, and) created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and an empty waste, and darkness was upon the face of the very great deep. The Spirit of Elohim was moving (hovering, brooding) over the face of the waters." (Amplified Bible)

It was when the earth was formless and void, an empty waste, that the Spirit moved upon the face of the waters and brought transformation. It is in exactly the same way that our lives are transformed. When we become formless and void, of no effect in our own hearts and minds, that is when the Spirit can move. In fact, the Spirit is hovering, brooding over us, waiting patiently for the conditions to be right, for us to be "open-faced":

2 Cor. 3:18 "But we all, with open face (literally, "with our face having been unveiled") beholding as in a glass the glory of the Master, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of Yahweh."

In order to take on the image and likeness of Yahshua, we've got to behold His glory without our veils, our masks, our preconceptions, and our traditions. We must strip away those things in order to see Him for Who He is. But when we do, then we are changed from glory to glory. How does this

happen? "By the Spirit of Yahweh". It is by the Spirit, coupled with the received proceeding Word, that we become more than we could have ever become on our own.

John 1:1,2, 4, 12 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Yahweh, and the Word was Elohim... All things were made through Him (the Word), and without Him was not anything made that has been made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men... As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become sons of Yahweh."

These verses demonstrate several key things: first, that the Word created – it brought forth life. Second, it shows that Yahshua became flesh and dwelt among us. He became something that He was not (flesh), that we could become something we were not (sons): "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become sons of Yahweh." It is by receiving Him – the proceeding Word, the Word proceeding from the Father – that we have right to become sons of Yahweh.

Yahshua stated "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). If Yahshua truly dwells in us, if we have truly received Him, then we have within us the Way, the Truth, & the Life. It is His life-changing presence in us that brings real, ongoing, and lasting change.

Not long ago the Father spoke a couple of things to my heart concerning this. First, He said "Amazing things happen when you get in the Word – and even more amazing things happen when the Word gets in you". That is absolutely true. How many of us know people who spend a lot of time reading the Bible but don't seem to be making any significant strides in their spiritual maturation process? It is not enough to read the Bible, or even meditate on its precepts; the Spirit in us must quicken the Word in order for it to complete its work in us.

The second thing Yahweh spoke to me about this subject was this: "Many believers want manna; but they don't want to become manna." It's not enough for us to desire spiritual manna, or even to take it in; we must digest it and allow it to become a part of who we are.

All true change begins with a Word – a Word of the Spirit. We must be properly positioned in our hearts and lives to receive it, and then we must allow the Word to renew our minds & bring change (transformation, metamorphosis).

The preceding Word is creative and powerful; it is prophetic, calling those things that are not as though they were; it is progressive, building upon itself; it is life-giving – the living

Word produces life, but only if received as a living thing. The living Word must be nurtured.

Are you looking for the change?

Fear (Not)

Fear. It's one of the most powerful of all human emotions, capable of paralyzing even the strongest of men. In fact, the dictionary defines fear as "an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger; an instance of this emotion; a state marked by this emotion." Notice the common word – emotion. Fear is emotional, not rational.

People fear many things: death, failure, success, change, sickness, etc. Ironically, studies show that 90% of the bad things that people fear or worry about never happen. 8% is stuff they can't do anything about, anyway. So only 2% of what people fear or worry about is something that will happen and about which they can actually do something.

What is the source of fear? Where does it originate? As believers we know the answer to that: fear comes from the adversary; it does not come from Yahweh. In fact, we're told in the Bible:

2 Tim. 1:6-7 "For this cause, I remind you that you should stir up the gift of Elohim which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For Yahweh didn't give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-discipline ('sound mind')."

Yahweh didn't give us a spirit of fear; but He did give us a Spirit of power, love, and self-discipline. Are we operating in that Spirit on a daily basis? If we're not then we leave ourselves susceptible to the influences of fear in our lives.

Yahweh told Abram, "Fear not, I am your shield and your exceeding great reward" (Gen. 15:1). The word translated as fear is *yawráy*, which means to fear, revere; to frighten. If Yahweh told Abram not to fear, then it seems pretty clear that Abram had a choice in the matter – whether to fear or not! We, as sons of Yahweh, have that same choice set before us. We can choose to 'fear not'.

Having that choice is great, but Scripture also tells us that there's actually an antidote to fear:

1 Jo. 4:17-18 "In this love has been made perfect among us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is, even so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has punishment. He who fears is not made perfect in love."

When we possess and operate in perfect love, we are immune to fear, because perfect love casts out fear. If we have fear operating in our lives, then that is an indication that our love has not yet been made perfect. In fact, these verses indicate that there is a certain boldness that comes with perfected love.

There's a reality TV program that some might be familiar with called "Fear Factor". As believers we recognize that faith is the opposite of fear. Instead of talking about "Fear Factor", we ought to be asking ourselves, "What is my 'Faith Factor'?" This is something we need to know now, because when crisis hits, it's a little late to find out that your faith isn't what it needs to be!

As mentioned earlier, fear is emotional (carnal), NOT rational. It paralyzes, keeping us from taking action. Faith, on the other hand, causes us to take action. We might state it this way: fear paralyzes; faith energizes. When our faith is bigger than our fear, we can do anything.

We're encouraged in Scripture to "(take) up the shield of faith, with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one" (Eph. 6:16). One of the main "fiery darts of the evil one" is fear. We need to become proficient at wielding the shield of faith. It's what Yahweh has equipped us with in order to stop those fiery darts.

Isa. 41:8-10 "But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend, ⁹ you whom I have taken hold of from the ends of the earth, and called from the corners of it, and said to you, You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you away; ¹⁰ Fear not, for I am with you; don't be dismayed, for I am your Elohim; I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you; yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness."

It's one thing for Yahweh to tell us not to fear. But He doesn't just leave it there – He provides the means to overcome fear. He, as Elohim, will strengthen us; He will help us; yes, He will uphold us with the right hand of His righteousness!

Throughout the Old Testament, Yahweh reminded His people not to fear. He told them not to fear other 'gods' (2 Ki. 17:35, 38). He told them not to fear to go out to battle (2 Chr. 20:17). And He exhorted Joshua several times to "be strong and of a good courage" (Josh. 1:6-7, 9); i.e., to "fear not". Again, this indicates that Joshua had both the ability and responsibility in determining whether or not to fear. It was simply a matter of him establishing, once and for all, that Yahweh was his source.

Similarly, in the New Testament Yahshua told His disciples not to fear. In one instance He said, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." (Lk. 12:32). Sadly, some believers seem not to be able to take this

to heart – they fear either that Yahweh doesn't really want them to enter the Kingdom (or that He is only grudgingly willing to give it to them); or that it's only a future-tense promise that has no bearing on their lives today. The reality is that He wants His people to experience and walk in the Kingdom today. Remember, Yahshua chastised the scribes and Pharisees of His day for preventing others from entering the Kingdom (Matt. 23:14).

In writing to the congregation of believers at Rome, Paul said, "you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption" (Rom. 8:15). It's the spirit of bondage that keeps us in fear; but "where the Spirit (of Yahweh) is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17). When we're truly walking in the Spirit, we will be free of the bondage of fear and will be able to do whatever the Father has called us to do.

Then we're assured in the book of Hebrews that, "...He has said, 'I will in no way leave you, neither will I in any way forsake you.' So that with good courage we say, 'Yahweh is my helper. I will not fear. What can man do to me?' " (Hebr. 13:5-6). Because of this assurance – that He will never leave us nor forsake us – we are empowered to say with good courage, "Yahweh is my helper. I will not fear."

Compare this affirmation with what Yahshua prophesied about the end-times, that fear would increase to the point that people would literally drop dead from it (Lk. 21:26). Again, this emphasizes the point that we need to examine ourselves, whether we are walking in the faith.

We have these promises from Yahweh. But like all promises in Scripture, we have a responsibility to lay hold of them. And it starts with our 'faith confession'. I exhort you to never again allow words of fear, doubt, or unbelief to come out of your mouth. Job said "that which I so greatly feared has come upon me." (Job 3:25). And of course we're familiar with Yahshua's admonition that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (Lk. 6:45). Whatever we have in abundance in our hearts will eventually come out of our mouths, whether fear, doubt, and unbelief, or rock-solid faith. We ought to follow the example of David, who "encouraged himself in Yahweh" (1 Sam. 30:6). We can see examples of this throughout the Psalms. For instance, we read:

Psa. 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

When Yahweh is with us, we need fear no evil.

Psa. 27:1-5 "Yahweh is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? Yahweh is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? ² When evil-doers came at me to eat up my flesh,

even my adversaries and my foes, they stumbled and fell. ³ Though a host should encamp against me, My heart shall not fear. Though war should rise against me, Even then I will be confident. ⁴ One thing I have asked of Yahweh, that I will seek after, That I may dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life, To see Yahweh's beauty, And to inquire in his temple. ⁵ For in the day of trouble He will keep me secretly in His pavilion. In the covert of His tent He will hide me. He will lift me up on a rock."

"My heart shall not fear. Though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident" (v3-4). How could David make these kinds of bold statements? Was it just wishful thinking? Was it arrogance? No, these were faith declarations based on his close, personal relationship with Yahweh. Do we have that kind of intimate relationship, where we, too, can make those types of declarations?

Is there anything that we should fear? Franklin D. Roosevelt made the famous statement that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." But a more biblically-accurate statement would be "The only one we ought to fear is Yahweh Himself."

Yahshua cautioned, "don't fear those who can destroy the body, but fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in gehenna ('hell') fire (Matt. 10:28). This kind of fear means a profound reverence and awe. Do we have that kind of reverence for our heavenly Father? If Yahweh be for us, who can be against us?

Feast of Tabernacles

October 3-10th, 2009

Lion of Judah Family Worship Center will again be hosting the Feast of Tabernacles in Huntsville, AL. We're going to have an awesome time of praise & worship, fellowship, and personal ministry. We'll also be having a special healing service and lots of fun activities for the whole family.

Our gatherings will be at The Olive Branch at 175 West Park Loop, and we've been able to secure great room rates at the nearby Best Western Rocket City Inn & Suites: \$72-80/night for standard double or king-size, \$99/night for suites.

Hotel amenities include a complimentary hot breakfast, swimming pool, exercise room, as well as free access to Riviera Fitness Center, a local members-only gym.

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Mark your calendars and make plans now to attend!

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- The Price of Freedom (7/4/09)
- Holy Spirit in the Life of the Believer (7/18/09)
- Attitude (2 pts.) (8/1/09, 8/8/09)
- Fear (Not) (8/15/09)

For all the latest teaching & preaching from this ministry, please visit us online – www.4LionofJudah.com. Most recent sermons are available for immediate download in mp3 format.

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Mark your calendars and make plans now to attend! Check our website or write us for all the details.

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