

The Disciplines of a Godly Life: Psalm 119

Meditation: Part 3

Living the Word Filled Life – In Fearful Times

There are fearful times coming to this planet. Open with me to Luke 21.25

Jesus says that we are headed toward days when people “expire”. The word is *apосуcho* ‘breath pops out’ or ‘expires’ because of complete fear. We see that in earthquakes, fires, and hurricanes, usually among the elderly with heart attacks. But the ultimate panic attack is coming and many healthy humans will just expire for fear. This past week we got a small taste of things to come!

For the past seven days scientists all over the world, have been glued to their seats watching the space weather, This past Tuesday they sat up in their chairs, rubbed their eyes and started to sweat as they watched the week unfold. If the bulge, buildup, and then eruption of our Sun had been facing us – we all would have been sweating! Why? What happened exactly 5 days ago on Tuesday?

- The largest solar eruption EVER seen, measuring x28 on the solar Richter scale exploded from the surface of the Sun and headed out away from the Earth.
- This week the Earth witnessed the greatest solar event ever measured.
- The Sun exploded a cloud of superheated gas equivalent to a million hydrogen bombs, all exploding at once.

Those who know say that everyone on earth would have known something happened if it had headed our way. The sun erupted three more times in less than 24 hours, bringing the number of major eruptions to nine in less than two weeks. Scientists have been monitoring the solar cycles since 1755. There has never been a string of activity like this.

Some notable recent events have touched the earth.

- On 3.13.89 a solar eruption measured at x15 fried the power grid of Quebec and plunged 6 million people into the dark.

- o Ten years later on 5.19.98, a flare half that size fried the Galaxy 4 satellite serving 45 million pagers and ATM machines.

AND THERE SHALL BE¹ SIGNS IN THE SUN . . .

Early Monday, Paal Brekke, deputy project manager of the SOHO spacecraft, was still digesting the significance of the three additional outbursts on top of two back-to-back monster flares Oct. 28 and 29.

"I think the last week will go into the history books as one of the most dramatic periods of solar activity we have seen in modern time," Brekke told SPACE.com.

Researchers at the NOAA's Space Environment Center in Boulder, Colo., said the latest flare produced a radiation event that rated an S3, or strong, designation on the NOAA's five-level space weather scales. The incident also caused an R4, or severe, radio blackout.

But Tuesday's eruption just stunned them all. Thankfully none of the latest eruptions was aimed directly at Earth, but glancing blows are expected.

Assessment:

Scientists now know that sunspots do occur in cycles. An 11-year cycle of sunspot activity seems to emerge from the detailed records of the 21 sunspot cycles observed since 1755. The Sun is now experiencing what some scientists think may be the most active cycle ever, a time of violent solar storms that promises to be a record-setter in many ways.

But we are three years BEYOND the solar maximum and right now, the sun is in its minimum activity phase. There should be little to no solar activity until 2012 or later. Instead, scientists say this is one of the most turbulent periods of solar activity since 1940, during a solar maximum event.

On March 6 the largest, most active sunspot ever seen had solar scientists around the world poised to warn of impending flare effects on Earth.

The unusual spot created a new, giant flare almost daily, saturating the space between the Sun and Earth with solar X-rays, gamma rays, and protons, and creating surging waves in the solar wind that disturbed the Earth's magnetic field with unprecedented regularity.

¹ Quoting from Jack Kinsella, The Omega Letter Intelligence Digest, Vol: 26 Issue: 4 - Tuesday, November 04, 2003.

Scientists say the sunspot activity is harmless to human beings and that we are protected from radiation by the atmosphere. The only effects most of us will notice will be sporadic problems with cell phones, TV reception and a bumpier internet than usual. In practical terms, it is pretty much an interesting non-story.

In spiritual terms, its a whole 'nuther ball game.

Richard Willson is a researcher affiliated with NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies and Columbia University's Earth Institute, New York. He authored a study for the Goddard Space Institute that says;

"Historical records of solar activity indicate that solar radiation has been increasing since the late 19th century. If a trend, comparable to the one found in this study, persisted throughout the 20th century, it would have provided a significant component of the global warming the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports to have occurred over the past 100 years."

Jesus gave signs that would signal His soon return. When He outlined those signs, He said they would be like 'birth pangs' -- increasing in both frequency and intensity as the end of the age approached.

He spoke of wars and rumors of wars, famines, earthquakes, pestilences and a climate of deception, on an ever increasing scale. He spoke of Israel as a literal place in the last days, and foretold Jerusalem's rise to global prominence at the appointed time. He said Jerusalem would remain in Gentile hands until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled.

All this is headline news for this generation. And THEN He said;

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things BEGIN to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:25-28)

"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, THIS GENERATION SHALL NOT PASS AWAY TILL ALL BE FULFILLED." (Luke 21:31-32)

Can't say it much plainer than that.

If you see Christmas decorations you can be sure that Thanksgiving is near!

WE LIVE IN FEARFUL TIMES

God has an offer to those who live in fearful times. More than any other prohibition God² repeatedly calls out to us to not fear. As Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

This morning I want to challenge you from the Word of the Living God – to Live the Word Filled Life – even in fearful times!

Fear is not from God, it comes from our flesh, it surrounds us in the world, and it is the realm of the Devil.

Fear not is the most often repeated negative prohibition is God's Word. The Lord wants us not to fear.

We live in a world that is possessed by fear – fear of death, fear of life, fear of danger, fear of the truth, and on we could go. But in this world of fear we are to Live a Word Filled Life – even in fearful times.

There is a way to live in constant touch with the God of Heaven – no matter what.

This offered lifestyle is called by various names in God's Word. The Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5.18 calls it “the Spirit filled life”, and in Colossians 3.16 – “the Word Filled Life”.

God offers His Presence and Influence to surround every part of my life. God offers an unbroken line of communication, supply, and fellowship with Himself.

This life is possible, no matter what goes on around us. And that is what we have been studying these past few weeks.

- From the constant changes that filled the lives of Enoch, Noah, and Abraham we learned they found the secret to **Living a Word Filled Life – In Distracting Times.**

² It is just like our Lord to speak to us when we need Him the most. His tender “Fear not!” can calm the storm in our hearts regardless of the circumstances around us. This is the way He assured Abraham (Gen. 15:1), Isaac (Gen. 26:24), and Jacob (Gen. 46:3), as well as Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20:15–17), Daniel (Dan. 10:12, 19), Mary (Luke 1:30), and Peter (Luke 5:10). The next time you feel alone and defeated, meditate on Hebrews 13:5 and Isaiah 41:10 and 43:1–7, and claim by faith the presence of the Lord. He is with you!

- o From Moses we saw that in spite of the swirl of life in Egypt, the whirl of life in the desert, and the immensity of life on the 40 year Wilderness wandering camping trip – it is possible to **Live the Word Filled Life – in Busy Times.**
- o Now as we open to Joshua 1.8-9 we will see today in God's Word that we can **Live the Word Filled Life – in Fearful Times.**

As we turn to Joshua the 6th book of the Bible we open to an account of God Himself talking to a man named Joshua. Joshua is a real person. He is about 90 years old – and has been asked by God to do something he had never before done. He is to lead a military campaign with untrained soldiers, in unfamiliar territory, and conquer an entire land in seven years. Listen to what the Lord says to him.

Joshua 1.1-9. Read and pray.

Joshua was approaching 90 years of age³ when called on by God to lead a seven plus year war against entrenched enemies. At age 90, Joshua had graduated from prep school. He had followed Moses for 40 years, every where he went. He had learned to obey and see God at work in protecting the nation of Israel, providing for their daily needs. But now the legendary presence of that monumental man from Egypt is gone.

There were giants, there were huge walled cities and vast armies, and there was this group of people that hadn't been exactly cooperative with Moses. And what would be a normal human response? FEAR. And that is exactly what the Lord confronts and comforts Joshua about – be courageous, don't fear if I am with you.

God speaks to Joshua, and gives him a promise -- Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, **for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.**"

There is one solution for facing trouble – take God with you.
There is an antidote for fear – experiencing God's Presence.

Joshua had cultivated this Word Filled Life while he was in the military and in politics. The hectic schedule and constant life on the road heading to and from battles never stopped him from time with the Lord.

³ John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

Then his second career as the leader of the Nation of Israel also found time for the Lord twice daily! His habits built up in his youth served him well. He loved to spend time in God's Presence and learn all he could at the Tent of Meeting – kind of like church and Sunday School. When he was older that habit of investing time for God to the exclusion of other activities never left Joshua. How did General Joshua Ben-Nun ever do it as a career military and political leader?

- HE STARTED A HABIT WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG MAN: Exodus 33:11 So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. And he would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, did not depart from the tabernacle. ***Joshua stayed on with the Lord. He loved to hang around the Tent of Meeting with God.***
- HE OBEYED GOD'S COMMAND: Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ***Joshua loved God's Word to stay on his mind and in his mouth.***
- HE STUCK WITH IT TO THE END: Joshua 24:15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." ***And he purposed that no matter what any other family did, his was staying faithful to the Lord. That resolve only was possible because of the first two.***
- ***Are you lingering in God's presence as He opens His Word to you? Are God's Words stuck to your heart, your mind, your mouth? That is what the Lord wants! Then you can lead your family God's way.***

Fearful times are coming – don't get swept up by the spirit of fear all around us, it is not from God! Remember and meditate upon the promises the Lord has made.

It is just like our Lord to speak to us when we need Him the most. His tender "Fear not!" can calm the storm in our hearts regardless of the circumstances around us.

This is the way He assured --

- ABRAHAM: Genesis 15:1 After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

- ISAAC: Genesis 26:24 And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake."
- JACOB: Genesis 46:3 So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there."
- JEHOSHAPHAT: 2 Chronicles 20:15-17 And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the Lord to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. 16 Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. 17 You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you."
- DANIEL: Daniel 10:12,19 Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. 19 And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me."
- MARY: Luke 1:30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."
- PETER: Luke 5:10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."
- PAUL: Acts 27:24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'

The next time you are afraid, and fear comes over you as you feel alone and defeated, meditate on these Scriptures and claim by faith the presence of the Lord. He is with you!

- Hebrews 13:5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."
- Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

Isaiah 43: 1-7

1 But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob,
And He who formed you, O Israel:

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by your name;
You are Mine.

2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you.
When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned,
Nor shall the flame scorch you.

3 For I am the Lord your God,
The Holy One of Israel, your Savior;
I gave Egypt for your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in your place.

4 Since you were precious in My sight,
You have been honored,
And I have loved you;
Therefore I will give men for you,
And people for your life.

5 Fear not, for I am with you;
I will bring your descendants from the east,
And gather you from the west;

6 I will say to the north, 'Give them up!'
And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!'
Bring My sons from afar,
And My daughters from the ends of the earth—

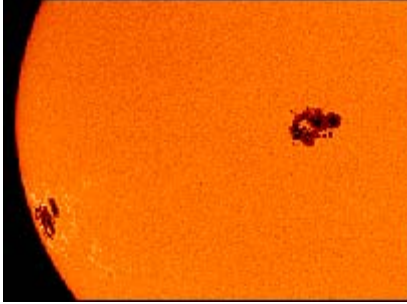
7 Everyone who is called by My name,
Whom I have created for My glory;
I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

Last Updated: Friday, 24 October, 2003, 13:56 GMT 14:56 UK

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/3210901.stm>

Earth put on solar storm alert

By Dr David Whitehouse
BBC News Online science editor



One big sunspot and another on the way

Imminent disruption is predicted for satellites, power systems and even mobile phones because of a solar storm.

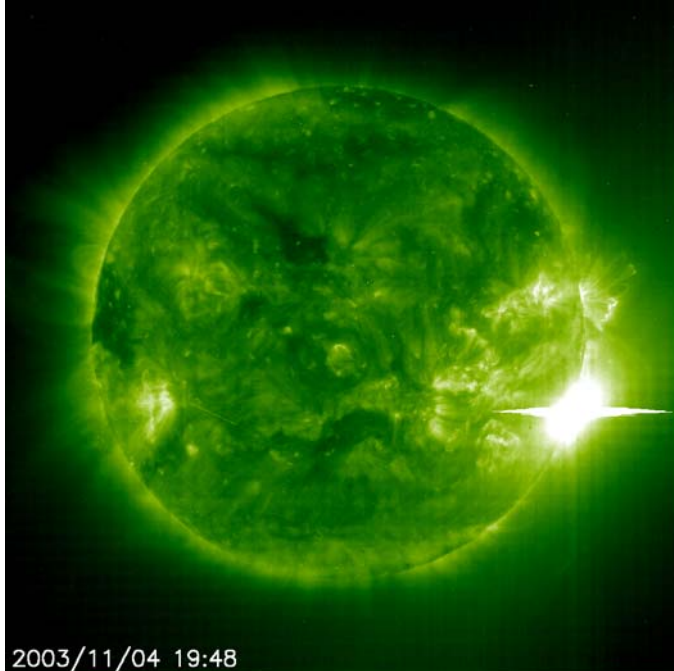
It comes from one of the largest groups of sunspots seen for years. Several times in recent days superhot gas has erupted above them.

The events, called Coronal Mass Ejections, have sent 10 billion tonnes of superhot gas speeding towards Earth.

As well as communication blackouts, aurorae - polar lights - may be seen from mid-latitudes as the gas arrives.

1	04/11/03	X28	
2	02/04/01	X20.0	
2	16/08/89	X20.0	
3	28/10/03		X17.2
4	06/03/89	X15.0	
4	11/07/78	X15.0	
5	15/04/01	X14.4	
6	24/04/84	X13.0	
6	19/10/89	X13.0	
7	15/12/82	X12.9	
8	06/06/82	X12.0	
8	01/06/91	X12.0	
8	04/06/91	X12.0	
8	06/06/91	X12.0	
8	11/06/91	X12.0	
8	15/06/91	X12.0	
9	17/12/82	X10.1	
9	20/05/84	X10.1	
10	29/10/03	X10	

SUPERFLARE: Astronomers won't soon forget Nov. 4th, 2003--the day of the [biggest explosion](#) ever recorded in our solar system. The blast originated from giant sunspot 486, and on the [Richter scale of solar flares](#), it measured **X28**. Smaller flares in the past have caused [power outages](#) and widespread auroras. The [Nov. 4th explosion](#) was not directed squarely toward Earth, so its effects were relatively minimal. Nevertheless it was a flare to remember.



The Classification of X-ray Solar Flares or "Solar Flare Alphabet Soup"

[back to spaceweather.com](http://back.to.spaceweather.com)

A solar flare is an explosion on the Sun that happens when energy stored in twisted magnetic fields (usually above sunspots) is suddenly released. Flares produce a burst of radiation across the electromagnetic spectrum, from radio waves to x-rays and gamma-rays. [\[more information\]](#)

Scientists classify solar flares according to their x-ray brightness in the wavelength range 1 to 8 Angstroms. There are 3 categories: **X-class flares** are big; they are major events that can trigger planet-wide radio blackouts and long-lasting radiation storms. **M-class flares** are medium-sized; they generally cause brief radio blackouts that affect Earth's polar regions. Minor radiation storms sometimes follow an M-class flare. Compared to X- and M-class events, **C-class flares** are small with few noticeable consequences here on Earth.

This figure shows a series of solar flares detected by NOAA satellites in July 2000:

