

RESPECT FOR POWER

“They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed.” (2 Thess 1:9)

A crow bar used to pry open a box can also be a deadly weapon. The elephant that moves heavy burdens also has the power to trample and kill. The wind that fills the sail and moves the ship also has the power to become a hurricane or tornado. The river that turns the water wheel can also become a destructive flood. The electricity that lights a home can also kill in an instant. The family car is powerful enough to kill thousands every year and the man who stands on the tracks to challenge the power of a train is stupid. Wise people respect the power of nuclear radiation and take every precaution possible to protect themselves from it.

It is always wise to have a healthy respect for power. The steam, for example, that can move a giant ship can also cut a man in half. High pressure steam leaks are invisible at their source, so those working in the engine rooms of ships are trained to wave a broom handle in front of them as they walk. When a deadly steam leak cuts the broom handle in two, it is wise not to proceed.

Paul’s graphic description of sinful man includes this quote from Ps. 36:1 **“There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom 3:18)**. The Bible is filled with examples of sinful men displaying their deadly disregard for God’s power. How utterly stupid! It is the fool who says in his heart that there is no God (Ps. 14:1).

When Paul preached in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:16 - 41), he concluded his message with a warning from Habakkuk 1:5. Even though God’s rebellious people would refuse to believe it, God promised to raise up the Babylonians and destroy them like a wolf pouncing on a lamb or a vulture swooping down to devour. The same God who had the power to deliver His people from Egypt, also had the power to chasten and destroy them! All who are tempted to reject God need to remember that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 1:7).

In December 2015, an engineer named Ravi Subramanian was sucked into a jet engine on an Airbus A319 at the airport in Mumbai, India. How close can you stand to a jet engine without being sucked it? Wise men don’t need to know for they will stay as far away as possible.

- Remember! God’s power once destroyed a world full of sinners with a flood.
- Remember! God’s power also destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah!
- Remember! Jesus is coming again with power to punish with everlasting destruction!
- The men of Beth Shemesh grew careless, looked into the ark of God, and died (1 Sam. 6:19)
- Uzzah grew careless, touched the ark of God, and he also died (2 Sam. 6:7).
- Korah, Dathan, and Abiram grew careless with God and also died (Nu. 16:31 - 34).
- Nebuchadnezzar forgot God and lost his sanity (Dan. 4:24 - 37).
- Belshazzar made the same mistake and lost his life (Dan. 5:25 - 31).
- Sennacherib forgot God’s power and lost 185,000 soldiers in a single night (Is. 37:36).
- What are you willing to lose?

X-rays were discovered in 1895 and Dr. Emil Herman Grubbe became the first X-ray martyr. In the course of his life, he suffered more than 90 surgeries for multiple cancers caused by his intense exposure to radiation. Today, X-ray technicians who are wise, respect the power they work with. God is more powerful than an X-ray and everyone who is wise certainly respects Him.

There is an old joke about the man who jumped off the Empire State Building. He was quoted going by the 35th floor saying: “Everything is all right so far”. So what about you? Just because everything is “all right so far” doesn’t mean that can ever escape from the power of God!