

## How Fear Hindered WWII Russia

Dictators only understand one thing, power. And when their own power is endangered they move without much thought of consequences. Joseph Stalin fully filled this description as a typical despot who acted only in self-interest, no matter the cost to his country or fellowman.

The German hierarchy understood completely the mind of their soon to be enemy. Reinhard Heydrich, who was in charge of Nazi intelligence, concocted a devilish scheme to exploit Stalin's paranoia.

In 1936 Heydrich had thirty-two documents forged and "leaked" into the Russian high command. The documents led Stalin to believe that the Germans had infiltrated his armed forces. The forgeries were an incredible success causing over one thousand men per document to be purged or banished. The total was about 35,000 men removed.

With plans already in place to invade Russia, the Germans successfully influenced Stalin to decapitate his own government. Some of his most qualified leaders were executed. This left the Russians severely disabled on the eve of the greatest struggle for existence they would ever engage in. It was made possible because one man feared.

Fear. It is a beneficial emotion that can keep us from serious harm or death. It keeps us from walking too closely to the edge; it warns us when we are taking chances. Fear can save us when it is based in reality. But what of fear that is based in fantasy? What of the the ghosts in our own minds that whisper anxious possibilities and terrorizing scenarios? An overactive imagination can haunt anyone. We know it is true that "you are what you think" and those that think fear are always afraid.

The Devil knows the power of fear. So he watches God's people closely to act upon their trepidation. And what he cannot find, he creates and drops into the hearts of men and women. Satan's goal is to get us to act on our false fears. If he can get us to open that door, then we will soon destroy ourselves without much more help from him.

The fear that helped destroy Stalin's government was the fear of others. He believed a false report and killed his friends and in some cases his family. How many relationships have we killed on false pretenses? How many ire raising scenes have we acted out in our minds about people we thought had something against us? Oh, how many times I have shamed myself when the truth finally came out! It was all a facade erected by insecurity and imagination. It is best never to act upon a rumor birthed in our minds. If it is not known for a fact, we would do well to not believe it.

The Bible plainly states, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" (Proverbs 18:13 KJV), and also; "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18 KJV).

If we would love those we fear, anxieties would soon melt. We would see that fear was nothing more than a long shadow cast from a small falsehood. Let us believe the best about our brother. Because acting upon unfounded agitations can very well lead us to hurt ourselves and those that we may desperately need some day.

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (Hebrews 10:24 KJV).

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