

Foreword by Barbara Yoder

KRISSY NELSON

Author of *Created for the Impossible*

SLAYING the
GIANT
of FEAR

**AND RELEASING THE ROAR
OF BREAKTHROUGH**

SLAYING the
GIANT
of **FEAR**

**AND RELEASING THE ROAR
OF BREAKTHROUGH**

KRISSY NELSON



Chosen

a division of Baker Publishing Group
Minneapolis, Minnesota

© 2020 by Krissy Nelson

Published by Chosen Books
11400 Hampshire Avenue South
Bloomington, Minnesota 55438
www.chosenbooks.com

Chosen Books is a division of
Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, recording—without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Nelson, Krissy, author.

Title: Slaying the giant of fear: and releasing the roar of breakthrough / Krissy Nelson.

Description: Bloomington, Minnesota: Bethany House Publishers, 2020.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020011356 | ISBN 9780800799663 (trade paperback) | ISBN 9781493424856 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Fear—Religious aspects—Christianity.

Classification: LCC BV4908.5 .N448 2020 | DDC 248.8/6—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020011356>

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture quotations labeled AMP are from the Amplified® Bible (AMP), copyright © 2015 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. www.Lockman.org

Scripture quotations labeled ESV are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ESV Text Edition: 2016

Scripture quotations labeled NKJV are from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations labeled NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked TPT are from The Passion Translation®. Copyright © 2017, 2018 by Passion & Fire Ministries, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ThePassionTranslation.com.

In some cases, the names of individuals and identifying details have been changed to protect privacy.

20 21 22 23 24 25 26 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



To my children:
my daughter, Jenessa, and my son, Justice
Never forget how much Jesus loves you
and the giant of fear fears you.
Roar your roar of breakthrough
and take the land God has given you.
You are champions in Christ.

Contents

Foreword by Barbara Yoder 13
Introduction 17

PART 1: The Giant Exposed 25

1. The Problem 27
2. When Fear Gets the Upper Hand 39
3. The Battle Line of Breakthrough 51

PART 2: Weapon #1—Obedience 61

4. Why Obedience? 63
5. Postured for Victory 73
6. Because He Said So 85

PART 3: Weapon #2—Faithfulness 95

7. Why Faithfulness? 97
8. Faithful in the Unseen 109
9. Faithful in the Fire 121

Contents

PART 4: Weapon #3—Stewardship 131

- 10. Why Stewardship? 133
- 11. What Is in Your Hand? 145
- 12. Abide in Christ 159

PART 5: Release Your Roar 167

- 13. Be of Good Courage 169
- 14. The Roar of Breakthrough 181

Foreword

Krissy Nelson is a wife and mother as well as innovative mover and shaker. She is paving the way for a new generation to break out of a structure of fear into freedom and fulfillment. I have loved the times of connecting with Krissy and her family. I call them real people. I love her passion for God and the intensity of her God-given purpose and mandate. She is willing to step out of the box called “ordinary.”

Reading her book jumpstarted me on a reminiscing trip over past experiences I have had with fear. Her experiences also reminded me of others who have shared their journey of overcoming fear. Then there was that book I wrote, *Taking On Goliath*, about giants in our lives. Memories rushed into my mind as I reviewed her book.

Fear is one of the main forces—if not the main force—that creates seemingly impossible barriers to our fulfilling God’s plan for our lives. Fear attempts to stop specific assignments He has given us and steps of obedience we need to take that seem beyond the ordinary.

This is not new. The Israelites faced inordinate fear when God invited them to go into Canaan and possess it, bit by bit, for themselves. Nearly all the original children of Israel were disqualified from entering the Promised Land because, in the war between fear and faith, they gave themselves over to fear. I believe this is the exact issue we are facing today as God has given us the opportunity to turn nations around and to transform our own lives and the lives of those we influence.

When I had just completed graduate school, the university invited me, because of my academic record, to join the staff as a professor. My very first assignment was to teach Ph.D.s who would be flying in from all over the United States to attend a four-week seminar in my area of expertise. But I was wet behind the ears, a total newbie. What did I have to give them? I was terrified!

The night before my first lecture, I was panic-stricken. I could not sleep. My stomach was rolling and making strange sounds. My skin crawled. Everything in my body seemed to shout *terror!* Finally I turned on the light and began to read desperately through the Psalms, starting with the very first one. I must have read halfway through the book screaming silently, *God, please help me!* Finally I came to a verse that broke the tyranny of my panic. Fear changed to faith. Releasing a humongous sigh of relief, I turned off the light and went to sleep. The next day I taught those educated professors with confidence. I went beyond my fear into faith, beyond my ability into God's supernatural ability. I decimated a Goliath.

We are in a “go-beyond” time. God is challenging us today to go beyond our comfort zones, abilities and previous achievements to do things that directly challenge our fears. He is inviting us to partner with Him to discover fresh and deeper faith—not just our own faith, but to move out

of fear to access His faith. If we are true New Testament believers, then we must become a supernatural people who do the impossible, a people who go beyond.

Krissy Nelson not only addresses fear but provides excellent examples of what fear looks like, how it talks to us and what its goal is. It is a Goliath that wants to paralyze us in a frozen place. Furthermore she challenges us to “go beyond” and replace fear with faith. And she lays out a biblical strategy on how to do this.

We have entered an era that is not easy. The days ahead will be filled with opportunities for us to freeze in terror. But if we overcome, we must replace those “now” fears by moving into audacious faith—faith that rises up to navigate impossible times and tasks.

Barbara J. Yoder, lead apostle and founding pastor,
Shekinah Regional Apostolic Center,
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Introduction

Not long ago I found myself on the cusp of significant breakthrough in my life. For the first time, I felt ready to step fully into the destiny I knew God had planned for me. I could see it, see Him, beckoning to me to walk forward and claim the promised land He had been preparing for me for so long. Yet at the same time I was paralyzed with fear. Instead of admitting my fear of the future to the Lord, I clammed up in an attempt to remain strong and courageous. I had succumbed to the wrong assumption that being afraid was a sign of weakness and doubt, so confessing I was scared—me, an author, television host and ministry leader—felt like exposing myself as a fraud. I told myself I should be immune to fear, that if my faith were strong enough, I would not be dealing with these feelings, right? The building pressure had become nearly unbearable. I was in agony. I could feel the roar of breakthrough rising within me, but when I opened my mouth to release it, to release the pressure, all that came out was a whimper.

Can you relate to this feeling? I know you can, because I know that everyone is afraid sometimes. Everyone. You are not alone, and you are certainly not faithless or a fraud or weak because of it.

Friend, it is time to admit your own reasons right here for justifying the expectation that you should be immune to fear. It is time to be honest and real. It might seem strange now, but as you will see in this book, being transparent about your fear is the first step you will take toward your destiny. It is exactly the action that will turn your whimper into a roar that can shake the gates of hell. Trust me; I speak from experience.

Truth That Calms the Storm

Eventually the pressure behind my fear became so strong that I could no longer ignore it. I could not stuff my feelings anymore because there was simply nowhere left to hide them. In my little room, on my knees before God, I bent down in defeat.

Like Peter, I had stepped out of the boat, but when I looked behind me all I could see were the impossible waters I had crossed over thus far. I wondered, how could I continue to follow Jesus atop the water? How could I maintain a lifestyle of radical faith in order to walk forward further and further from the boat, no land in sight, when I was frozen in terror? I could barely hear Jesus's voice saying, "Come," over the sound of the storm. My weakness as a human being was painfully obvious next to Him. I knew that I faced a new choice: Continue forward in faith, or surrender to the fear of the unknown.

I could almost feel the wind blowing all around me. In my mind's eye I began to look down at the surface of the water. Every limitation I had, every struggle and every doubt rose like a giant wave trying to take me down. The storm carried a voice shouting at me to quit right then and there. It said, "You're not good enough. You can't do this. You didn't get here on your own. You should quit now."

Yes, the enemy seized the opportunity to dictate the narrative of my life. His voice thundered around me, even speaking into the steps I had already taken with the Lord and attempting to pervert where God had taken me: out into the deep of the impossible realm of His Kingdom. He twisted the truth with his accusations and lies, reminding me I never could have gotten where I was on my own. And he was right about that; God had gotten me where I was.

Fear began to come over me. I wanted to turn around and run back toward the boat. I wanted to throw in the towel. What God had put before me was too big. It was way bigger than I could have imagined, and I was painfully aware that I could not do it. No way. No how.

That was when the lightbulb of truth came on. Suddenly the waves stopped and the wind was silenced as truth came crashing in. It was so obvious that I wondered why I had not been clinging to this truth all along: Whatever God calls you to do for Him will always be bigger than you. It will always seem impossible. It will always feel as though you are stepping farther and farther into the deep without a map and only Jesus as your guide. He will go before you and hold your hand, all at the same time. Jesus will lock eyes with you, speaking truth and encouragement. *Fear not*, He will tell you. *You can do this. I am with you. Nothing is impossible with God.*

Finally I could hear His voice over the sound of the wind and the crashing water. I suddenly got it. I understood the supernatural reality of this life of faith we are called to walk as disciples of Christ Jesus, our Lord. I began to accept the new normal of life outside the boat with Jesus—never dull, never predictable and always an adventure of faith.

From the depths of my soul I pressed past the lies of the enemy and cried to the Father, admitting my fear. “God, I’m scared.” As these words left my lips, a roar swelled from the inside of me. Now my heavenly Father was dictating the narrative of my life all over again, and not the giant of fear. Once again I allowed my admission of fear to exit my soul, this time as a shout of hope that something would be different. “I’m scared, Abba!”

I felt a weight lift from my shoulders. The cry of truth thundering from the depths of my soul was a roar of breakthrough in my life. Just as a lion paralyzes its prey with the sound of its roar, fear was paralyzed by the sound bellowing out of me, and the giant fell silent on the sidelines.

In the silence, the Father spoke. His words were simple, pure and piercing. He said, “Krissy, I never leave My sheep without a Shepherd.”

You see, no matter the call, Jesus is with you. He is your great Shepherd. The Bible says, “I will never leave you or forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). Jesus paid it all so that you could live your days on this earth filled with His presence and power to do the impossible.

You Can Be Fearless

We all experience fear at some point for different reasons. And guess what. That is okay. The goal is not avoiding fear.

The goal is pressing forward despite fear. It is us focusing more on Jesus than on the giant of fear.

The truth is, in our humanity, we all have weakness and limitations. But instead of us coming into agreement with the giant of fear and saying, “Yeah, I’m weak. I should just go back to the boat until I’m stronger,” we can remind ourselves we are filled with the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead (Romans 8:11). We can proclaim, as Paul did, “I will boast in my weakness, because it is in my weakness that His power is made perfect” (2 Corinthians 11:30; 12:9). This is such good news, my friend. You can reframe your weaknesses and limitations so they are not areas where you feel ashamed but instead guideposts of just how much you need Jesus every single day.

What a gift that is, recognizing our dependency on Christ. “‘For it is not by power nor might, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord,” according to the Scriptures (Zechariah 4:6). We all need Jesus. Every single day we need Him. It is in Him we live and move and have our being. It is in Him we are strong. He is our good Shepherd, leading us through our life and rescuing us from the mouth of the bear and the paw of the lion. Just as a human shepherd rescues his sheep, so Jesus rescues us from the teeth of the enemy’s lies and accusations.

Allow Him to rescue you right now. And let out a shout! “Jesus, I need you!” Give it a try right now, will you? Let out a roar from within and declare, “Thank You, Jesus, that I am weak! Thank You for this ever-present reminder that it is Your strength I need more of and not my own!”

We must realize that since we are God’s sheep, He will never leave us without a Shepherd. Because He is watching over you, you can be bold and courageous. You can be fearless. You do not have to wait for someone else to prepare the

way. Jesus already prepared the way. He *is* the way! And His Spirit will lead you, like the Shepherd that He is, right across the victory line where the giant of fear tried to defeat you.

Ready to Roar

As God began to reveal to me the weapons I would need in order to take down the giant of fear, I began to see David and Goliath's face-off in a new light and understand the supernatural pearls of truth God embedded within this story. Given what God revealed to me about the significance of His role as our good Shepherd, it should come as no surprise that the Lord would use a human shepherd to teach us an important lesson about His own Shepherd's heart for us and how to rely on Him to defeat the giant of fear forever.

In this book, I will teach you exactly what God taught me, and continues to teach me, through David's story. We will step together up to the battle line alongside David to learn what it was that made him victorious. We will see why David did not fear men, not even a giant, and we will learn how to ignore the voice of the enemy, as he did.

We will also look at the weapons David used to defeat the giant of fear before he ever faced off with Goliath. God has given us the same weapons—obedience, faithfulness and stewardship—and you will be encouraged to know you already have them in your arsenal. You just have to learn how to use them to slay the giant of fear.

As you come into agreement with all the Lord has for you, you will take your stand in opposition to fear. The giant's voice will have less say in your life as the voice of God grows louder and more profound. By the end, you will find yourself roaring your roar of breakthrough, paralyzing the giant of

fear as he bows to the name of Jesus, while you run victoriously across the battle line and into the destiny God has planned for you. It may seem hard to believe now, but your freedom from fear is coming.

My friend, I know firsthand how debilitating fear can be. But there is hope. Right now the deep in me is calling out to the deep in you. As we travel together through this book, you will begin to identify and sharpen the weapons given to you by God Almighty. You will learn about God's plan for your life, a plan that includes freedom from the grip of fear, and how to cut off the head of the giant of fear, just as David did. Most importantly, you will come to know you have been lovingly equipped for every battle you will ever face by a God who has already assured you the victory. You do not have to fight and strive anymore, only to find yourself bruised and battered but no closer to the promised land. All you have to do is take the first step and let God unfold the rest.

Are you ready? Let's get started.



PART

1

THE GIANT EXPOSED

1

The Problem

Then the Philistine said, “This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other.” On hearing the Philistine’s words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

1 Samuel 17:10–11

One giant stood at the battle line calling out to the army of the Lord and causing them to run away in terror. “Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul?” (1 Samuel 17:8). His taunts echoed across the valley floor, striking fear in the hearts of an entire army and their king.

Can you imagine? You are all geared up for battle. You are surrounded by an army of soldiers ready to fight, but out of nowhere a terrifying adversary walks right out of your worst nightmare and into the landscape before you. Fear begins to swell up from deep within. And then he speaks. A sound like

a roar is released from this giant's mouth as he declares your doomed fate. His words crush your destiny and challenge everything you believe in, even your trust in God.

His bold, booming threats fill your heart with panic. You look to your right and to your left to find your fellow army mates with that same pale look of terror on their faces. Then all at once the whole company of soldiers turns and runs the other direction from the foe. You follow.

For forty days this giant Goliath stood at the battle line taunting the Israelites to find even one brave man willing to rise up and fight. Morning and night, he came out shouting the same intimidating challenge: "This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other" (1 Samuel 17:10).

Not one could be found who would fight this giant, not even King Saul, who, the Bible says, had no equal and was a head taller than any of the others (1 Samuel 9:2). Even with his physical stature, fear consumed the king, and Saul ran away in fear right alongside his army. Each morning they gathered at the battle line, the giant on one side, King Saul and the army on the other. And each time the Bible says every one of God's people ran away "dismayed and terrified" (1 Samuel 17:11).

This is what fear does. Fear challenges our faith. It strikes panic in our heart until we can barely move, except to flee from the battle line and away from our destiny. But fear need not rule your life anymore.

Your Response to Fear

The story of David and Goliath is filled with wisdom to help us walk in victory over fear. For one, it helps us clarify our response to fear and develop new patterns of behavior.

Have you ever wondered why fear so often causes us to question our very identity, as well as the identity of the One who fights our battles? Deuteronomy 3:22 (ESV) says, “You shall not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you,” yet we still fear. We still struggle to trust that the Lord is going to battle on our behalf. Like the Israelites, we crumble under the weight of dismay.

The Hebrew word for “dismay,” *chathath*,* speaks to a shattering that occurs. In that brokenness, courage and resolution are lost, seemingly forever. Before the giant Goliath, an army who by nature should have been full of courage—they were numerous, they were trained, they had a leader and, most importantly, they were God’s army—came apart. Such intense feelings for an army of men. How could this be? How could one giant cause an entire army to retreat in fear like this, to back down from their God-given mandate to take the land?

Shattered from Within

The reality is, fear is relentless. Even with just a few little words the enemy can amplify the sound of fear in our hearts, causing us to retreat in panic. Then the spirit of fear calls out to us from within, as Goliath called out to the army: “This day I defy you. Give me one man or woman who will dare fight me.” We can count on fear to shout menacingly at us from the battle line of our life at four times our size and adorned in seemingly impenetrable armor. We can count on our flesh to run and hide. It will do it every time.

*Biblehub.com, s.v. “*chathath*.”

In the story of David and Goliath, the Israelite army is a symbol of the flesh, and David is a symbol of the spirit. What is the difference between flesh and spirit? That answer could fill the pages of another book, but to put it simply: Our spirit is that place within us that responds to God's Spirit. It bears witness to the truth and to what is right. Our flesh is our carnal nature. It will often lead us into sin, doubt, fear and more. When faith is challenged, the flesh responds automatically with fear. Through preparation and prayer, however, we can learn to use fear as a trigger to tell our spirit to rise up and fight through the power of God's Spirit at work within us, as He was with David.

That is what you are doing with this book. Together we will practice identifying the giant of fear and then overriding your flesh's response to it so that your spirit can take over. Romans 8:5 (ESV) tells us, "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit." You will practice positioning yourself so you can take a stance like David, one that can see fear for what it is: a defiant giant that dares defy the powerful armies of the living God. We will also practice wielding the three most powerful supernatural weapons God has given us in our fight against fear: obedience, faithfulness and stewardship.

David embodied the truth that God does not give us "a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV). By the end of this book, you will do the same so that you can approach the battle line with the proper perspective, positioning and supernatural weapons to slay the giant once and for all!

David: A Symbol of the Spirit

David is known as a man after God's heart (1 Samuel 13:14). When we encounter his story in the Scriptures, David is a shepherd boy serving his family, working in the fields, and the youngest of eight sons. While he was not the oldest among his brothers, he was given the mantle of firstborn by God Himself (see Psalm 89:27).

David was such a faithful shepherd that when he went to serve his brothers at the battlefield, he left his sheep with another shepherd so they would not be unattended (1 Samuel 17:20). Can't you just see the heart of God even in this simple act of David caring for his sheep? He would never leave them alone. Even David's sheep did not need to be afraid, for there was always a good shepherd nearby caring for them and looking after them.

While David had never experienced battle, as a shepherd guarding sheep he was familiar with danger. God had saved him from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear, and he knew God as his protector. This powerful, trusting relationship with God was the foundation for his encounter with Goliath.

David entered the battlefield bearing food he brought for his brothers. Standing among the army, he overheard the taunts of the Philistine warrior giant, and instead of retreating in fear like the rest of them, David was appalled at his mockery. He looked to the soldiers standing near him and asked, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and removes this disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that should defy the armies of the living God?" (verse 26).

This young man who had no experience on the field of battle could have been terrified by the sight of Goliath, as

was the entire army of Israel, but David knew who would fight the battle through him. He walked in fellowship with the Lord and knew intimately the protection of Jehovah-Nissi—God my Banner—who had delivered him from the paw of the bear and the lion while he was guarding the sheep (verse 37). He knew he had no reason to fear this taunting giant directly mocking the armies of the living God because the Lord would fight for him.

For forty days Goliath had been spewing out carnal threats, tearing away at the army's confidence in God. Remember how immediately Goliath identified them as the "servants of Saul" in 1 Samuel 17:8? They were really the army of the living God, not just the army of any human king. By redirecting the soldiers' faith in God to faith in their human king, Goliath managed to splinter and then shatter the army's confidence. Fear had tightened its noose.

But David could not be swayed. Victory over this giant was not a question for David. Because of his relationship with God, he was not thrown off by the giant's lies and distortions of truth. He knew to whom he belonged, and he knew his foe was in direct violation and defiance of almighty God. He was led by the Spirit of God and not by his flesh, so he operated with a deep, inward assurance. The sounds of fear were not amplified within him, only the deep, inward confidence in the Lord almighty. Therefore, running away in fear was not an option, and he was baffled at the sight of this army who had great fear.

You, too, can have this kind of assurance. When the giant of fear stands at the battle line of victory in your life, be assured God will fight for you. He activates supernatural weapons you may not even realize you have. They may seem dull now, but they will become progressively sharper through

your daily walk with the Lord. Through the fire and through the rain, as you depend on God, He will ease your pain. He will fight for you. He will win every war. He will hold you by the hand and remind you who you are and whose you are. Eventually, when you stand before a fearsome adversary, you will not wither and run in fear. Instead, you will charge boldly into battle like David, knowing the war has already been fought and won for you by your Father in heaven, through Jesus' victory on the cross.

A New Mom Battles Fear

I will never forget the night fear woke me up. Gasping for breath, I shot straight up in my bed. The clock read 2:00 a.m. I looked down at my newborn baby fast asleep in her bassinet on my left. To my right was my husband, who was also fast asleep. A sense of relief came over me as I saw my loud gasp for air had not awakened either of them.

There in the dark I began to think about the days that were fast approaching. I was only three weeks postpartum and facing my dreaded return to work. Gazing down at my new baby, I wondered how other working moms did it. This was all new to me, and the thought of leaving my newborn with strangers terrified me.

I had never known fear like that before. On one hand, returning to work seemed so simple, but on the other hand, I was overwhelmed by the unknown. The internal tension I was experiencing was so intense. A once career-minded, ladder-climbing young woman, now I was transformed by this little life lying peacefully next to me. Instead of planning ways to advance my career, I found myself wondering, *What am I doing with my life?*

That night, tears began to fall from my eyes, and a silent cry came from deep within. I began to tremble, as I was trying so hard not to let my cries be heard. The more I wept, the more I began to wonder if I could ever go back. I was terrified at leaving my baby girl, frightened that I no longer wanted the things in my career I had worked so hard to build, and overwhelmed at the thought of all the people who were relying on me to return to work as the same person I had left just a few weeks prior.

I had my dream job to look forward to, yet here I was trembling in fear at the thought of going back. I had just helped a good friend of mine realize her ambition of owning her own women's health club. She had put everything on the line to pursue her dream and trusted me to be her operations manager. She was depending on me to help her run with it all.

I was very driven in those days. I remember being in labor standing over my hospital bed with my laptop, notebook and cell phone all sprawled out before me on the bed. It was the wee hours of the morning, and between contractions I was frantically sending out final e-mails to candidates I had interviewed in the days prior, letting them know they did or did not get the job. I needed to tie up these loose ends so they could begin their training and I could go on and have a baby.

My daughter was born on February 21, and the luxurious new women's health club we worked tirelessly to build was scheduled to open just a few weeks later. Prior to having a baby I could not fathom how or why moms needed more than a couple weeks off work after baby, and boy, was I in for a surprise!

In the dark, my daughter at my side, I sat thinking about everyone who was counting on me to be on top of my game in just about a week. In my mind's eye I saw the faces of all

the people who would look to me for leadership. I imagined the phone calls coming in day and night with questions, and the glitches that would no doubt occur with all the new equipment, security system, computer software, etc. The weight of all of this was overwhelming. And I broke.

You want to know what my greatest fear was? Even though I loved my work, I suddenly no longer wanted any of it. That thought alone terrified me. Instead of excitement at the thought of getting back in the swing of things, I felt trapped by my job, when all I really wanted to do was be at home raising my daughter. To make matters worse, some of my own dreams were beginning to surface again, dreams I would never have time to pursue if I was raising my daughter and working full-time.

On top of those fears, I worried about letting people down, especially my friend and boss. She was relying on me to return as the same person who had left before having my baby, and there I sat in the dark of my room wondering who that person even was anymore.

At that point I could no longer contain the sound of my sobs. My husband shot straight up and immediately wrapped his arm around me. At first he struggled to form words but finally put together the obvious question: “What happened? Is everyone okay?”

Weeping and nodding my head that yes, everyone was all right, I managed to form a short sentence. “I don’t want to go back to work,” I told him. I was finally willing to admit it. My words trailed off as if there was so much more to say but no energy left to say it. Deep, guttural cries from within began bellowing out of me.

I was no longer the person I had grown to know. In a lot of ways that was a good thing. I was going to be better for

it, certainly, because I had grown quite selfish. But at the same time I was terrified of who I was becoming. The new me had totally different dreams and plans from what I had known and wanted before. In a matter of moments I had gone from loving my dream job to feeling as if I was a slave to money and other people's expectations, and that appeared to be my new normal. I felt stuck, like I had no options. It only got worse as time went on.

When I returned to work there were many days I would sneak to the back of the building in the alleyway and just cry. I did not want to be there. My efforts not to disappoint anyone seemed fractured, and I was certain I was letting everyone down. I was not able to be the mom I wanted to be, home nurturing my brand-new baby, and I was not able to be the coworker or leader I wanted to be because I was so distracted by my emotions and the deep changes that had occurred within me. I was juggling disappointment on all fronts, including with myself for not being able to juggle both career and family at the same time. I knew I needed to pull the trigger on the decision that seemed so obvious: to lay down my career.

Finally, after about six months, I was able to choose family and walk away from the career I once loved. While I still continued to work, I was able to find a nine-to-five job that let me leave the office and be all-in with my family when I was home. I realized I was not stuck and did not need to live under the fear of other people's expectations anymore, even if it meant doing the unpopular thing. I was not going to live in fear any longer—not fear of failure, fear of rejection, fear of not having enough, none of it. God was calling me home. He had course-corrected my life, and I was going to go after Him.

This was the beginning of my journey in identifying, battling and defeating fear. There was so much I did not know and so much I could have done differently. Looking back, I wish I knew then what I know now. But deciding to fight fear—even if I did not yet know how—was a pivotal moment in my life. It is what brought me here, and it helped shape what I will share in this book in the hope that you will not make the same mistakes I did.

Where are you in your journey with fear, my friend? Whether your toes are on the battle line for the first time, or you have run away and returned over and over again, you need to know there is freedom and victory over fear. So take a deep breath of relief. There is hope on the horizon, because God does not send us out without equipping us first. You do not have to be afraid anymore. The supernatural weapons you will be able to use to defeat fear are in your hands and heart right now as you read. You will soon learn how they work in tandem together to give you long-term victory over the Goliath in front of you.

//////////////////// **D E C L A R E I T** //////////////////////

Father, thank You for giving me everything I need to defeat the power of fear in my life. I am ready. I am a champion in Christ!