# Fear

“*Fear reveals baseborn souls.”*

It is proper to praise Virgil, who has so carefully constructed this chreia from his great knowledge. Not only does this poet, who gained much knowledge in life, show forth that knowledge in his writings and works, but he has likewise acquired wisdom, and uses that wisdom to rightly and stunningly apply his knowledge to his topics. This is clearly shown in his work *The Aenid*, which picks up from Homer’s *Iliad,* one of the greatest works of all time.

This chreia states that when men are exposed to fear, it will reveal that they are either of noble character or of cowardly, base birth. Thus Virgil says that fear will reveal baseborn souls.

These words are spoken by Phoebus in Virgil’s *Aenid*, as she speaks of one brave and mighty in stature. Thus we realize that perhaps Virgil’s greater intention was for us to take it the other way – that the *noble* souls are revealed by standing up in the face of fear.

If we choose not to heed this chreia and mend our ways, we will find ourselves mocked, ridiculed, and exposed as a coward in the face of fear.

Just as soap and water will wash away dirt and reveal the pure and the ugly, so fear will indeed reveal the baseborn soul.

The donkey, in an attempt to hide in lion’s skin, was betrayed by the nervous sound of his voice. Here fear reveals the fact that it is just a donkey, not a noble lion.

J.R.R. Tolkien, that great author, said, “All that is gold does not glitter, not all those who wander are lost…” He here agrees with Virgil in saying that even gold does not glitter always, and must be revealed.

So, having seen Virgil’s wisdom, we see how we ought to praise him and study more of him and his works in the future.