

# Fear (Not)

## Introduction

*Please note: this document is simply parked here (Essays: Early Church) because it includes elements taken from both the Old and the New Testaments.*

Over the past few months I've heard from several sources, including an evangelical station on the radio, that "Fear not" is one of the most go-to phrases in the Bible.<sup>1</sup> I had been expecting a virtual plethora of references which prompted me to do a quick check in a standard biblical concordance. The numbers turned out to be disappointing, but that's secondary to what they signify. Nevertheless, the phrase is worth examining by reason of its popularity, especially nowadays when so much anxiety is coming at us from every quarter. What's presented here includes many if not most references of this phrase from both Testaments. On occasion when "Fear not" is used by people with reference to the Lord it's included.

Parallel to "fear not" is the famous "fear of the Lord" which too is quoted often but mostly misunderstood. The English language (and presumably others) can't convey this theological insight properly which results in a lot of tongue twisting. Also there's a tendency to explain it away, thinking that the teaching this biblical insight will solve the problem. Indeed it may help but requires a more appealing approach by situating it within a larger context and from there allow each person draw his or her own insight. Although "fear of the Lord" isn't discussed here, chances are almost certain that a study on it will follow the current one. You might even call this relatively short document a preface to that project.

It's important to see each example of the phrase "fear not" in its context, not just having the references hang out there. Keeping in mind the overall theme of the website, this is to be done in the spirit of reading the verses as *lectio divina* and to see how it may be applied to one's own life. However, should you wish to gather information for one reason or another, best to look elsewhere.

What conclusion can be drawn after reading all these excerpts? After you get a feel for each and string them together, you appreciate better our natural tendency toward fear when it comes to something that threatens us. This demands a pause, albeit briefly, to stand back and posit a gap of sorts between experiencing fear while you

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<sup>1</sup>According to **The Theological Dictionary of The Old Testament** (vol. 6), *yare'* (to fear) and its derivatives "have an impressive total of 435 occurrences."

wait for the “not” to kick in, its sole source being divine.

A quick note as to the order of this phrase and title. First comes “fear” followed by “not.” It’s a more poetic way of expressing trust in God instead of the bland “do not fear” although that certainly is meaningful. There are several verbs meaning to fear, the most common in Hebrew being *yare’* and in Greek, *phobeo*. The former pertains, of course, to the Old Testament and the latter, to the New <sup>2</sup>. Each instance will be pointed out as well as any variations. As for the general biblical idea, fear implies respect. That’s kind of bland and requires some fleshing out. However, in the context of this document fear is discussed almost as a gentle command...rather exhortation...something not to do, if it may be put as such.

Because *yare’* is so common, it’s fun to parallel it with the common verb *ra’ah*, to see. Both verbs derive from different roots (important in Hebrew). However, the different forms sometimes lend themselves for a kind of happy confusion if you don’t pay attention to the vowel points. In sum, *yare’* can look like *ra’ah* and visa versa. Playing this out a bit further (which, of course, objectively isn’t true) we can say that in some instances to fear = to see and to see = to fear.

Anyway, this association is simply a second hand interjection. Nevertheless, such an observation runs in accord with the general approach to the document at hand. A certain freedom of interpretation is taken while at the same time remaining close to the text at hand. This freedom, however, is conditioned by the fact that it’s done with *lectio divina* first and foremost as a vehicle to dispose oneself to the presence of God. At the same time this latitude shouldn’t be taken lightly or an excuse to play around with the text in an inordinate manner. So if we’re not tuned into the practice of *lectio* as an means leading to God, what’s presented here is of no value, simple as that.

All scriptural verses and other biblical references are from the RSV <sup>3</sup>. The verb *yare’* is assumed to be in the verse at hand. If it is not, the proper verb will be inserted and if necessary, given an explanation. Note that the direct command “fear not” isn’t found among the Acts of the Apostles nor the epistles of St. Paul though obviously both deal with the issue.

## Old Testament

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<sup>2</sup>Interestingly the epistles of St. Paul don’t contain that many references to fear.

<sup>3</sup>References to the Apocrypha are not included. However, the book of Sirach has a super-abundance of references to fear as it pertains to God.

**Genesis 15.1: After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.”<sup>4</sup>**

Reference is to war with kings from the east and Melchizedek, king of Salem, who brought to Abram bread and wine after which he blessed him. Note that the verse at hand has the same noun *davar* for “things” and for “word” and overall applies to word more as an utterance of expression not unlike the Greek equivalent of *logos*. In other words, *davar* has significant content to be unpacked. Such too is the case in hand with recent events summed up as “these things.”

The *davar* of the Lord (from now on it will be left untranslated) came to Abram in a vision or *machzeh* or to put it another way, what was uttered in a divine manner translated over into something visual. I.e., Abram saw what was uttered. Within this *davar-to-machzeh* “Fear not” is located. The Lord says that he is a shield or *magen* which usually is a small size. Regardless, it is the Lord, so the element of dimension is out of the picture. Pretty much equivalent to this *magen* is the Lord as *sakar* which also applies to wages earned for honest work. It’s described as “very great,” the adverb *me’od* implying excessiveness...excessively great.

The next verse begins with the conjunctive *v-* (“and”) which suggests that despite this *davar-to-machzeh*, Abram objects by saying that he’s childless and has no heir. In other words, the conjunctive intimates that Abram barely heard or barely paid attention to the this *davar-to-machzeh*. A bit later the Lord brings Abram outside his tent meaning that what had occurred with inside it which we don’t know until now. At this point the Lord asks him to count the stars if he can which will be the equivalent to his descendants.

**Genesis 26.24: And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father; fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your descendants for my servant Abraham’s sake.”**

This verse occurs after Isaac had dug a number of wells and arrived at Beer-sheba. Note the words “the same night” meaning the same time he had arrived there. It was at Beer-sheba that Abraham had dug a well, it meaning “well of seven” or “well of the oath,” -sheba applicable to both. Actually the naming took place just before

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<sup>4</sup>Note that many verses begin with the conjunctive *v-* translated variously (and sometimes not) as and, but and so. This means that the verse at hand has direct contact with the one before it and the one after it.

Abraham was about to offer his son Isaac, hence the latter's obsession with wells, if it may be put that way.

The Lord appears (*ra'ah*) to Isaac at night, not during the day, implying that a dream is involved and to allay any fear, says that he is the God of his father. Here's an example where the forms of *ra'ah* and *yare'* (*yera'* and *tyra'*) have a certain convergence as mentioned in the Introduction. The "fear not" at hand is because the Lord is with Isaac, implying that at the moment he was not certain if this were true. Still, there's a separation between the Lord and his *ra'ah*, this meaning sight but obscured by the night.

In addition to this being-with Isaac in a vision, the Lord will bless him, *barak* fundamentally as to bend the knee in acknowledgment. In the situation at hand, this applies to the Lord bending to a human being, if you will, after which he will multiply Isaac's descendants, *ravah* which suggests to become great. Involved without mentioning it is Isaac's wife Rebecca who favored her son Jacob over Esau. So when "descendants" is mentioned, the noun *zarah* can refer to seed as well. In the verse at hand this *ravah* took two paths, one regarding Esau and another regarding Jacob, the latter turning out to be more enduring. Furthermore, *ravah* is not done because of Isaac but because of his father Abraham designated as a servant, *heved* also as a slave. For Isaac this could cut two ways. One, that he's in a line of patriarchs that will extend into the future and two, that he is subservient to his father and in a way secondary to him.

**Genesis 35.17: And when she was in her hard labor, the midwife said to her, "Fear not; for not you will have another son."**

This instance of "fear not" has no direct relationship with the Lord but is mentioned anyway. Most likely similar instances will be included because they tie in with the larger picture of Israel's heritage, the one here being the death of Rachel. *Qashah* is the verb to be hard as well as to be stubborn. The midwife encourages Rachel—falsely, it turns out—that she will survive this labor and give birth to yet another son. Yet this "another son" turns out to be the same child whom at the point of death Rachel named Ben-oni or Son of my Sorrow. Note that she does this literally when her soul or *nephesh* was departing. As soon as that happened Jacob renamed the child to a more favorable name, Benjamin (Son of the Right Hand). Shortly afterwards Jacob set up a pillar in her wife's name, *matsevah* also used negatively insofar as it can be with an idol but certainly not the case here.

**Genesis 50.19: But Joseph said to them, “Fear not, for am I in the place of God?”**

This and the next verse may be taken as one but are separated here simply for convenience. They come at the very end of Genesis or before Joseph dies. However, judging by vs. 22, this doesn't seem to be immediately. His magnanimous spirit continues to the end, encouraging his eleven brothers after having sold him into slavery, a fact which had bothered them to the very end. Joseph allays their fear by telling them he isn't in the place (*tachat*, also below) of God. As Israelites worshipping the one God, they knew this to be true. However, this is Egypt where Joseph is second place to Pharaoh who is considered divine. So in a sense, Joseph is divine but knows through and through that he is not such.

**Genesis 50.21: So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he reassured them and comforted them.**

Vs. 20 intervenes between the verse above and the one at hand which is worth inserting here in order to connect them: “As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today.” The verb *chashav* implies a thinking-out in the sense of to contrive and thus is deliberate and used with the preposition *hal-*, literally “upon me.”

Despite this stern but necessary warning, Joseph assures his brothers a second time not to fear, for they had very good reason to feel that way. *Kul* is the verb to provide, also as to nourish and to sustain. Joseph was able to look far beyond the limited, even darkened vision of his brothers, well into the future. In fact, that future meant four hundred years of residing in Egypt followed by Moses leading them from there into the Sinai wilderness for forty years before entering Canaan or the place these brother came from originally. So the *kul* at hand has a very, very long extension.

This verse concludes with Joseph offering both reassurance and comfort, the two verbs being *nacham* and *davar*. The former also means to move to pity and to have compassion whereas the latter is the verbal equivalent of the noun (same spelling) meaning to speak in the sense of giving full expression. It's used with the prepositions *hal-* and *l-* (upon and to) with regard to the heart or *lev* of the eleven brothers. In sum, this *hal-* offsets the *hal-* of vs. 20, “evil upon me” and is re-enforced, if you will, by addition of the second preposition.

After this Joseph continues to reside in Egypt along with his brothers for what seems to be an indefinite period of time. The idea is that after the reconciliation between all

involved they settled into their respective roles. The eleven brothers had a sense they were in Egypt for the long haul which proved to be true, perhaps far longer than anticipated. The same might be true with Joseph despite his foresight. After all, four hundred years is a long time. Despite this, Joseph tells his brothers to take his remains with them into Canaan.

**Exodus 14.13: And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord which he will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again.”**

This verse takes place at the most critical part of Israel’s departure from Egypt, Pharaoh’s army bearing down upon them on one side and the Red Sea on the other. It’s a classic description of being between a rock and a hard place. Concomitant with “fear not” is *yatsav*, to take one’s stand, to be present before, the two being practically interchangeable. After this pair comes Moses’ further exhortation to see the Lord’s salvation, *yeshuhah* (the verbal root also for Jesus) being the object of *ra’ah*. If it weren’t for (not to) the combined steadiness of *yare’* and *yatsav* this divine *yeshuhah*. Actually at the moment it isn’t visible but lays in the future which is immediate. Still, it’s a gamble that the people will do this. On the other hand, they have no choice, no place to go.

As for this salvation, the Lord himself will do it and do it “today,” the other mention with regard to destruction of the Egyptians. Note the way it’s put with two similar sounding words, *’asher-yahaseh*, the first being translated as “which.” This part of the verse refines the future tense as “this day” when the Israelites no longer will see the Egyptians. In this verse note the similar forms of *yare’* and *ra’ah*, the latter occurring three times: *tyra’u* (to fear), *re’u*, *re’ytem* and *re’otam*.

In the next verse Moses continues to exhort the people simply to be still, *charash* also as to be silent, dumb or speechless. In sum, the overall theme of this verse—fear not through be still—centers upon steadiness and not moving an inch which allows for God to act unencumbered. Without a doubt, this was Moses’ finest hour. It helped to sustain the Israelites as they made their way through forty years of wandering in the Sinai wilderness.

**Exodus 20.20: And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; for God has come to prove you and that the fear of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin.”**

The context is the recent giving of the Ten Commandments followed by the dramatic

manifestation of the Lord begun in the last chapter and coming to a conclusion here. In the verse before this one the people, naturally fearful of what they had witnessed, asked Moses to speak and not God, the verb being *davar*. Moses concurs and tells the people not to fear. Actually there's reason to fear because God is about to prove them, *nasah* also as to get proof. Further consideration situates this *nasah* within the context of the Ten Commandments and what went before it in this same chapter.

The *nasah* at hand will be the Lord setting fear (*yir'ah*) of him literally "on their faces," that is, as close and as personal as you can get. Talk about being in your face, as the contemporary expression goes. The force of these words is to prevent the people from committing sin, *chata'* fundamentally as to miss the mark. After this comes a whole series of divine ordinances running through several chapters designed to keep this fear on the faces of the people. In this way they can't see anything else except through the lens of the commands.

**Deuteronomy 20.3<sup>5</sup>: 2) And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people 3) and shall say to them, "Hear O Israel, you draw near this day to battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint; do not fear or tremble or be in dread of them; 4) for the Lord your God is he that goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory."**

These three verses are a prescribed way for Israel to comport itself when facing enemies. The priest has the important role of encouraging when *davar* to the people. *Shamah* or hear is reminiscent of the famous "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" of 6.4. Compare two similar verbs, *qarav* and *nagash*, the former often used in conjunction with making an offering and used with respect to time. As for the latter, it's used with approaching the Lord such as an altar or holy place.

After his *nagash*, the priest will *davar* to the people and comes off with a kind of stock formula with four components:

- 1) heart (*lev*) not to become faint, *rakak* also to be tender or soft as well as to weaken
- 2) not to fear, *yare'*
- 3) not to tremble or *chaphaz*, also to make haste
- 4) have no dread, *harats*, also as to tremble

The reason for such confidence is that the Lord himself goes with the people to fight

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<sup>5</sup>Vss. 2 and 4 are included since all form one sentence.

and thus will bring about victory, *yashah* which fundamentally means to save.

**Deuteronomy 31.6: Be strong and of good courage, do not fear or be in dread of them: for it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you.**

Two pairs of opposites: *chazaq* and ‘*amats - yare*’ and *harats* (be strong and good courage - do not fear and have no dread). The first pair: to bind fast and to strengthen, restore, to harden. The second pair: to fear and to tremble (cf. Dt 20.3).

As with the previous section, the Lord goes with the people which Moses near his death promises. This will involve crossing the Jordan River and taking possession (rather, re-possession after some four hundred years) of Canaan. Moses assures them that the Lord neither will fail nor forsake them, *raphah* and *hazav*. The former implies a casting down or relaxing and the latter, to abandon.

**Deuteronomy 31.8 <sup>6</sup>: 7) Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and of good courage; for you shall go with this people into the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them; and you shall put them in possession of it. 8) It is the Lord who goes before you; he will be with you, he will not fail you or forsake you; do not fear or be dismayed.**

The text begins literally by Moses “calling (*qara*’) to Joshua in the eyes all Israel.” In other words, it’s a solemn assembly when Moses transfers leadership to his heir. He makes this as public as possible so everyone will know what’s going on. *Chazaq* and ‘*amats* are Moses’ first words whereas in the section above *chazaq* applies to Israel. As for ‘*amats*, its pretty much the same with the added dimension of being strong only with regard to one’s feet, aptly put because soon Joshua and the people will walk through the Jordan River into Canaan and then all around that land.

As for the land the Lord had sworn to Israel’s fathers, this is repeated in Jos 1.6. Note that it’s the Lord speaking now: “Be strong and courageous because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them.” As for the promise, cf. Gn 16.18: “On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram saying, “To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.” Not only will Joshua lead Israel into Canaan, he will put Israel in possession of it, the verb being *nachal*, to inherit.

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<sup>6</sup>Because one verse is between the previous section and the one at hand, vs. 7 is included so as to have all three form a unit of sorts.

Moses makes it clear that not only what he had said is an oath rooted in the past, but that the Lord himself will go before Joshua and be with him. Neither will he fail nor forsake him, *raphah* and *hazav* as in the section above. Then he adds not to fear nor to be dismayed, *yare'* and *chatat*, also as to break.

Vs. 9 has Moses writing down “this law” or *Torah* after which he gave it to the priests who put it in the ark of the covenant which they would carry through across the bed of the Jordan River into Canaan, this being a major source of support and inspiration for Joshua. As for the writing of the *Torah*, note that despite its length, Moses was able to put it in writing almost instantaneously. This too had a profound effect upon Joshua, for no one after Moses had that ability he had acquired while being on Mount Horeb to receive the *Torah*.

**First Kings 17.13: And Elijah said to her, “Fear not; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me and afterward make for yourself and your son.”**

This incident takes place during a severe famine when the prophet Elijah visits a widow gathering sticks to prepare a scant meal for her and her son. Then she says in a resigned fashion that the two of them will die. Instead of showing immediate sympathy and apparently not even interfering with her plans, Elijah asks to be taken care of first. She concurs which gives the prophet an occasion to console her by saying that the famine will be over shortly. This proves true, and the widow and her son carry on as before. So the command as well as exhortation “fear not” had taken root in this woman from the beginning and resulted in a miracle.

**Second Kings 17.7 <sup>7</sup>: 7) And this was so because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and had feared other gods 8) and walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel and in the customs which the kings of Israel had introduced.**

Although this verse does not refer to “fear not” it’s included because Chapter Seventeen mentions several other instances where the worship of alien gods were in conflict with worship of the Lord. Special mention is made of the Samaritans. Such deviations with regard to worship represent the most persistent obstacle Israel had experienced, especially since entering Canaan. Moses, Joshua and others were keenly

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<sup>7</sup>Vs. 8 is inserted because the two verses form one sentence.

aware of it and made numerous pronouncement against such practices.

The context is the wickedness of King Ahaz ('and he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord') which prompted an invasion by the Assyrians. Implied is that the people went along with their king and became just as guilty by reason of his dismantling of the temple's fixtures for tribute. As often is the case, any collective sin of the people is situated against the background of the Lord having brought them from Egypt. As vs. 7 intimates, right after this the people strayed. As for the word "customs" used twice, *choq* also means an appointed portion, law or statute. Often it's attribute to various aspects of the *Torah*, so here we have the exact opposite.

**First Chronicles 28.20: Then David said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and of good courage and do it. Fear not, be not dismayed; for the Lord God, even my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished."**

While this verse opens with the now familiar *chazaq* and 'amats noted last in Dt 38.7, it adds "do (*hasah*, also to make) it." Implied is that at this early stage in his life Solomon lacked a certain resolve and hence needed encouragement. Not only that, the still fragile monarchy required firm leadership which David saw was needed. After the all important "do it" David adds the familiar "fear not" coupled with the verb *chatat* or not to be dismayed which as noted regarding Dt 31.8 also means to break. In other words, don't be shattered.

To boost Solomon's resolve further, David speaks of the Lord God as "even my God," words intended to make this transition of royal kingship as seamless as possible by rooting it in the divinity.

David also tells his son that the Lord will neither fail nor forsake him, the same pair *raphah* and *hazav* as in Dt 31.8. Note, however, the small, almost troubling word *had-* or "until." Reference is to David's dream of constructing a temple in Jerusalem which he was unable to effect but now entrusts to his son. We could say that the "until" at hand can foreshadow Solomon's later apostasy and fall into debauchery. However, it won't come into play *had-* he fulfills his father's deepest wish. Then *raphah* and *hazav* will do their work not only to Solomon but to the nation of Israel.

In conclusion, note the use of *mela'kah* and *havodah*, prescribed service (from the same verbal root for messenger/angel) and something which has been made or fabricated. Here the former is to be put at the avail of the latter or when both are

finished, *kalah* also as to come to and end.

**Second Chronicles 20.15-16<sup>8</sup>: 15) And he (Jahaziel) said, “Hearken, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the Lord to you, ‘Fear not and be not dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God’s. 16) Tomorrow go down against them; behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the end of the valley, east of the wilderness of Jeruel.’”**

The context is an assembled army from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir (cf. vs. 10) to make an attack when the Spirit (*Ruach*) came upon Jahaziel who now offers these words of encouragement. He begins with *qashav*, to hear in the sense of to attend to something instead of *shamah* which usually is found in such a situation. *Qashav* thus is indicative of the serious state of affairs at hand. The two verbs at hand are *yare’* and *chatat* as in 1Chron 28.20 with regard to the great multitude of foes at hand, *hamon*.

Jahaziel speaks confidently and in an almost matter-of-fact manner that God will fight on behalf of the Israelites. Without a doubt this cool manifestation of courage inspired everyone. All they have to do is go through the motions automatically, as it were, and see the results.

**Second Chronicles 20.17: You will not need to fight in this battle; take your position, stand still and see the victory of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem. Fear not and be not dismayed; tomorrow you go out against them, and the Lord will be with you.**

Again Jahaziel states that the Israelites won’t have to fight which must have seemed reckless to some, relying that heavily on the Lord. Their task is to take up their position and stand still, *yatsav* and *hamad*, the former being found in Ex 13.14, a similar situation or Israel with the Egyptian army behind it and the Red Sea in front. Once this is done—simple yet extremely difficult—the people will see the Lord’s victory or *yeshuah*, also as salvation “on your behalf” which reads literally as “with you.”

As for this intended victory, it takes place on the morrow with the further encouragement of *yare’* and *chatat* as in 2Chron 20.15-16. That means Israel had overnight to ponder how this victory will actually be carried out. Chances are that virtually nobody got any sleep that night.

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<sup>8</sup>Because one verse separates the one at hand and the next, vs. 16 is inserted that the text may make more sense.

**Job: 11.15: Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish; you will be secure and will not fear.**

Words uttered by Zophar, one of Job's friends who got word of his sufferings and decided to offer him consolation. While well intentioned, ultimately his words ring hollow in light of what God says toward the end of the book. In a sense, the same applies to Job complaining of his trials though that differs. This verse begins with *ky-'az* or "surely" which reveals Zophar's confidence in what believes which is a kind of talking-down to Job.

The lifting up (*nasa'*, also to take away) of one's face is to be done without blemish, *mum* also as a stain as well as bodily defect. This *nasa'* will result in being sure and having no fear, *yatsaq* and *yare'*, the former fundamentally as to pour or to flow out.

**Job 33.7: Behold, no fear of me need terrify you; my pressure will not be heavy upon you.**

A second friend of Job, Elihu, who utters these words in the same manner as Zophar above. *'Aymah* or fear (also means terror) will not cause Job terror, *bahat* also as to come upon suddenly. As for pressure, *'ekeph* derives from a verbal root meaning to put a load upon which here won't be heavy, *kavad* (also as to honor).

Although it isn't recorded at the end of the book, most likely Job thought something along the lines of with friends like this, who needs enemies?

**Psalms 56.4: In God whose word I praise, in God I trust without a fear. What can flesh do to me?**

Note two locations of the psalmist:

1) "In (*b-*) God" from which issues his praise of the *davar* or word as expression (*logos*). The verb *halal* also means to be clear or brilliant, the idea that divine praise possesses a purity transcending the human realm but willing to receive it from us.

2) "In (*b-*) the Lord" whereas the Hebrew text has *'Eloyim* or God for both #1 and #2. Here the psalmist trusts (*batach*, also to confide one's hope) without *yare'*.

The psalmist concludes his twofold gesture of praise and trust *b-* God with a

rhetorical question which rests upon this small preposition indicative of in-ness. Being *b-* God, precludes flesh (obviously people but can include animals) from reaching him.

**Psalm 56.10-11<sup>9</sup>: 10) In God whose word I praise, in the Lord whose word I praise, 11) in God I trust without a fear. What can man do to me?**

This verse is similar to the last entry but has '*Eloyim* and *YHWH* or God and the Lord with regard to the preposition *b-* and the verb *halal*. In vs. 11 the psalmist adds a third *b-* with regard to *batach* and no fear or *yare'*. Then follows a rhetorical question where man (*'adam*) is used instead of "flesh."

**Psalm 118.6: With the Lord on my side I do not fear. What can man do to me?**

The first part of the first sentence reads literally "with the Lord to (*l-*) me." It is precisely this to-ness that precludes *yare'*. Then as in the last entry the psalmist interjects a rhetorical question as far as man (*'adam*) not being able to harm him, here with regard to being *l-* him.

**Isaiah 35.4: Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not." Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God He will come and save you.**

Presumably Isaiah is uttering these words to those with a heart which is fearful, *lev* and *mahar* (also as to be prompt as well as to be rash), the singular *lev* indicative of one heart. It belongs to one people which suggests that this pertains to everyone who is fearful even if they don't admit it. *Chazaq* and *yare'* as found together in Dt 31.6.

*Hineh* or behold is designed to get the people's attention...their *lev*, if you will. Isaiah is speaking of the future when God will come with the following two which will effect salvation or *yashah* (cf. Dt 20.3). Note that this future is with two instances of the verb *bo'*, (will) come:

- 1) With vengeance or *naqam*.
- 2) With recompense or *gemul*, also as benefit or action which is specifically pointed out as belong to God.

**Isaiah 40.9: Get up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your**

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<sup>9</sup>Two verses are combined since they form one sentence.

**voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!”**

This verse contains two place names which essentially are interchangeable. The first one is Zion, synonymous with Jerusalem, though more often associated with the temple. Zion...the temple...is a herald of good tidings, the verb being *basar* also to make joyful.

The second place name is Jerusalem or the city as a whole which is to lift up her voice in strength, *koch* also as power or might. That is to say, Jerusalem will come off with a full-throated good tidings which no ear can miss. It's joined with the second use of *basar* and *yare'* or not to have fear in doing so. Note that the verb *rum* (to lift up) is used twice, indicative of the Lord wanting Jerusalem's *basar* to penetrate everywhere within herself.

Also included is Judah to which both Zion and Jerusalem will direct their respective *basar* and draws attention to the presence of God who seems to have come there already. However, he needs to be pointed out because the people don't recognize him in their midst.

**Isaiah 41.10 <sup>10</sup>: Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.**

Words of encouragement from the Lord which both form a command and a heart-felt desire: neither to fear not to be dismayed, *yare'* and *shahah*, the latter as to turn the eyes from, to look away. When hearing these words the people must wonder how to locate the immediacy of God being with them. He simply states that he is their God, they needing to unpack this.

These words are both consoling and puzzling, difficult for the people to grasp. For that reason God says in rapid, almost staccato bursts that he will do the following three things: strengthen (*amats*, also to be alert), help (*hazar*, also to give aide) and uphold (*tamak*, also to take hold of). The last is joined with the Lord who extends his right hand which is victorious, *tsedeq* being a noun meaning righteousness.

**Isaiah 41.13 and 14 <sup>11</sup>: 13) For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who**

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<sup>10</sup>Although vss. 8 and 9 along with vs. 10 form one extended sentence, only vs. 10 is included here; otherwise the text would be too long or cumbersome.

<sup>11</sup>Because the two verses are close together, both are treated here as a unit.

say to you, “**Fear not, I will help you.**” 14) **Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I will help you, says the Lord; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.**

This section which is comprised of two verses has two instances of *yare’* not. In the first, the verb *chazaq* (to be firm, to be strong) is used for to hold; compare with *tamak* in the section above, that hand being *tsedeq* or in righteousness. Here *yare’* (not) is joined with the Lord *hazar* (cf. section above).

In the second verse the Lord bids Jacob not to *yare’*, calling that people as a single person a worm or *tolehah*, especially one springing from something putrid; also it means red in the sense of scarlet. The comparison of people to such a despicable, lowly creature is not demeaning but intended to awaken awareness that they are far more by reason of the Lord coming to their aide. *Hazar* is the verb, to help as in the previous verse with *yare’* there as well. Such *hazar* comes from another title of the Lord, Redeemer, which is the participle *ga’al* suggestive of continuous redeeming or buying back.

In this verse the Lord takes pains to call his people both Jacob and Israel in one breath, that is, one person who struggled with the unknown man (cf. Gn 32.22+) and a nation whose identity is rooted in the former. It is found in the next section as well as many other places.

**Isaiah 43.1: But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mind.”**

*Hatah* or “now” along with *koh* or “thus” beginning a new chapter serve to introduce a certain immediacy and urgency. Note the two verbs *bara’* and *yatsar*, to create and to fashion. The former suggests to form by cutting and applies to Jacob; the latter, to fashion not unlike a potter as applicable to Israel.

After stating these two different manners of making with regard to two entities, the Lord tells both not to fear because he has redeemed them both and called them by name, *ga’al* and *qara’*. As for the latter, the preposition *b-* is prefaced to *shem* or name, literally as “in your name.” This is followed by the terse, direct *ly-’atah*, literally “to me you.” Such directness is a clear reason not to fear, *yare’*.

**Isaiah 43.5<sup>12</sup>: Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east,**

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<sup>12</sup>Vss. 5 and 6 form one extended sentence, though for the sake of convenience and

**and from the west I will gather you.**

Yet another instance of the Lord saying that he is with his people after saying “fear not.” This being-with has been pointed out several times already and by now as far as Isaiah’s words go, makes you wonder how the people tried to incorporate them. This, of course, implies the difficult circumstances in which we can assume they found themselves.

Two cardinal directions, east and west, north and south being mentioned in vs. 6. The former represents the rising of the sun and the latter, its setting. Israel’s offspring are located in the east or sunrise which the Lord will bring or *bo’* (cf. Is 35.4). The rest or “you” (we could take as parents of the offspring) are those whom the Lord will gather, *qavats* fundamentally as to take by the hand. The place-where most likely is the temple at Jerusalem though it isn’t mentioned.

**Isaiah 44.2: Thus says the Lord who made you, who former you from the womb and will help you. Fear not, O Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen.**

Note the two verbs, *hasah* and *yatsar*, to make and to form. The former is the common verb for general fashioning of things whereas the latter to fashion as in Is 43.1. According to the verse at hand, first comes the making which can be taken as a kind of first formation followed by the more detailed forging, if you will. Both were at work from the birth of Israel which can be traced back to Abraham and the patriarchs when the Lord decided to help or *hazar* (cf. Is 41.13).

The command not have *yare’* extends to Jacob and Jeshurun, the latter a poetic name for Israel and mentioned first in Dt 32.15: “But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked; you waxed fat, you grew thick, you became sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.” A footnote in the RSV says that Jeshurun is “a poetic name of endearment of Israel; it may mean ‘dearest upright one.’”

**Isaiah 44.8: Fear not nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any.**

*Yare’* is the second verb along with the first, *pachad* also to be in dread, to be in awe. The Lord is taking pains to remind Israel of his relationship with her in the past, the expression “from then” in Hebrew. The way it’s put means the Lord is reminding his

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brevity vs. 5 is dealt with.

people of past interventions, no specific one being mentioned. He puts this as a rhetorical question, as something he both told and declared, *shamah* and *nagad*. The first verb means to hear, that the Lord caused Israel to hear, while the second implies being conspicuous or obvious. Also the first can be attributed literally to “from then” whereas the second can be at the present moment. Regardless, the element of time is of secondary importance as far as the Lord is concerned.

Prior to the second rhetorical question and right after the first one the Lord exclaims that his people are his very own witnesses, *hed*. Even so, they are unable to answer. As for God saying who he is, putting it this way is embarrassing for the Israelites. All too often they had turned from him and had worshiped alien gods.

The Lord finishes off with claiming that he alone is the Rock or *tsur* also as a wall or cliff thereby indicative of height. His “I know not any” almost invites...provokes...Israel to make a response which never comes.

**Isaiah 54.4: Fear not, for you will not be ashamed; be not confounded, for you will not be put to shame; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more.**

The first part of this verse has two divine commands as something to be taken up willingly and being accepted before being put into practice:

- 1) *Yare'* - *bosh* or fear not - will not be ashamed
- 2) *Kalam* - *chapher* or be not confounded - will not be put to shame. The first verb also means to humiliate and the second, to blush.

In the second part of this verse not the contrast between *shakach* and *zakar*, to forget and to remember, which here are pretty much the same. To the first belongs *bosheth* (from *bosh*) or shame and to the second belongs *cherpah* or reproach.

**Jeremiah 30.10: Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, says the Lord, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save you from afar and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid.**

Vs. 10 begins with the conjunctive *v-* translated as “then” to show, as it often does, the close connection between what had been recounted and the current situation. The Lord tells both Jacob and Israel neither to fear nor to be dismayed, *yare'* and *chatat*

(cf. 2Chron 20.17). The reason? He will save them (*yashah*, cf. Is 35.4) but will do this from afar along with their children currently held captive.

This salvation-at-a-distance must have puzzled Jeremiah's listeners as to how it would come about. Would the Lord appoint someone, a kind of knight in shining armor, to ride into Babylon, slay its inhabitants and bring back the exiles or even better, come down from heaven itself? Regardless, the main point is that Jacob shall return, enjoy quiet and ease and not fear from anyone else. The three verbs begin with the letter "sh:" *shuv*, *shaqat* and *sha'an*. The second two are similar; the first implies resting down and the second to live in tranquility.

**Jeremiah 46.27: But fear not, O Jacob my servant, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save you from afar and your offspring from the land of their captivity.**

*Yare'* and *chataat* as in the previous section are directed, if you will, to Jacob (person) and to Israel (nation). Despite the distance involved—and such distance isn't geographical but a result of Israel straying from the Lord—the Lord will save (*yashah*, cf. Jer 30.10) but do so from afar as well as offspring who are in captivity, *merachok* and *shivym* being pretty much equivalent. Nevertheless, the former (Jacob and Israel) might be considered as living at home but further away in spirit than their offspring who are held captive.

**Jeremiah 46.28: Fear not, O Jacob my servant, says the Lord, for I am with you. I will make a full end of all the nations to which I have driven you, but of you I will not make a full end. I will chasten you in just measure, and I will by no means leave you unpunished.**

This verse follows the previous one, the two almost being considered as a single unit with the Lord yet again combining *yare'* (not) and him being with the people he's addressing. *Kalah* or full end also means a bringing to completion which here applies to those nations among whom the Lord has driven his people, the verb being *nadach* also as to thrust forward, to expel. However, the Lord will not bring this *kalah* upon Jacob his servant. Instead, he will chasten him or *yasar* also as to correct but do so literally in judgment (*mishpat*). Also the Lord won't leave his people go unpunished, *naqah* also as to be pure, innocent.

**Daniel 10.12: Then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words."**

For a second time the mysterious man addresses Daniel by name, telling him not to *yare'*. The words which follow indicate that he and the Lord have been keeping a close eye on Daniel even though he may have not been fully conscious of it. "First day" is unspecified but can apply to Daniel before being taken captive in Babylon as well as all those days up to the present. In other words, "first day" characterizes the entirety of Daniel's life where the first day is equivalent to the last.

"Set your mind" is rendered literally as "give your heart" or *lev* which here pertains to understanding and humbling, *byn* and *hanah*. It appears that Daniel had been born humble, if you will, a characteristic not lost on Babylonian officials which is why kings had sought him out. Daniel's *davar* or words as utterances had been heard, the reason why this man had come. "I have come because of your words" reads literally "I have come in (*b-*) your words."

**Daniel 10.19: And he said, O man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage."**

"Greatly beloved" or *ysh-chamudoth* is found three times in this book, the other two in 9.23 and 10.11 and rendered as "man of desires," here to console Daniel in his distress. If the prophet hadn't heard this, chances are he would have given up or just die. In rapid succession the (apparent) second man said not to *yare'* and to be at peace or *shalom*. In the text *yare'* comes before '*ysh-chamudoth* while *shalom* comes after, meaning that "man of desires" is situated in between, if you will, a fact that must have struck Daniel.

The verb *chazaq* or be strong reveals the weakness both physical and spiritual as well as desperation on Daniel's part. After he had experienced this *chazaq* by that touch in vs. 18 which permeated his entire being, Daniel asks for the Lord or '*Adony* to speak, this title referring to the Lord himself or the unidentified second man.

**Joel 2.21: Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things!**

This and the next verse could be taken pretty much as one. Each does not deal with human beings, rather, the first *yare'* is directed toward the land or '*adamah* which more often than '*erets* refers to the physical earth itself. *Gyl* and *samach* apply to this '*adamah*: the former can pertain to performance of a round dance, to go around, whereas the latter also means to be cheerful, merry. The reason for both? The Lord has done (*hasah*, cf. Is 44.2) great things which seems to refer to earlier in the

chapter when the Lord offers repentance to Israel. Should Israel reject it, the land would suffer.

**Joel 2.22: Fear not, you beasts of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green; the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine give their full yield.**

The same reason not to *yare'* as in the previous section is extended to beasts, *behemah* referring to quadrupeds. For them the wilderness has been transformed into pastures and yield various types of fruit. Note the contrast between *midbar* and *navah*: the former being sterile and sandy whereas the latter as a dwelling or place to lay down.

**Zephaniah 3.16: On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, “Do not fear, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak.”**

With regard to “that day” (last found in vs. 11), it can be traced to vs. 8, “the day when I arise as a witness.” Despite this emphasis on a specific time, it doesn’t seem to pertain to measurement of the chronological type though in the verse at hand Jerusalem clearly is a place. Reference most likely is the temple located there. What’s specific about this verse is that the Lord asks the people assembled there (i.e., in the temple) not to let their hands grow weak, *raphah*, also as to cast down, let fall. This can apply to hands raised on high in prayer. So here not to *yare'* is synonymous with hands raised on high.

**Haggai 2.4-5<sup>13</sup>: 4) Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the Lord; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the Lord; work, for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts 5) according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit abides among you; fear not.**

Two persons are noted here, Zerubbabel and Joshua, the former most likely a Babylonian Jew who returned home after being exiled with his people. Joshua is identified clearly as the high priest. Along with the people these two men are urged separately by the Lord to take courage or *chazaq* (cf. Dan 10.19). Note that the people are identified with the land, *erets* more being significant by reason of the recent return from Babylon, that is, more or less identified as the nation of Israel.

The command to work (*hasah*, cf. Joel 2.21) applies to rebuilding the destroyed

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<sup>13</sup>Both vss. 4 and 5 are included since they form one sentence.

temple at Jerusalem where *hasah* is pretty synonymous with the Lord's presence among the people. Wisely the Lord associates this presence with Israel's exodus from Egypt which is essential to Jewish worship and theology. I.e., everyone was familiar with that account.

In conclusion, this emphasis on the Lord being with his people newly arrived at home is solidified when he says that his Spirit or *Ruach* is not just present but abides (*hamad*, more as to stand firm) in their very center, *betok*.

**Zechariah 8.13: And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong.**

A contrast between byword of cursing and a blessing, *qelalah* and *berakah*. The first is literally "in (*b-*) the nations," implying that the intimacy implied by this *b-*ness, if you will, will be transferred in wondrous fashion. The change comes about by the Lord saving the people, *yashah* (cf. Jer 46.27). As with the Haggai verses, the Lord tells the people to have their hands be strong, *chazaq*.

**Zechariah 8.14-15<sup>14</sup>: 14) For thus says the Lord of hosts: "As I purposed to do evil to you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the Lord of hosts, 15) so again have I purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; fear not.**

Note two uses of the verb *zamam* or to purpose, also to lie in wait or to propose to oneself: to do good and to do evil, *raha* and *yata*. To the former belong the earlier generation exiled to Babylon for having sinned against the Lord. To the latter belong the current generation which has returned from exile to Jerusalem.

As for those associated with *yata*, they are not to *yare*' their forefathers' provocation of the Lord, fundamentally as to break out or to break forth. More importantly, they are to realize that with their fathers the Lord did not relent, *nacham* also as to lament as well as to comfort (cf. Gn 50.21).

## New Testament

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<sup>14</sup>Both vs. 14 and vs. 15 form one sentence and are treated as such. Obviously vs. 13 comes before them, so we have an extended quote from this book.

**Matthew 1.20: But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.”**

Note the preposition *en-* (in) prefaced to the verb *enthumeomai*, suggestive of intense questioning with regard to one’s *thumos* or soul, breath, life Here it pertains to Joseph trying to decide whether or not to go ahead and marry Mary who mysteriously had become pregnant. *Idou* or behold interrupts his deliberations, signaling the presence of an angel (i.e., messenger) who appeared to (*phaino*: also, to bring to light) him in a dream. There’s a close sequence here: from *enthumeomai* to *idou* to *phaino* and finally to saying with the first most likely partaking of Joseph awake and Joseph dreaming.

Joseph must have been both surprised and delighted when the angel called him “son of David” meaning his direct connection with Israel’s most famous king. That went a long way to reassure him that all will be well and that he has a larger mission to perform. And so Joseph is not to fear (*phobeo*<sup>15</sup>) to marry Mary.

Note that the passive way Mary’s pregnancy is expressed, “that which is conceived” along with the two prepositions *en* and *ek* (in and from): “in her” and “from the Holy Spirit” (*Pneuma*).

**Matthew 10.31: Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.**

This verse is situated within the larger context of Jesus telling his disciples not to fear those who can kill the body. Instead, such fear is reserved for “him who can destroy both soul and body in hell” [vs. 28]. *Diaphero* is the verb at hand which literally means to carry through (*dia-*) and also means to be different. Taking this as applicable here, Jesus posits a difference between the disciples and many sparrows. Chances are the disciples took small comfort in the comparison but never admitted it publically.

**Matthew 14.27: But immediately he spoke to them saying, “Take heart, it is I; have no fear.”**

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<sup>15</sup>*Phobeo* is the verb used the most in the New Testament. It also means to terrify, to alarm, to stand in awe as well as to threaten. It seems that the third use is implied here and most likely will be the same with other verses. The verse at hand continues into the next one which is omitted by reason of convenience.

The context is the disciples being caught in a storm with their boat in danger of capsizing. When they cry out to the yet-to-be-unidentified Jesus walking on the water toward them, they thought he was a ghost, hence *de* with *euthos*, “but immediately.” As for this walking, on water is miraculous enough, but then there are the waves, hilly terrain that’s constantly moving, if you will. However, they flattened out before him but to the disciples this human figure keeps appearing and then disappearing among these moveable hills, a rather disconcerting experience.

*Tharseo* or to take heart also means to take courage; the noun *tharsos* also means boldness. Jesus presumes that as soon as he identifies himself....and he must have gotten pretty close to the boat...he figured that the disciples would lose their fear. Because it was night, they recognized his voice, not his form, which as noted above seemed to be a ghost because it was barely distinguishable.

**Matthew 17.7: But Jesus came and touched them saying, “Rise and have no fear.”**

The context is the Transfiguration or more specifically when Peter, James and John heard an unidentified voice saying “This is my beloved Son (etc.)” They had fallen flat on their faces out of fear and remained there until Jesus approached and touched them, *apto* also as to bind, to fasten. And so reading into this a bit, Jesus’ touch can be taken as binding the three disciples more closely to himself which dissolves their fear. To their relief, the next verse says that they saw only Jesus, this *apto* transformed into vision.

**Mark 5.36: But ignoring what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, “Do not fear, only believe.”**

The context is when a woman with a flow of blood touched Jesus and was healed. Right afterwards comes the present healing with regard to another woman, the daughter of the local ruler of the synagogue. Note that vs. 35 connects the two by beginning with “While he was still speaking.”

Several messengers approached not Jesus but the synagogue leader who was present and must have witnessed the healing just mentioned. They blurted out the fact that his daughter was dead. Perhaps this bluntness is recognition that his daughter may have been close to death for a while, so the messengers figured it was time to set aside niceties. We can assume that he was with Jesus, hoping he’d cure his daughter. Then the delegation told him not to bother Jesus, *skullo* being a strong word also as to mangle or to rend. Jesus overheard this conversation and simply told the synagogue

leader not to fear but to believe. At this juncture one could ask believe what? The leader gave no response to Jesus nor is there any hint that he asked him to heal his daughter.

**Mark 6.50<sup>16</sup>: For they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; have no fear.”**

The cause of terror (*tarasso*, also to stir up) is the sight of Jesus walking on the water toward the boat in which were the disciples. Even at a distance Jesus could see their *tarasso*. This compelled him to speak immediately (*euthus*) and to take heart or *tharseo* (cf. Mt 14.27). As for these words plus not to fear, Jesus literally had to bellow them out so as to be heard over the storm.

**Luke 8.50: But Jesus on hearing this answered him, “Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well.”**

Here Jesus interrupts a conversation between the synagogue leader and those who came to inform him that his daughter is dead. They tell him not to bother (*skullo*: cf. Mk 5.36) Jesus any more. Note as with the similar verse in Mark the association of fear with death which obviously is a common sentiment. So when Jesus says to believe in this context, that’s a pretty hard thing to do.

**Luke 12.7: Why even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.**

The context is Jesus speaking about the one to fear, that is, Satan, who can kill plus cast one into hell or Gehenna. The numbering of one’s hairs, of course, is a way of saying that God is closely involved with each person, this image when multiplied explodes into infinity. *Diaphero* is the verb to be of value (cf. Mt 10.31).

**Luke 12.32: Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**

“Little flock” is a term of endearment where Jesus is both aware of and embraces all the embarrassing and shameful moments common to his disciples. Aligning that with the command not to fear is especially powerful and comforting. *Eudokeo* is the verb at hand, to be well (*eu-* or adverb) pleased. As for the kingdom, at this juncture the disciples barely knew what Jesus was talking about. To realize this in full required

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<sup>16</sup>The first sentence in this verse begins with vs. 49 which here is excluded.

the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost after which they were able to make sense of these words plus everything else Jesus had uttered.

**John 12.15: Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming sitting on an ass's colt!"**

Here we see for the only time a conjunction between the Greek *phobeo* and the Hebrew *yare'*, Zech 9.9 being quoted. It runs in full as "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Should aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and riding on an ass, on a colt of an ass."

Jesus didn't say these words but were added shortly after the event by John as a reflection on his master's triumphal entry into Jerusalem one week prior to his death. As the next verse says, the disciples didn't know "this at first" which could refer to John's association but did so after Pentecost.

**1Peter 3.14-15 <sup>17</sup>: But even if you do suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them nor be troubled, 15) but in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord.**

These two verses come after an extended quote from Ps 34 when Peter brings up the issue of suffering for righteousness, *pascho* and *dikaiousune*, which results in being blessed, *makarios* also as happy. "Them" refers to those in vs. 13 who inflict harm; rather, Peter puts this as a rhetorical question. No one can do harm or *kakao* (also to treat badly) if one is zealous for that which is right which here is *agathos*, good.

Along with having no fear Peter urges his readers not to be disturbed, *tarasso* (cf. Mk 6.50), borrowing part of Is 8.12-13 which reads in full as "Do not call conspiracy all that this people call conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."

Instead of fear and being trouble, Peter advocates having reverence for Christ, *hagiazos*, to set apart as sacred for God which is located in the heart.

**Revelation 1.17-18 <sup>18</sup>: When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid**

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<sup>17</sup>Vs. 15 is added since the two verses form one sentence. Note that vs. 15 continues this one sentence into vs. 16.

<sup>18</sup>Vs. 18 is added because the two verses form one sentence.

**his right hand upon me saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last 18) and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades.**

*Kai hote* or “when” indicates a time gap of sorts between vs. 12 or John turning to see the voice of one speaking to him who as yet is to be identified and vs. 17, John seeing this person. Again, without identifying him, John falls down as dead. Right away he must have thought of his experience of seeing Jesus being transfigured, the two incidents having a certain parallel.

First and last or *protos* and *exchatos* which bring to mind the first and last letters of both the Hebrew and Greek alphabets. In other words, no fear is to be situated in between these two. Since they are letters forming words, we can take Jesus’ words as an exhortation not to use them to form words which are harmful.

To both *protos* and *exchatos* Jesus (again, not identified as such) attributes to himself the fact that he is the living one (*zon*). When he says that he has the keys of death and Hades John must have thought of Peter being entrusted with the keys to the kingdom of heaven in order to bind and to loose in both earth and in heaven.

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