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THE FEAR OF GOD AS ETHICAL MOTIVATION  
IN PAULINE THEOLOGY

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of New Testament Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Theology

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by

Walter A. Maier

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

A significant feature of Pauline ethical teaching is the apostle's repeated use of motivations of various kinds to spur Christians in their obedience to the will and Word of God. Four principal motivations are indicated in Paul's letters: love for God, including the response of gratitude; fear of God; hope for reward, arising out of trust in the promises of the Lord; and faith in the Gospel assurance of the believer's baptismal union with Christ and participation in the latter's death and resurrection. No section of the apostle's parenesis fails to include either the mention of or allusion to one or more of these motivations. Ideally, according to his thought, all four should function conjointly and simultaneously in prompting all moral exertions which Christians put forth. For a full understanding of Paul's ethical system, it is imperative correctly to comprehend the apostle's teaching in the whole area of Christian ethical motivation.

The present writer has long been interested in the study of Pauline instruction concerning motivation for sanctification. In 1967 he presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, a Master of Sacred Theology thesis on the subject of the fourth of the above-mentioned motivations for ethical living, namely, faith in the fact of the Christian's union with Christ and personal participation with Him in

his death and resurrection.<sup>1</sup> The opportunity to enter upon a concentrated study of what Paul has to say, in particular, about the sanctifying fear of God presented itself in the same year, when the writer obtained approval from the graduate faculty at the seminary to begin work on a doctoral dissertation dealing with this subject. The results of his investigation are embodied in the present treatise, entitled, "The Fear of God As Ethical Motivation in Pauline Theology."

Of the several motivations for ethical living spoken of in Paul's works probably the fear of God is considered least in the church. This is undoubtedly the case in the writer's own denomination. In his entire lifetime of church-going he has never once heard from a Lutheran pulpit a thorough exposition of that fear of God which is expected of Christians. Of the various motivations, fear of God is also the least treated in the seminary classrooms and in the writings of New Testament scholars and commentators. Many books written on the theology of Paul and many works dealing specifically with Pauline ethics do not even mention this fear, or scarcely refer to it. This is true, for example, of Werner Elert's The Christian Ethos<sup>2</sup>; Rudolf Schnackenburg's The Moral Teaching of the New Testament<sup>3</sup>; D. E. H. Whiteley's The Theology of

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<sup>1</sup>Walter A. Maier, "The Christian Under Grace, According to Romans 6:1-14," (unpublished S.T.M. thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1967). This thesis, an exegetical study, is available in the library of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

<sup>2</sup>Translated from the German by Carl J. Schindler (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957).

<sup>3</sup>Translated from the 2nd revised German edition by J. Holland-Smith and W. J. O'Hara (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965).

St. Paul<sup>4</sup>; and a recent volume by Victor Paul Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul.<sup>5</sup> Most commentators do not discuss fear as an ethical motivation, even when the term occurs in the Pauline text. A comment of Alfred Plummer in A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians at 2 Cor. 7:1 is representative of the kind of remarks which are provided. He writes:

'The fear of God' or 'the fear of the Lord' is repeatedly given in O.T. as the principle of a good life; so esp. in Psalms (ii. 11, v. 7, etc.) and Proverbs (i. 7, 29, viii. 13, etc.). It is the whole duty of man (Eccles. xii. 13). "He who tries to do any good thing without the fear of the Lord," says Herveius, "is a proud man." Cf. v. 11; Rom. iii. 18; Acts ix. 31, x. 2, 35. In Eph. v. 21 what is said in O.T. of Jehovah is in a remarkable way transferred to Christ, *ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ*.<sup>6</sup>

The brief statement of Philip E. Hughes in Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians at the same verse is typical, too:

And this is to be done "in the fear of God"--that is, in reverence and devotion towards Him to whom we owe everything, in awe of Him at whose judgment-seat we shall have to give an account of the things done in the body (5:10f.), and in dread lest, through carelessness and disloyalty, we should be ashamed before Christ at His coming (I Jn. 2:28).<sup>7</sup>

Another recent work, The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, does not offer much more light on the concept of the holy fear of God

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<sup>4</sup>(Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964).

<sup>5</sup>(New York: Abingdon Press, 1968).

<sup>6</sup>Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians in The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 212.

<sup>7</sup>In The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), p. 258.

in Paul's writings. In an article on fear by Samuel Terrien, under "Fear in the NT" there is a section with the heading, "Fear and Sanctification." The first paragraph states:

The new man in Christ is delivered from worldly fears, but he is constantly reminded that he has to fear evil in all its forms (Matt. 10:28; Rom. 11:20). The sanctification of the Christian individual as well as that of the church is the fruit of the fear of the Lord (II Cor. 5:10-11; 7:1; cf. Col. 3:22; Heb. 10:31; etc. . . .). It is thus a grave error to maintain, with many moderns, that Christianity, as opposed to Hebraism, has replaced the fear of God by the love of God. The NT, as well as the OT, understands so profoundly the tragic dimensions of love and knows so acutely the awesomeness of the divine presence that it proposes to man no other prospect than the service of God "with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).<sup>8</sup>

The bibliographical listing at the end of this article mentions only a small number of works which deal with the concept of fear in the Old Testament. Neither the library card catalogue nor indices to scholarly periodical literature on the New Testament can direct the reader to any substantive studies whose primary focus has been on the concept of the fear of God in the Pauline writings.<sup>9</sup> The need of an "in depth" consideration of this subject is apparent, therefore.

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel Terrien, "Fear in the NT," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by George Arthur Buttrick, et al. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), II, 259.

<sup>9</sup> Brief treatments of the concept of the fear of God in Paul's writings are found, e.g., in Rudolf Bultmann's Theology of the New Testament, translated from the German by Kendrick Gabel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 320-324; the article on "Furcht" by W. Mundle in Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament, edited by Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther, and Hans Bietenhard, fourth part (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, n.d.), pp. 416-417; the article on "Froemigkeit, Gottesverehrung" by L. Coenen, W. Guenther, and W. Mundle in the same Begriffslexikon, pp. 394-399; and the article on "Fear" by Ed. Diserens in A Companion to the Bible, edited by J.-J. von Allmen, translated from the 2nd French edition by P. J. Allcock, et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 113-119.



Many questions should be answered. Among them are the following:

What is the actual meaning of "fear" in the phrase "fear of God"? What kind of fear is this? What is the difference between the fear of the Lord which is expected and that which is forbidden, according to the teaching of Paul? Exactly to what in or connected with the deity is the believer's fear the appropriate response? What is the relationship of the fear of God to the other ethical motivations spoken of in the apostle's writings? Does Paul assume that fear of God and love for God are compatible? That they are capable of simultaneous generation within the heart? How, specifically does the fear of God prevent sinning and become ethically motivating? How is the apostle Paul, the proclaimer of the Gospel of love and grace, able to inculcate the fear of God when addressing Christian congregations? What are the sources of Paul's concept of the fear of God? Are his views on the subject derived from his background in rabbinic Judaism? Did aspects of hellenistic Jewish thought influence the apostle's understanding of this fear? What comparison is there between the concept of the ethically motivating fear of God which is enjoined in the Old Testament and that which is presented in Paul's epistles? What is the relationship of Paul's view to the instruction concerning this fear in the writings of other New Testament authors? Did the apostle's teaching concerning this fear have an influence on subsequent theological literature in the church, like that attributed to the Apostolic Fathers?

An examination of Paul's epistles leads to the discovery that the apostle expressly refers to the ethically motivating fear of God fifteen

times, in as many passages, scattered through seven of the thirteen letters. These passages are the following: Rom. 3:18; 11:20-21 (taken together as one passage); 13:7; 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 5:11; 7:1,11,15 (three passages); Eph. 5:21,33 (two passages); 6:5; Phil 2:12-13 (one passage); Col. 3:22; 1 Tim. 2:10; 5:20. We shall be concerned in our study first with a consideration of possible sources for the Pauline concept of this fear. To this end, the next chapter will be devoted to an investigation of the concept of the fear of God in the Old Testament. Chapter III will scrutinize the literature of the inter-testamental period and of the pre-Pauline Christian Church (Acts). Chapter IV will take up the question of the effect of rabbinic thinking on Paul's understanding of the fear of God. Then, in the same chapter, the fifteen above-indicated references to the "fear of God" will be considered exegetically. General points of instruction they provide will be summarized. The interpretative effort here will be the main concentration of our study. In Chapter V the occurrences of the concept of the holy fear of God in the non-Pauline epistolary literature of the New Testament and in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers will be noted; comparisons with Pauline thought will be drawn. The final section will summarize the principal findings and list the over-all conclusions of our discussion.

Throughout this investigation the writer has dealt chiefly with primary sources and/or English translations of these sources.<sup>10</sup> Views

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<sup>10</sup>The sources used are: Rudolf Kittel, et al., editors, Biblia Hebraica (3rd edition; Stuttgart: Privilegierte Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1945), 2 vols.; Alfred Rahlfs, editor, Septuaginta

of biblical scholars have been referred to wherever these contribute to the understanding of a text or topic under consideration.

The major conclusions of the present study may, by way of anticipation, be stated as follows: Paul's understanding of that fear of God which fosters the sanctified life appears to be derived primarily from the canonical Old Testament, and not from the literature of the intertestamental period, the religious teaching of the early (pre-Pauline) Christian Church, the theology of contemporary Rabbinic Judaism, or other possible sources of influence on the development of this concept in his thinking. As in the Old Testament, this fear, in the thinking of Paul, had as its object or focal point the divine judgment on sin, visited in the present and in the future upon believers as well as

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(Stuttgart: Privilegierte Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, c.1935), 2 vols.; R. H. Charles, editor, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 2 vols.; G. Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English (Revised edition; Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1965); F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker, and Ralph Marcus, translators, Philo and Philo Supplement, 12 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950-1962); Eberhard Nestle, Erwin Nestle, and Kurt Aland, editors, Novum Testamentum Graece (25th edition; Stuttgart: Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1963); Kirsopp Lake, translator, The Apostolic Fathers, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, c.1912). Sources used for the study of rabbinic writings were: C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, editors, A Rabbinic Anthology (New York: Meridian Books, Inc., [1938]); and Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Die Briefe des Neuen Testaments und die Offenbarung Johannis Erlaeutert aus Talmud und Midrasch, Vol. III of Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926). Unless otherwise specified, English quotations of Old and New Testament passages which appear in the present study are taken from the Revised Standard Version of the Scriptures (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1946).

unbelievers. This fear can be aroused only in the hearts of followers of the Lord. It is wholly compatible with, indeed, complementary to, the love for God as well as to the other motivations for godly living of which the apostle speaks. It is a holy emotion, which promotes sanctification. Paul doubtless assumed his addressees to be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the concept from their reading of the Old Testament. He sought in his letters to build upon the Christians' previous understanding of biblical teaching, whether pertaining to the fear of God or any other subject.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FEAR OF GOD AS ETHICAL MOTIVATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A study of "The Fear of God As Ethical Motivation in Pauline Theology" may properly begin with a consideration of the root or source of this concept in the thinking of the apostle Paul. A primary source was the Old Testament with its prominent stress of the idea of the fear of God. It is the purpose of this chapter to investigate salient features of the Old Testament view on this subject, especially on the subtopic of particular concern, the fear of God as motivation for ethical behavior, for the moral life.

#### "Fear" in Its Primary Sense--the Actual Emotion of Fear

The Hebrew root most frequently employed in the Old Testament to express the idea of fear in the concept "fear of God" is  $\text{אָרָא}$ . It has the primitive meaning of trembling, shuddering, shivering, quivering, quaking.<sup>1</sup> Numerous other Hebrew terms,<sup>2</sup> expressive of different degrees in the intensity of fear, however, are also found in

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<sup>1</sup>The root  $\text{אָרָא}$  appears in the verb  $\text{אָרָא}$ , to fear; the nouns  $\text{אָרָא}$ , fear,  $\text{אָרָא}$  and  $\text{אָרָא}$ , fear, terror; the verbal adjective  $\text{אָרָא}$ , afraid of; and the niphal participle  $\text{אָרָא}$ , (used as an adjective), feared, fearful.

<sup>2</sup>For a convenient listing of several score nouns, verbs, and adjectives see Joachim Becker, Gottesfurcht im Alten Testament (Rome: Paepstliches Bibelinstitut, 1965), pp. 7-18.

the Scriptural "fear of God" passages and help comprise a rich Old Testament "vocabulary of fear." These words refer to the human emotion of fear. Since fear in this sense may be described as the "emotional state characterized by anticipation of pain or great distress and accompanied by heightened autonomic activity especially involving the nervous system," or as "agitated foreboding often of some real or specific peril,"<sup>3</sup> "the fear of God," then, is primarily the emotion of fear aroused by an expectation that God may or will cause one pain or distress.

#### Circumstances Under Which This Fear Is Aroused

According to the Old Testament this "fear of God" is aroused in different ways, under various circumstances. It is evoked, we may note initially, when people palpably experience the divine presence in majesty, in the theophanies (for example, Ex. 3:1-6; 19:16-20; 20:18-20; Gen. 3:8-10) and in dreams and visions (Gen. 28:16-17; 15:12-16; Dan. 7:13-15; Is. 6:1-6; Ezekiel 1). Fear of God is produced also by the mighty works of the Lord in nature and history, and particularly by those affecting the lives of people in terms of punishment or blessing. These acts are called "terrible,"<sup>4</sup> אַיִן אֵלֹהִים, in Deut. 10:21,

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<sup>3</sup>These phrases are the first and fundamental meaning for fear, as supplied in Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Company, c.1961), p. 831.

<sup>4</sup>Unless otherwise specified, the Old Testament terms and passages the writer cites in this chapter are quoted from the Revised Standard Version. Passage locations are given according to the verse numbering of the RSV.

2 Sam. 7:23, Is. 64:3, Ps. 145:6; "terrors," מוֹרָאִים, in Deut. 4:34. The adjective in the singular, מוֹרָא, is employed in Ex. 34:10 and Ps. 66:3.

The fear-inspiring deeds of the Almighty wrought in the realm of nature are either works constituting a divine intervention in the normal course of nature, as when the Lord sent fire from heaven to consume Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:38-39; similarly, Jonah 1:11-16) or God's normal, regular operations involved in the preservation of the earth's inhabitants (Jer. 5:22-24; Ps. 65:6-9; Job 37:1-24). The mighty act per excellentiam wrought by Yahweh in the history of his people is their deliverance from Egyptian bondage at the Red Sea.<sup>5</sup> Other powerful deeds of the Lord affecting the national life of Israel, and also pagan peoples roundabout, are referred to in Ps. 65:5; Psalm 76; Is. 25:1-3; Zech. 9:4-5; Ps. 9:19-20; Psalm 64; and Is. 41:23. Divine blessings bestowed upon an individual pious Israelite

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<sup>5</sup>The fear of God figures with exceptional prominence in the Scriptural account of this miraculous rescue of the Israelite nation. The people of Israel are said to have feared the Lord as a result of their great deliverance (Ex. 14:30-31); other nations who hear of the Egyptian army's overthrow are filled with terror of Yahweh's outstretched arm (Ex. 15:13-18; Joshua 2:9-11; 1 Sam. 4:6-8). Interestingly, the Exodus narrative reports that the Lord caused a great fear of Himself also to overtake the Egyptians just prior to their destruction, when the enemy force was passing over the sea bed and began to experience trouble with the chariot wheels (Ex. 14:25). Jeremiah remarks that God brought Israel out of Egypt "with great terror" (32:21); cf. 2 Sam. 7:23. (Such a "terror of Yahweh," it may be noted--that is, a terror sent upon an enemy by Yahweh, and one frequently connected consciously and directly with Yahweh and his power as its object--is the climax feature of the so-called "Holy Wars" fought at various times in Israel's history. Cf. Joshua 10:10; Judg. 4:15; Judges 7; 1 Sam. 7:10 [5:11]; 14:15; 2 Chron. 14:13; 17:10. See also Gen. 35:5; Lev. 26:36.)

may arouse the fear of God, in others as well as in himself, as is indicated in the testimony of David in Ps. 40:1-4 and 22:23-25.

Punitive judgments which exhibit Yahweh's wrath against the sins of his own nation, or its members, may do the same--as, for instance, when those who witness the earth swallowing up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram are filled with terror and flee for their lives from the area (Num. 16:31-35).<sup>6</sup>

Certain persons and things in the creature world are particularly related to, or peculiarly associated with, the deity. They represent the Lord, as it were, or his presence. For this reason they arouse a human fear which is, in fact, the fear of God, though not specifically labeled the fear of God in the Old Testament Scriptures. The presence of an angel from heaven excites such fear, as in the case of the wife of Manoah (Judg. 13:6) and of the prophet Daniel (Dan. 8:17-18; 10:7-11, 15-19). Certain men of God evoke this fear, as for example Samuel (1 Sam. 12:18; 16:4), Moses (Ex. 34:30), and Joshua (Joshua 4:14); so also Saul, because of the sacred office of the king (1 Sam. 24:4-7; 26:9-11; 31:4; 2 Sam. 1:14; 1 Sam. 11:7); and Solomon, "because . . . the wisdom of God was in him, to render justice" (1 Kings 3:28). The entire people of Israel will occasion such fear, according to Deut. 28:10.<sup>7</sup> Israelites are to have fear for the sanctuary, as the Lord

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<sup>6</sup>Additional examples are found in 1 Sam. 12:16-18; 2 Sam. 6:6-10; Ps. 52:1-7; also Job 6:4; 7:13-14; 9:34; 13:10-11,21; Ps. 88:15-16.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Is. 19:17 and Neh 6:16.



directs in Lev. 19:30 and 26:2.<sup>8</sup> Violators of the sanctuary, Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, are devoured by fire (Lev. 10:1-5). The presence of the ark of the covenant should prompt this fear, as the accounts of 1 Sam. 5:1-6:18; 6:19-21; and 2 Sam. 6:6-11 plainly indicate. The Word of the Lord occasions this fear, according to Ps. 119:161; Ezra 10:3; Prov. 13:13; Is. 66:2,5; and 1 Sam. 28:20.

Finally, Yahweh's saints deliberately generate the fear of the Lord in their hearts by their reverent contemplation of the Almighty's nature. Their fear is an appropriate, God-pleasing response to the deity's holiness, will, and wrath against sin; to his righteousness and activity of judging, as the just Judge of all mankind. It motivates to ethical behavior as prescribed by the divine will. This fear, one consciously cultivated by the people of God as an aid to sanctification, will be the focus of our consideration in this chapter.

This fear prompted Abraham to undertake the sacrifice of his son Isaac in obedience to the Lord's directive (Gen. 22:12). This fear appears to be reflected in Joseph's resistance to the adulterous advances of Potiphar's wife and in his remonstrance, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9). The same fear moved the Hebrew midwives to disobey the commandment of the Pharaoh and let the Hebrew male children live (Ex. 1:17,21); prevented the leaders of the Israelite congregation from breaking the oath sworn to the Gibeonites by Yahweh (Joshua 9:20); enabled Job to turn away from evil (Job 1:1,8; 2:3);

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<sup>8</sup>Cf. Gen. 28:17 and Is. 8:14.

impelled the Psalmist David to worship toward the Lord's temple (Ps. 5:7). The sacred poet speaks to the Lord concerning this perfective fear, saying, "My flesh trembles for fear of thee," and then reveals a specific object of his fear in the words: "I am afraid of thy judgments" (Ps. 119:120). Isaiah predicts that the "shoot from the stump of Jesse" shall have "the spirit of . . . the fear of the Lord," this holy motivation to godliness resting upon Him, "And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord" (Is. 11:1-3). God Himself, speaking prophetically of the new covenant He will establish with his people, mentions this fear as one of its blessings; He says "I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me" (Jer. 32:40).

Though no Scripture passage specifically enunciating this idea can be adduced, it may be assumed that the perfective fear of God, as generated by pious Israelites, must have had in view also the final, threatened manifestations of God's wrath and judgment on the universal "day of the Lord." The latter concept, while existing in popular belief prior to the time of the Latter Prophets, was greatly illuminated by the statements of these prophets. This is seen, for example, in Is. 2:10-21 and Zeph. 1:14-16.

#### General Instructions Concerning the Ethically Motivating Fear of God

The Old Testament Scriptures record many directives that God's people cultivate in their hearts the precautionary fear of the righteous

Lord which will lead them to observe the divine commandments. Moses instructs Israel, "You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve him, and swear by his name" (Deut. 6:13; compare 10:12-20; 13:4; Lev. 25:17,36). Joshua directs the people: "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness" (Joshua 24:14). Since it is true that "by the fear of the Lord a man avoids evil" (Prov. 16:6), the teacher in the Book of Proverbs admonishes his "son" to "fear the Lord, and turn away from evil" (3:7); to "continue in the fear of the Lord all the day" (23:17).

The leaders of the Lord's people, in particular, are to be filled with the fear of God in the discharge of their official responsibilities, as Scripture verses like the following indicate: 2 Sam. 23:3-4; 2 Chron. 19:5-9; Neh. 5:9,14-15; 7:2. In certain passages of the Psalms the sacred writer looks beyond his pious countrymen and seeks the conversion and salvation of the rebelliously wicked in and beyond Israel. David directs his evil oppressors: "Stand in awe [of Yahweh], and sin not" (Ps. 4:4).<sup>9</sup> He warns the kings and rulers of the earth: "Serve the Lord with fear, with trembling kiss his feet, lest he be angry, and you

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<sup>9</sup>This is the translation of the King James Version and is to be preferred over the rendering of the RSV, "Be angry, but sin not"--despite the LXX translation ὀργιζέσθε καὶ μὴ ἠμάρτανετε, and Paul's citation of the LXX in Eph. 4:26. A basic meaning of ὀργίζω is to be agitated, quiver, quake, tremble with fear; this fits the context of Psalm 4 more satisfactorily than the idea of being angry, displaying righteous indignation. Cf. Herbert C. Leupold's discussion, Exposition of the Psalms (Columbus: Wartburg Press, 1959), pp. 68-69.

perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled" (Ps. 2:10-11). The author of Psalm 33 exclaims: "Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!" (verse 8).

The principal way in which the godly can be led to exercise the obedience-fostering fear of the Lord is through the attentive hearing of the divine words of God's law which reveals the holy and righteous nature, will, and acts of the deity. This is indicated in Deut. 4:10; 6:1-2; 17:18-19; Prov. 2:1-5; Jer. 36:1-3,16. The proper fear of God is aroused also by a consideration of the stringent punishments for gross wickedness which the divine law instituted in Israel. For example, the man who entices his Israelite brother to commit idolatry is to be immediately stoned to death; "And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and never again do any such wickedness as this among you" (Deut. 13:6-11; similarly 17:8-13). Other stimuli to godliness would be provided by divine theophanies, God's performance of his own mighty acts, and so on--as discussed above.

In the Scriptures great blessings are said to be in store for those who fear the Lord. The godly, whose fear impels them to follow the Almighty's will, are divinely assured that it will go well with them and their children forever (Deut. 5:29; compare Eccl. 8:12-13). In the Book of Proverbs it is recorded that "The fear of the Lord leads to life; and he who has it rests satisfied; he will not be visited by harm" (19:23; compare 14:27). Among specific benefits which accrue to those who fear the Lord are wisdom and good understanding (Ps. 111:10), knowledge (Prov. 1:7), instruction in the divinely approved

way of life (Ps. 25:12), the Lord's friendship and knowledge of his covenant (Ps. 25:14), happy family life (Psalm 128), riches and honor (Pr. 22:4). A sure visitation of evil, however, is the threatened lot of all who spurn the fear of the Lord and the godliness to which it leads, as Moses warns Israel in Deut. 28:58-64; as Wisdom serves notice to those who reject her counsel, Prov. 1:26-31; and as Jeremiah informs his countrymen, Jer. 2:18-19.<sup>10</sup>

#### "Filial" and "Servile" Fear

The perfective fear of which we have been speaking in the last section, it should next be stressed, is possible only to the true saints of the Lord. Its generation is altogether beyond the capability of the ungodly in the world, who are at enmity with Yahweh; want nothing to do with Him or his will; refuse to reckon with his attributes, wrath, and judgments; or trust his love. The author of the De Profundis explains in his prayer to the Lord: "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared" (Ps. 130:4). Compare 1 Kings 8:40 (2 Chron. 6:3); Mal. 2:5. Through faith in Yahweh's grace and in the Abrahamic covenant promise of the coming, great seed of the patriarch who would establish pardoning blessing for the whole race of sinful men, the pious Israelite obtained the forgiveness of all his transgressions; the gift of spiritual life; and with this the desire and power to set his mind upon the divine Word and self-revelation, the capacity to fear the

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<sup>10</sup>Cf. Jer. 44:10-11.

holy, righteous God, and the ability to love and obey the Almighty's commandments. The Lutheran Confessions call the fear under present consideration "filial fear," which they define as "such anxiety as has been connected with faith, i.e., where faith consoles and sustains the anxious heart."<sup>11</sup>

The opposite of this filial fear may be termed "servile fear." "It is servile fear when faith does not sustain the anxious heart [fear without faith, where there is nothing but wrath and doubt]."<sup>12</sup> Such fear at times possesses the hearts of the wholly ungodly, when they are compelled to listen to the voice of their own conscience, confront the punitive power of the deity, or face the prospect of death. It will fill their beings completely and constantly in that day when men will "enter the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the cliffs, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth" (Is. 2:21).

God's believing children, too, because of the sinfulness which still attaches to them, are occasionally afflicted with various kinds of servile fear. They doubt the goodness and promises, the love and providence of God; they stand in dread of enemies, worry about impending trials, disaster, and death. The many "fear not"-directives (—<sup>2</sup> ~~Σ~~

[7, 7] ~~Σ~~ 7 7 ) of the Old Testament, spoken to godly

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<sup>11</sup>Apology of the Augsburg Confession, XII, 38, Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 261.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

individuals or the Israelites as a whole, give indication of the presence of some kind of servile fear in the believer's heart, forbid its continuance, and pave the way for the resurgence of confident trust and filial fear. This is suggested in Gen. 15:1; 21:17; 26:24; Ex. 20:20; Judg. 6:23; Dan. 10:12; Ex. 14:13; Num. 21:34; Deut. 3:22; 20:1-4; Joshua 8:1; 10:8; 11:6; 2 Kings 1:15; 1 Sam. 12:20; Is. 41:10, 13-14; 43:1-2; 44:2,8. The generation of the proper fear of God brings with it freedom from all other fears; therefore it should be cultivated assiduously--this is the Old Testament ideal (Is. 8:12-13).

Because the precautionary, filial fear of God serves the Old Testament faithful as a prime motivation to ethical behavior, a further consideration of this fear as featured in the Old Testament Scriptures will be of value to our study in this dissertation. To such an investigation we shall proceed after first giving attention, in the next section, to some of the derived significances of certain of the "fear of God" expressions in these Scriptures.

#### Derived Significances of the Phrase "Fear of God"

The phrase "fear of God" (  $\text{יִרְאַת אֱלֹהִים}$  ) and the similar formulations which employ words other than  $\text{יִרְאַת אֱלֹהִים}$  to express the same concept are used in certain passages of the Old Testament in senses other than the primary--that is, the human emotion of fear, which has been the subject of our discussion until this point. The additional usages which appear may be termed derived significances of the "fear of God" expressions. All of them are figurative; all,

metonymical. Thus we read, for example, the words: "Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of his majesty" (Is. 2:10).<sup>13</sup> In this passage those who hear the prophet's word are bidden to hide not from the emotion of fear (an impossibility) but from that which inspires terror. The latter in context is the glory of the divine majesty, metonymically called "terror" in the first part of the verse. In like manner the punitive judgments of the Almighty--the objects of human dread--are referred to as the "fear" or "dread" of God in Ps. 36:1; Ex. 20:20; Job 9:34; 13:21; Ps. 119:120a; similarly, "terrors of God" and "thy terrors" in Job 6:4 and Ps. 88:15, respectively. In one verse, Ps. 19:9, "the fear of the Lord" serves apparently as a synonym for God's law, which is the object of the pious Israelites' fear (compare verses 7 to 11).

That to which the fearing of God leads the faithful servants of the Lord is sometimes, by metonymy, designated as the fear of the Lord. This may be the worship of Yahweh. The Revised Standard Version even translates  $\text{לְפָנָיו}$  "to worship" at the end of the passage Joshua 22:24-25. Compare Jonah 1:9.  $(\text{לִפְנֵי יְהוָה})$   $\text{לְפָנָיו}$   $\text{לְפָנָיו}$  is frequently employed in the Psalms as a typical designation of the genuine worshippers of the Lord; of true, believing Israelites (15:4; 22:23,25; 66:16; 118:4; 135:20). Even hypocritical, rote participation in religious rituals is referred to as the fear of God: Is. 29:13; 2 Kings 17:25,27-29,32-34; Judg. 6:10.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. verses 19 and 21; also Job 25:2.



A true fearing of God issues also in pious behavior, ethical living generally. The divinely prescribed moral way of life is referred to metonymically as the fear of the Lord,<sup>14</sup> as in Gen. 20:11; 42:14; Ex. 18:21; Job 22:4; Deut. 25:18; Hos. 10:3; Prov. 8:13; Ps. 34:11,13-14; 2 Chron. 26:5. In the case of a number of these passages and many other Scripture verses mentioning the fear of God it is difficult to determine whether the fear as emotion or the fear in the sense of ethical behavior is meant. There is no reason in these instances not to assume that a blending of the two ideas occurs; the fear of God expression may be regarded as designating both subjective emotion and resultant behavior. Samuel Terrien's observation points in the direction of a conclusion like this, when he says:

The expression "the fear of the Lord" (yir'ath Yahweh) becomes the familiar way of describing the religion of biblical Judaism in the post-exilic period . . . . It would be a grave error, however, to soften the meaning of the expression and to ignore its central element of mysterium tremendum. Although many commentators and historians have fallen into this error during the past hundred years, the fear of the Lord is not merely to be equated with reverence, piety, or religion because it is impossible today to reevaluate and again charge these terms with their ancient--but now largely lost--connotation of awesomeness.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>The moral life of the godly, of course, cannot and should not be exclusively distinguished from the worship of God. The latter is a part of the former; and the former may be considered a part of the latter. In the case of passages cited as referring to the worship of the Lord (as in the previous paragraph of the text) or to the moral life (as in this paragraph), it is simply a question of the verses' particular emphasis or thrust.

<sup>15</sup>Samuel Terrien, "Fear," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by George A. Buttrick, et al., (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), II, 258. Mention ought be made in passing of several erroneous notions

The Ethically Motivating Fear of God  
Further Examined in Relation to  
the Specific Objects of This Fear

It was asserted earlier that the fear of the Lord which serves God's Old Testament people as a motivation to ethical behavior is the emotion of fear they generate in their hearts as a reaction to the divine holiness and wrath against sin, to the divine righteousness and the judging activity of mankind's just Judge. Passages alluding to this fear were cited. Now we shall find it useful for the purpose of our study further to consider this filial fear. We shall investigate the nature of its objects, the holiness, righteousness, wrath, and judgments of God; and note why this fear motivates to ethical living.

The concept of holiness is expressed by the Hebrew root WTP which possesses an original idea of separation and withdrawal but is

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concerning the significance of the Old Testament "fear of God" concept which are set forth in some of the scholarly literature on the subject. The fear of God is not the equivalent either of "faith in God" or of "love of God" as has been proposed. Nor does the English word "reverence" (nor do synonyms like "veneration," "respect," "honor") adequately render the meaning of the fear referred to in the "fear of God" expressions, as some hold. Faith is not an emotion like fear; as confidence of the heart in God, it makes possible the generation of a God-pleasing fear of the Lord. The love of God, the attraction and desire felt for God, who arouses delight and admiration, is an emotion completely separate and distinct from fear (though they may be closely associated, as will be shown later in this chapter). The English word "reverence" suggests a commingling or combination of fear and love (not fear alone), for this is its definition: "profound respect mingled with love and awe (as for a holy or exalted being . . .)"; Webster's Third New International Dictionary, p. 1942. These words are a part of the first and basic meaning supplied for the word.



which the divine holiness occasions in the deity (Ps. 78:38-41; Is. 10:17; Ex. 32:10; Num. 25:3; Deut. 31:16-17). It leads to an outward expression which consists in an attack of divine power on all the forces which oppose God's holy will. God's wrath is also the object of godly fear. The wrath of God expresses itself and manifests itself outwardly by way of divine judgments and punishments visited upon transgression. For this reason the Old Testament Scriptures most frequently picture wrath as feared in terms of the punitive judgments, the "concretizations" of wrath. These punishments may be threatened, personally experienced, or observed in the lives of others. God's visitations in wrath become the focal point of the fear of God.

The Old Testament writers depict Yahweh as active in judging. The verb  $\text{שָׁפַט}$  and its cognates are frequently used to express the idea of judgment. A number of other Hebrew words reinforce  $\text{שָׁפַט}$  and are likewise rendered by "judge" or some similar expression. This judging is essentially a dynamic process; the judge both discerns right from wrong in a situation and takes action as a result. "Judgment" involves both discrimination and vindication; as Leon Morris observes: "He who does mishpat [judgment] seeks out the wrongdoer to punish him, and the righteous to vindicate his cause."<sup>18</sup> All these thoughts apply to the divine activity of judging. Yahweh Himself says: "I the Lord search the mind and try the heart, to give to every man according to his

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<sup>18</sup> Leon Morris, The Biblical Doctrine of Judgment (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1960), p. 17.

ways, according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. 17:10). This dynamic judgment is in progress now, embracing every human being and his works: God continually surveys the behavior of all men, punishes those who do wickedly, and rewards with blessing those who are obedient to his will (Ps. 62:12; Ezek. 18:25-32; Jer. 32:19; Zech. 1:6). And the present divine judicial dealing will culminate in an eschatological and final judgment with eternal dispensations for the evil and the good (Ps. 96:13). The godly are aware of the divine judging activity; produce in their hearts a fear of God's judgments; shrink from transgression; and strive for holiness (Ps. 119:120 and verses 67 and 71).

God's judging is an expression of his righteousness, or justice, the  $\text{P} \ddot{\text{T}} \ddot{\text{Y}}$ , or the  $\text{S} \ddot{\text{P}} \ddot{\text{T}} \ddot{\text{Y}}$ , of God (Jer. 11:20; Ps. 7:9,11; 9:7-8; 98:9). The basic meaning of the root  $\text{P} \ddot{\text{T}} \ddot{\text{Y}}$  is "conformity to a norm," or "the state corresponding to a norm."<sup>19</sup>  $\text{P} \ddot{\text{T}} \ddot{\text{Y}}$ , furthermore, expresses relationship, "a concept of relation referring to an actual relationship between two persons and implying behaviour which corresponds to, or is true to, the claims arising out of such a relationship."<sup>20</sup> God's righteousness, or justice, accordingly, may be defined as the disposition of the deity, in his relationship to men as God and Lord, to deal with them in accordance with his holy will as norm.

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<sup>19</sup>Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, translated from the French by Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1958), p. 94.

<sup>20</sup>Walter Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, translated from the fifth German edition by John A. Baker (London: SCM Press, 1967), I, 240.

The expression of this will is provided in law, natural and revealed. The action to which his righteousness moves the deity is the dynamic procedure of judging, which results in the reward of blessing for obedience and punishment for disobedience to the divine commandments. Because the divine righteousness moves the Lord to judge and punish evil, it, too, is the object of godly fear, of a holy dread which is productive of a subservience to Yahweh in the life of the believing follower of God.

In summary, it may be stated that according to the Old Testament Scriptures, the fear which the pious in Israel direct toward Yahweh is aroused by their consideration specifically and simultaneously of the divine holiness and wrath against sin, and the divine righteousness and judging activity--of all these in conjunction. The Almighty, because of his holiness and wrath, is fiercely, relentlessly opposed to all sin; because of his justice, is disposed to deal with human beings in accordance with the norm, the threats, and the promises of his holy law. He is continually engaged in surveying the works of all men--including those of his own people--and bringing punitive judgments upon such as violate his will. He it is, with his retributive judgments, therefore, toward whom the godly direct a filial fear. And this fear prompts the pious to avoid sin and live the life pleasing to the Lord.

#### A Closer Look at the Divine Punitive Judgments

A listing of the kinds of wrathful, punitive visitations which the righteous and holy God brings specifically upon his own people when they

transgress his commandments clearly reveals why these judgments are to be greatly feared and earnestly avoided. Penalties for transgression are administered in the spiritual sphere. Since sin always constitutes a resistance of the indwelling Spirit of God,<sup>21</sup> one phase of the divine judicial reaction to wrong-doing is the withdrawal of that Spirit to a certain extent from the sinning child of God and the weakening of his spiritual life. David was concerned about this dangerous consequence of his own sinning, when he besought the Lord in his great penitential prayer, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me" (Ps. 51:11b). In the case of certain gross or repeated sins, the punishment is the complete removal of God's Spirit (compare the case of King Saul, 1 Sam. 16:14) and the loss of spiritual and eternal life. David, therefore, aware of the

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<sup>21</sup>As for the identification of the "Spirit" of God mentioned in the Old Testament, there are many exegetes today who agree with the view of Maimonides, the noted medieval Jewish scholar, that, while the "Ruach Elohim" is the same as the "Ruach ha-Kodesh," the Spirit is not a person but only a power emanating from God. N. Friedmann, however, in an article titled "The Mystery of the Trinity," which appeared in the Concordia Theological Monthly, XV (November 1944), 721-729, shows conclusively that the Old Testament in a number of passages teaches the personality of the Spirit of God and his Godhead. As the title of his essay suggests, Friedmann maintains that the doctrine of the Trinity is presented in the Old Testament Scriptures, and that there were ancient rabbis who accepted and taught this doctrine.

It is likewise the assumption of the Lutheran Confessions that in certain references to the "Spirit" (of God) in the Old Testament the sacred writers are designating the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity. Cf. e.g., Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, VIII, 72, Triglott, p. 1041; and II, 26, p. 891.

heinousness of his sin, prays Yahweh, "Cast me not away from thy presence" (Ps. 51:11a). Ezekiel warns, "The soul that sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:4). If a man through transgression loses his spiritual life and is not reconverted to Yahweh prior to his physical death, then he goes to death in Sheol (Ps. 49:14,19). Surely these spiritual judgments are a source of deepest concern and dread to the faithful in Israel.

There are, however, additional punitive consequences of sin. These may be called the "psychical" or the "physical" or the "circumstantial" counterparts of the spiritual judgments, which the Almighty frequently sends the pious along with the latter. These are the afflictions and sufferings of many kinds which Yahweh brings upon his people. There is the burden of the troubled conscience (Ps. 38:4,8; 6:1-3). Then there are the mental upsets, the physical sicknesses of all types, and also earthly reverses, privations, losses, and sorrows; failures of friends, oppressions of enemies, and the like (Ps. 38; 39:11; 102:2-10; Lam. 3:1-20; Psalms 74 and 89). Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 record long lists of temporal judgments which the Lord threatens to bring upon Israel, if they walk contrary to the divine commandments. There is abundant Scriptural evidence that these threats were carried out against the people as a whole or against individuals or groups within the nation in periods of disobedience. So many of the divine visitations overtake the godly in the course of their lifetime that Moses observes in Psalm 90: "All our days pass



away under thy [God's] wrath" (verse 9). The culminating physical judgment is, of course, death (Ps. 90:3,5-8). While the spiritual penalties for transgression may or may not always be perceived by a sinner, he frequently does not remain oblivious to the physical, psychical, and circumstantial counterparts of the spiritual judgments.

A feature of the divine visitations upon those sinning is that in many instances these judgments are meted out to the penitent, or are allowed to continue on for them, even after they have received forgiveness for the sins which called forth the punishments. A case in point is David's experience of troubles after committing adultery with Bathsheba and arranging the murder of her husband Uriah (2 Samuel 11). When the Lord sent Nathan the prophet to rebuke David for these flagrant transgressions, this man of God also brought the penitent king an announcement of divine pardon for his evil, assuring him, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die" (2 Sam. 12:13). At the same time, however, the prophet served notice that a number of divine, retributive judgments would nevertheless overtake David as a result of his sins: the child that Bathsheba bore the king would die (verse 14); the sword would never depart from David's house (verse 10); evil would be raised up against him out of his own house; the Lord would take the king's wives before his eyes and give them to a neighbor who would lie with these wives in the sight of the sun (verse 11). All these grievous visitations come upon him precisely as predicted, according to the account of 2 Sam. 12:15-18, the record of events in subsequent chapters (13 to 18) of the same book, and the first two

chapters of 1 Kings. The king was himself punished with sufferings of a kind like to those which he had inflicted upon others.

Numerous other examples of the divine administration of affliction to pardoned sinners in direct consequence of their transgressions can be found in the biblical record.<sup>22</sup> A pious Israelite's recognition of this aspect of the divine judicial procedure would serve to impress the godly individual with the seriousness and the fearfulness of the Lord's retributive judgments, and intensify in him the dread of the divine displeasure and the sincere desire to walk in the way of righteousness.

#### The Relationship of the Fear of God and the Love for God

Before leaving the consideration of the fear of God as ethical motivation in Old Testament theology, it will be well briefly to consider the relationship of the fear of God to the love for God, which is also presented in Old Testament theology as a motivation for godliness. The two emotions are sometimes regarded as antithetical, as impossibly existing together in the human heart. This, however, is not the view of the Scriptures. The following points may be noted.

First, it is clear that God's people are enjoined in the Old Testament both to fear and to love God. Passages directing Israel to fear God have been cited previously.<sup>23</sup> Among those inviting the

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<sup>22</sup>E.g., Num. 20:1-12; 14:20-23; Ex. 21:23-25.

<sup>23</sup>Supra, pp. 14-15.

people to love Yahweh are these: Deut. 11:1,13-14; Joshua 22:5; Ps. 31:23. A Scripture verse designating the fear of God and the love for God together as duties of the faithful is Deut. 10:12-13; compare 6:1-5; 13:4.

Secondly, the true believers in Israel do love the Lord, in addition to fearing Him. Their genuine loving of Yahweh (as expressed, for example, in Ps. 73:25-26) is portrayed as a loving in grateful response to the Lord's own primary love for Israel (Jer. 31:3). God's love established the covenant and is operative in bestowing the blessings of the covenantal relationship upon the pious in the nation. Such blessings are the forgiveness of sins and fellowship with God (Psalm 32); the Lord's attendance upon their prayers (Ps. 116:1), preservation of their lives (Ps. 31:23), deliverance in time of trouble (Ps. 18:1). To love the Lord their God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might (Deut. 6:5); and to live the lives which please Him, is the delight of the saints.

Thirdly, the Word of the Lord instructs the faithful that the divine love directed toward them is educative, and at times necessarily corrective (Prov. 3:11-12; Ps. 119:67; Job 51:17). God in his love is seriously concerned, when through sinful folly, and especially repeated sinning, his people damage their spiritual lives and resist his Spirit. He is not pleased, when in consequence of their transgression He is compelled to remove the Spirit's influence from them to some extent. It is on this account that his love sends afflictions upon the erring which have as their purpose to bring them to their spiritual senses,

restrain them from sinning and prompt them to righteous behavior. Love in effect joins with the justice and holiness (and wrath) of God to provide punitive judgments for sin; but they are to be seen as penalties which are salutary and corrective chastisements.<sup>24</sup>

That the pious in Israel understood the trials and afflictions which they experienced as evidences of Yahweh's love (as well as of his holiness, wrath, and justice) and as beneficial chastisements is plainly indicated in the Old Testament record (Prov. 3:11-12; Deut. 8:1-6; Job 23:10; 36:7-15; Ps. 89:30-34). The people of the Lord gladly testify to the blessings that have come to them through trial: Ps. 119:67,71,75; 94:12-14; Job 5:17-19. Perhaps the chief benefit of afflictions is the realization they impress upon the hearts of the pious that God Himself is their highest good in life--not the temporal gifts and bounties He bestows. Through trial God's people come to cling to Him with ever increasing tenacity, with more fervent love. They even are able to express spiritual joy in the very midst of trouble (Hab. 3:17-18). They find an approach to the solution of the age-old and perplexing question as to why the righteous are called upon to suffer while the wicked by contrast are frequently allowed to prosper (Psalms 73 and 37).

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<sup>24</sup>The term "chastisement" is a noun derived from the verb "chastise"; the latter comes from the Latin castigare (from castus, pure, and agere, to drive) and signifies to correct by punishment, to inflict punishment with a view to reformation or amendment. To "punish," on the other hand, means simply to inflict penalty, suffering or privation, for wrong-doing, irrespective of a purpose to reform.

Furthermore, when additional troubles overtake them, the faithful in Israel show their continuing trust in and love of the Lord by humbly submitting to required suffering (Lev. 26:41; Is. 57:15; Ps. 10:17). They recognize the merciful restraint with which the Almighty visits chastening judgments upon them (Ps. 103:8-11; Lam 3:22) and seek the divine presence and succor in the midst of trial. They confidently appeal to the Lord for deliverance from affliction (such prayers are found in most of the Psalter), as He has bidden them (Ps. 50:15), and patiently wait for the relief (Ps. 33:20; 27:13-14).

It will be seen, then, that faithful Israelites in no way regarded the fearing of God and the loving of God as incompatible emotional exercises. They endeavored, rather, to generate both these godly emotions in their hearts, simultaneously. The pious viewed Yahweh as a God of holiness (and wrath), justice, and love, believing that these three attributes (along with the others) existed co-ordinately in the deity. Their fear of the Lord they saw as a proper response to the divine holiness (and wrath) and justice; their love of the Lord, as the response to the divine love. As for the punitive, divine judgments for sin in their lives, they regarded these as Fatherly chastisements, resulting from the interplay of the three attributes of the deity mentioned previously. They believed that divine love transformed the just, holy, wrathful judgments into salutary chastening experiences for the Lord's people. The righteous chastening judgments were to be feared and if at all possible avoided (Ps. 32:8-9; Prov. 23:17; 28:14); but,

when tribulations did come, the goodness and love of God involved in their sending were also to be considered. Sufferings were to prompt the response of repentance, gratitude, continuing trust and love of the Lord in the hearts of the afflicted.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE FEAR OF GOD AS ETHICAL MOTIVATION IN THE LITERATURE OF THE INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD AND IN THE PRE-PAULINE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

While there is little evidence in the epistles of St. Paul to demonstrate his familiarity with the writings of the intertestamental period,<sup>1</sup> there is no reason to doubt that he had access to many of

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<sup>1</sup>The question of Paul's knowledge and use of non-canonical, Jewish, intertestamental writings has long been debated. There are a few apparent parallels in Pauline thought or terminology to certain concepts or expressions found in some of the Jewish literature. Examples of terminological similarity are phrases like "pass the flower of her age" (Sirach 42:9; 1 Cor. 7:36); "treasures of wisdom" (Sirach 1:25; Col. 2:3); "pain . . . as on a woman in travail" (The Book of the Secrets of Enoch 62:4) and "destruction . . . as travail upon a woman with child" (1 Thessalonians 5:3); "the wrath of the Lord came upon them to the 'uttermost'" (The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs--Levi 6:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:16). The theme of the power of God vs. the nothingness of man appears in Wisdom of Solomon and in Paul; also the themes of God's patience toward his enemies, though He knows they are not profited by it, and of the contrast between the fate of God's enemies and his children. Congruities between the two writers--beyond terminological resemblances--can also be found in 4th Ezra and in Pauline epistles. Investigation of the various parallels, however, leads to the conclusion that these correspondences do not indicate Pauline dependence upon apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works. They suggest, rather, either a common tradition, often originating in the Old Testament, or common employment of idiomatic expressions in general use. See E. Earle Ellis, Paul's Use of the Old Testament (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), pp. 76-84. Ellis states, p. 82: "Because of its emphasis on placing Scripture in its historical environment modern biblical scholarship has often tended to convert parallels into influences and influences into sources. Further, the limited number of extant contemporary documents has sometimes resulted in an exaggeration of their importance and in an underestimation of the general currency of a particular phrase or concept. Too often, also, the investigator has uncritically assumed that the Biblical writer must have a 'source' but that the apocryphal literature can be taken as pure spring water. In comparing Pauline correspondences with the apocryphal literature it has

them. This is true especially of the literature of both hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism, surviving works of which are known as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Paul was also aware of the beliefs of groups who participated in the various religious movements in his Jewish environment. Literary documents from one of the Jewish sects, the Essenes, who headquartered at Qumran, have been discovered near the ruins of this ancient site near the Dead Sea. A consideration of "The Fear of God As Ethical Motivation in Pauline Theology" therefore should include an investigation of the occurrence of this term in representative theological literature of the intertestamental period.

This investigation may be extended to an examination of the writings of Philo. Chadwick expresses the viewpoint "that of all the non-Christian writers of the first century A.D. Philo is the one from whom the historian of emergent Christianity has most to learn."<sup>2</sup>

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been the writer's impression throughout that they pointed not so much to a direct source of influence as to current theologumena and traditional concepts or interpretations. . . . [W. L.] Knox's observation is appropriate: 'Consequently, it is never possible to be certain how far a similarity of ideas and even language may not be due to the fact that two writers are borrowing from a common source. Further, since all Jewish writers appeal in the last resort to the OT and use it in accordance with a more or less conventional system of interpretation, it is manifest that there are always wide possibilities of the occurrence of striking similarities which have no further relation to one another than a common use of the same passage of the OT.'

<sup>2</sup>Henry Chadwick, St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria (Manchester: John Rylands Library, 1966), p. 288. (This booklet is a lecture by Chadwick reprinted from the Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, XLVIII (1966).



Various passages in Philo do provide analogies to the New Testament; and there are certain correspondences between Philo and Paul, as Chadwick (for one) has shown.<sup>3</sup> While any hypothesis of a direct or indirect Pauline dependence on Philo should be ruled out, the possibility ought to be allowed, as the Oxford professor suggests, that both writers "draw on a common stock of hellenistic Jewish tradition."<sup>4</sup> The questions of interest to us are these: Does the concept of ethically motivating fear appear in Philo's works, and how is it treated? Does Philo's usage afford evidence that Paul's understanding of this fear has been influenced by the same hellenistic Jewish tradition which helped shape Philo's thinking?

Moreover, since the apostle surely was acquainted with the practical religious teaching of the early Christian community in the years before his own conversion, it will be of importance for our study to determine the prevalence of the concept of the ethically motivating fear of God in the theological thought of the church during the first years of its existence. The sources of information in the latter regard is Acts, particularly the first half of this work. The third chapter of our study, then, proposes to consider the subject of the fear of God as ethical motivation in the literature of the

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<sup>3</sup>Analogies and correspondences are indicated in the previously cited work.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 290.

intertestamental period, in Philo, and in the pre-Pauline Christian Church as described in Acts.<sup>5</sup>

The paragraphs that follow are few, because a survey of Acts, Philo, and of surviving theological works which were written between the testaments uncovers little of significance for our study. For, whereas the fear of God is one of the prominent concepts of the Old Testament, as we have shown, it may be generally stated, conversely, that this idea assumes no comparable prominence in the literature of the intertestamental period as a whole, in Philo, or in Acts. A few remarks will substantiate this observation.

#### The Fear of God in the Intertestamental Literature

A perusal of the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, and the Dead Sea Scrolls reveals that this literature contains very few references to the fear of God, or the fear of the Lord. In many of the intertestamental works these phrases and parallel expressions are missing altogether; in others they appear but once or twice. Only in the apocryphal books of Sirach and Tobit and in the pseudepigraphical Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and Psalms of Solomon is the fear of God mentioned with a greater frequency. The concept by no means stands out in the intertestamental works taken as a whole.

Furthermore, wherever these works present the concept of the fear of God as ethical motivation, the significance of this idea is not

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<sup>5</sup>A consideration of ethically motivating fear in the teachings of Rabbinic Judaism will be reserved for Chapter IV.

developed beyond what is offered in the Scriptures of the canonical Old Testament. The ethically motivating fear is directed toward the wrathful judgments of God.<sup>6</sup> This fear is presented and inculcated as a virtue of the people of God.<sup>7</sup> It is depicted as a prime deterrent to sin and as conducive to the obedience of the Lord's commandments.<sup>8</sup> The blessings to which it leads are enumerated and extolled.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Cf. 1QH X. 34, as presented, e.g., in G. Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English (Revised edition; Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1965), p. 185. Also: The Sibylline Oracles--Fragments, i.1-4-- in R. H. Charles, editor, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), II, 377; and The Story of Ahikar 2:91, ibid., II, 739.

<sup>7</sup>(The material in pseudepigraphical and apocryphal works to be referred to in this and succeeding footnotes will be located in Charles, according to volume [Roman numeral] and page number, both supplied in parentheses. Material in the Qumran literature will be designated according to the standard abbreviations for this literature.) See The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs--Reuben 4:1 (II, 298); Levi 13:6 (II, 311); Judah 16:2 (II, 320); Zebulun 10:5 (II, 332); Dan 6:1 (II, 335); Naphatali 2:9 (II, 337); Gad 5:5 (II, 341); Joseph 11:1 (II, 350); Benjamin 3:3 (II, 355)--; The Book of the Secrets of Enoch 2:3 (II, 432) and 43:3 (II, 457); The Sibylline Oracles--Fragments, 3:29; The Psalms of Solomon 2:37a (II, 634); [4:24 (II, 637)]; 12:4 (II, 644); 18:8,10 (II, 651); The Story of Ahikar (Arabic) 2:14,20 (II, 731); and 1QH XII. 3.

<sup>8</sup>The Book of Tobit 4:21 (I, 213); Sirach 1:30 (I, 321); 2:15-17 (I, 323); 3:7 (I, 324); 15:1 (I, 369); The Letter of Aristeas 159; 189 (II, 112); The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs--Simeon 3:4 (II, 301); Gad 5:4,5 (II, 341); The Psalms of Solomon 18:9 (II, 651); [18:13-14 (II, 652)].

<sup>9</sup>The Book of Tobit 4:21 (I, 213); Sirach 1:11-27 (I, 319-321); 2:7-11 (I, 322); 6:16-17 (I, 335); 25:10-11 (I, 401); 32:16 (I, 427); 33:1 (I, 428); 34:13-17 (I, 435); The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs--Joseph 2:4 (II, 346)--; The Book of the Secrets of Enoch 48:8 (II, 459); The Psalms of Solomon 2:37b (II, 634); 3:16 (II, 635); 4:24-27 (II, 637); 5:21 (II, 638); 6:8 (II, 639); 13:11 (II, 645); 15:15 (II, 646); CD VIII. 19-20; 1QSb I. 1; 1QSb V. 25.

## This Fear in Philo

The fear of God as such, and as ethically motivating, is mentioned infrequently in the writings of Philo. In Decal. 12:52 the fear of God (*εὐγένεια*) is said to be "the beginning (*ἀρχή*) of the virtues." H. A. Wolfson suggests that Philo's assignment of leadership to this fear is probably based upon Prov. 1:7,<sup>10</sup> which may be translated from the Septuagint: "The fear of God (*φόβος Θεοῦ*) is the beginning (*ἀρχή*) of wisdom . . . and godly fear (*εὐγένεια . . . εἰς Θεόν*) is the beginning of discernment." Philo does not, however, regard the fear of God that prompts godliness as the highest of virtues. He writes, Quaest. in Ex. 2:21:

There are two reasons why men honour the Deity, (namely) love and fear, and love is later, being in the elder ones [that is, mature persons], while fear comes earlier, so that not ineptly is it said that fear is the leader, for love, which comes after, is also acquired later. And may it not be that one who fears does so rightly and properly? For just as imprudence is younger than prudence, so is fear (younger) than love, since fear is born in a worthless man while love (is born) in a virtuous one.<sup>11</sup>

In Philo's thinking, followers of the Lord may be separated into *φίλοι Θεοῦ* and *δοῦλοι Θεοῦ* (Mig. 9:45). The latter may be regarded as having the fear of God and as engaging in a lower form of worship of God. The former have a love for God and practice

<sup>10</sup> Harry Austryn Wolfson, Philo (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), II, 215.

<sup>11</sup> Philo Supplement II, translated by Ralph Marcus (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), XII, 60-61.

a higher form of worship. Philo writes in Quod Deus 14:69:

For I observe that all the exhortations to piety [ΕΥΓΕΒΕΛΙΑ] in the law refer either to our loving or our fearing the Existent. And thus to love Him is the most suitable for those into whose conception of the Existent no thought of human parts or passion enters, who pay Him the honour meet for God for his own sake only. To fear is most suitable to the others.<sup>12</sup>

The author speaks of "three classes of human temperaments" in Abr. 25:124, and makes God address Himself to three corresponding groups of worshippers, as follows (128):

My first prizes will be set apart for those who honour Me for Myself alone, the second to those who honour Me for their own sakes, either hoping to win blessings or expecting to obtain remission of punishments, since, though their worship is for reward and not disinterested, yet all the same its range lies within the divine precincts and does not stray outside.<sup>13</sup>

These three classes, it is clear, refer respectively to those who worship God from love, to those who worship Him in expectation of a reward, and to those who worship Him from fear.

The preceding paragraphs present all that is significant (and distinctive) in the works of Philo on the subject of godly fear. The Jewish philosopher has relatively little to say regarding this fear. Of particular note is the fact that, though the writer calls the fear of God the beginning of virtues, he regards that emotion as inferior to

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker (1954), III, 45.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., translated by F. H. Colson (1959), VI, 67.

the virtue of love for God. The latter estimate of ethically motivating fear is not found in the Old Testament Scriptures. It will be seen from the study of the Pauline concept of God-pleasing fear, in the next chapter, that the apostle reflects no such view in his epistles. The judgment cannot be substantiated, then, on the basis of evidence in Philo's writings that the hellenistic Jewish tradition on which the Alexandrian philosopher drew influenced Paul's understanding of the fear of God.

#### This Fear in the Book of Acts

Some recent exegetical scholarship has returned to the traditional view that Luke is the author of Acts.<sup>14</sup> Much critical discussion has concerned itself with the sources employed by Luke in the writing of Acts. There is, however, little possibility of success in defining these to the complete satisfaction of even a majority of critics. The difficulty in identifying sources in the text is due to "the literary work of the author." Jacques Dupont explains: the writer "is not satisfied with transcribing his sources, he rewrites the text by putting the imprint of his vocabulary and his style everywhere."<sup>15</sup>

Martin Dibelius seeks to discover the traditional elements incorporated in Acts by applying the procedures of form critical analysis to

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<sup>14</sup> See Jacques Dupont, The Sources of Acts: The Present Position, translated from the French by Kathleen Pond (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

the Lucan text.<sup>16</sup> He claims that in Acts "Luke has not only fitted together, joined and framed fragments of tradition, as in a mosaic, but . . . there is a . . . [great] depth of original composition."<sup>17</sup> According to Dibelius, all the speeches in Acts are Luke's work. Of Lucan composition also are the different generalizing introductions to specific narratives related in the text, particularly those in chapters 1 to 12; the independent, connective "pragmatic interpolations" (many of them indicating how the early Christian community developed--for example, 2:42; 4:4; 5:42); and other sentences which link together complexes of traditional material. For the missionary journeys of Paul, Luke had a "guiding thread," probably an itinerary of stations where the apostle stopped. This contained also Paul's notes on his journeys, the founding of congregations, and results of evangelizing activity. Underlying information for the remaining sections of Acts, Dibelius suggests, was supplied Luke directly by Paul or his associates; or it came to Luke's attention in the form of small, "closed," "well-knit" units of tradition, fragmentary accounts which were originally handed down independently in Christian communities.

For the purposes of the present analysis, the writer assumes that the reports of events and speeches found in Acts are all authentic;

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<sup>16</sup>The results of his form critical investigation of Acts are presented in Dibelius' essays gathered by editor Heinrich Greeven and translated from the German by Mary Ling and Paul Schubert in the volume Studies in the Acts of the Apostles (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956).

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

that, whatever the background information on which Luke drew in the first twelve chapters of Acts, he gives us a true description of the life, beliefs, and teachings of the pre-Pauline Christian Church. What, then, it may be asked, about the concept of the fear of God in Christendom's earliest period?

There are several references to the fear of God in the first part of Acts (chapters 1 to 12). That fear as occasioned by an Old Testament theophany is mentioned in 7:32; by an angel of God, in 10:3-4; by a mighty act of God, in 2:43 and 5:5,11. But the fear of God as motivation for a way of life is spoken of only in 9:31, a Lucan summary statement which reports: "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit it was multiplied."<sup>18</sup> Godly fear is to be at least remotely associated with the derived "fear of God" expressions in 10:2,22,35.<sup>19</sup> Ethically motivating fear, it will be seen, hardly enjoys prominence in the Lucan account of Acts 1 to 12.

If the investigation of Acts is completed, the same can be said for the rest of the book, which presents material pertaining to the church after Paul became an apostle. The fear of God (Jesus), induced by a divine act, is referred to in 19:17 (also perhaps in 24:24-25,

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<sup>18</sup> Revised Standard Version.

<sup>19</sup> *φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν* in 10:2 and 22 is, technically, a phrase designating a "proselyte of the gate."



where the act in question is future). Ethically motivating fear is (remotely) involved only in the derived usage of *ἑβουλαί*, which is found at 13:16,26,43,50; 16:14; 17:4,17; 18:7.<sup>20</sup>

On the basis of these findings we may conclude that any formative influence on a Pauline conception of the fear of God as ethically motivating is less likely to have come from the intertestamental literature and the religious teaching of the early church than from the canonical Old Testament itself. It is not apparent from a study of Philo that, in the matter of this fear, Paul was in any way informed by the hellenistic Jewish tradition which influenced the Alexandrian philosopher.

We must now proceed to the investigation of Paul's views themselves.

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<sup>20</sup>These expressions employing participial forms of *ἑβουλαί* designate proselytes of the gate.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FEAR OF GOD AS ETHICAL MOTIVATION IN THE PAULINE CORPUS

The apostle Paul was born to Jewish parents in Tarsus of Cilicia and given the name Saul. Apparently his family moved to Jerusalem at an early date in Paul's life. Paul states (Acts 22:3) that he received his upbringing at Jerusalem<sup>1</sup> and was in that city also instructed in

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<sup>1</sup>W. C. Van Unnik, Tarsus or Jerusalem: The City of Paul's Youth, translated from the Dutch by George Ogg (London: Epworth Press, 1962) has convincingly demonstrated that Paul spent the years of his youth, with his family, completely in Jerusalem, and not in Tarsus as many scholars have supposed. Van Unnik asserts, p. 55: "in biographies of the apostle all emphasis ought to fall on the fact that he grew up in the centre of Judaism, where the Torah prevailed in the home and in the street and determined both thought and action, in a strictly Pharisaic-religious environment, and that he, as it were, imbibed that atmosphere. He grew up not as a typical Jew of the Diaspora cut off from all that . . . but as a man for whom there was only one possibility, one ideal and one delight, namely the fulfilment of the law and will of the Lord." For an understanding of Paul, he adds, it is important to realize that "Paul's main knowledge of Hellenism was gathered . . . after his conversion, and thus from the beginning it was seen in the light of the revelation in Christ. It makes radical difference whether he was, as it were, drenched through with Hellenism unconsciously in his early years, as (contrary to Acts 22 and 26) is most often suggested, or consciously learned to see it first with the eyes of a Jew learned in the law and after that with the eyes of a Christian" (pp. 57-58).

Paul later was exposed to the thought currents and religious ideas of Diaspora Judaism and of the Gentile world of his day. He came into contact, for example, with the Hellenistic mystery cults. Scholars have debated for decades the effects these and other environmental factors may have had upon the apostle's theology and proclamation. However, the differences in the Judaism of the Diaspora and that of Palestine have often been exaggerated, as shown in W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (2nd edition; London: SPCK, 1965). The effect of the mystery religions on Pauline thought was remote. Davies asserts (p. 98): "All that we can safely assume as to the impact of the mysteries on . . . Paul is that the mysteries quite definitely formed part of the milieu

the strict manner prescribed by ancestral law, as a Pharisee, at the feet of no less a teacher than the learned and distinguished rabbi Gamaliel. In the course of his education Paul had not only become thoroughly conversant with the Old Testament Scriptures but also well versed in the substance, techniques, and subtleties of rabbinic interpretation.<sup>2</sup> The training he had received from Gamaliel likewise had deepened the hold upon him of the tradition of the elders, the hedge of 613 commandments which rabbis of the past had erected around Old Testament law, and for which Paul was "zealous" in later years (Gal. 1:14). As an ardent supporter and promoter of the Judaism of his day, Paul was present at the stoning of Stephen and a tireless persecutor of the early church.

#### Ethically Motivating Fear in the Teachings of Rabbinic Judaism

Fear of God as ethical motivation appears in the surviving literature of Palestinian Judaism. A consultation of standard works

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into which Paul brought his gospel; that Paul undoubtedly would therefore be open to their influence, and that many of the terms he used would have an undertone of meaning which would strengthen the appeal of the gospel to the Hellenistic world. Further than this, however, we cannot go . . . ." The only contemporary religious force which might be expected to have exerted any considerable, discernible influence upon the apostle Paul's theological ideas and terminology is the religion of Rabbinic Judaism.

<sup>2</sup>On Paul's familiarity with rabbinic interpretative methods, cf. E. Earle Ellis, Paul's Use of the Old Testament (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), pp. 38-76.

which present in English or German the pronouncements of, and reveal the theological views held by, the Jewish rabbis during these years suggests, however, that the fear of God which promotes sanctification was not a subject of great interest or extensive comment on the part of these religious leaders. Billerbeck adduces very few rabbinic remarks regarding this fear in his treatment of the Pauline epistles, in the Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch.<sup>3</sup> Montefiore and Loewe's A Rabbinic Anthology,<sup>4</sup> though it has a chapter titled "The Importance of Motive or Intention. Kawanah, and Lishmah. The Love, the Fear, and the Praise of God,"<sup>5</sup> records only a few rabbinic references to the fear of God. Expressions of Pre-Tannaitic scholars and Tannaitic scholars from Periods I to III (10-140 A.D.),<sup>6</sup> according to the classification of editors Montefiore and Loewe, are extremely scarce. It will be well to take cognizance of a few representative statements in preparation for the study of the Pauline view

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<sup>3</sup>Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Die Briefe des Neuen Testaments und die Offenbarung Johannis Erlaeutert aus Talmud und Midrasch, in Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926) III. On the citation of this work as "Billerbeck" (alone), see the "Vorbemerkung" by Joachim Jeremias (pp. 1-2) which appears at the head of "Ein Tempelgottesdienst in Jesu Tagen" by Paul Billerbeck, Zeitschrift fuer die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, LV (1964), 1-17.

<sup>4</sup>C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, editors, A Rabbinic Anthology (New York: Meridian Books, Inc., [1938]).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., Chapter X, pp. 272-294.

<sup>6</sup>The teaching of rabbinic scholars only from the Pre-Tannaitic Period (c. 200 B.C.-10 A.D.) and those from Tannaitic Periods I to III can be presumed to have influenced Paul--certainly not those of a date later than Tannaitic Period III.

of the fear of God. This will enable us later to determine whether the rabbinic concept may have had an influence upon Paul's thought.

A number of extracts from A Rabbinic Anthology are indicative of the type of rabbinic comment on the fear of God that is infrequently provided. Each of the following citations is anonymous, except Extract 1362. Extract 735 follows:

God said to Moses: "Do not fear" (Num. xxi, 34), and yet it says in Prov. xxviii, 14, "Happy is the man who fears always." It is a quality of the righteous that, although they have received God's assurance, they never cast off the fear of Him.<sup>7</sup>

A related thought appears in Extract 1004:

One verse says: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and one verse says: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God." So act both from love and from fear. Act from love; then, if thou wouldst hate, know that thou lovest, and no lover hates; act from fear; for, if thou wouldst rebel, no fearer rebels . . . .<sup>8</sup>

Extract 540 reads:

"If they had been wise, they would have understood this" (Deut. xxxii, 29). If the Israelites had understood the words of the Torah which was given to them, no people or kingdom would have ruled over them. And what did the

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<sup>7</sup>Montefiore and Loewe, p. 285.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 378. Cf. R. Travers Hereford's statement on the fathers' and the rabbis' view of the fear and love of God, in his edition of Pirke Aboth (New York: Schocken Books, 1962), p. 23. Commenting on a saying of Antigonos of Socho (I,3), he writes: "Service of God for love was always the ideal service in the Rabbinical teaching. The dictum of Antigonos [And let the fear of Heaven be upon you] . . . is added in order to remind us that if we serve God from love, we must also serve him from fear. He is the Father in Heaven, but he is also Lord of the worlds, Sovereign and Judge."

Torah say to them? "Take upon you the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, and excel one another in the fear of God, and do deeds of lovingkindness one towards the other."<sup>9</sup>

Extract 541:

Let all your doings be done for the sake of God. Fear God and love Him. Feel reverence and joy towards all the commandments.<sup>10</sup>

According to Extract 1395, genuine fear of God characterized ancient Jewish patriarchs:

God said to the Israelites, "You must not think that you are permitted to swear by my name even truthfully. You are not permitted to swear by my name unless you have the character of one of those who truly feared God, Abraham, Joseph, and Job."<sup>11</sup>

The rabbis held the doctrine of the two yetzers, of the good inclination and the evil inclination in man. The evil yetzer urged man to all sorts of sins. The best defense against this impulse, according to the Jewish teachers, was the study of the Torah. Extract 1406 suggests, however, that the fear of God also serves as a preventative against following the evil inclination:

Moses said to Israel, "Remove the evil inclination from your heart, and be united in one fear of God and in one counsel to minister before Him; as He is unique in the world, so let your service be unique before Him, as it says: 'Circumcise your hearts.'"<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Montefiore and Loewe, p. 200.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 492.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 497. On the doctrine of the two yetzers, see particularly the first half of Montefiore and Loewe's Chapter XI, pp. 295-306. Cf. also Davies' discussion, pp. 20-35.

Finally, the fear of the judgment of God at the end of time is enjoined. Extract 1621 records the instruction:

Fear the earthly tribunal, even though witnesses against you can be bribed: fear yet more the heavenly tribunal, for pure witnesses will testify against you there, and, moreover, they proclaim continually, "If you have fulfilled my words with joy, my servants will come to greet you, and I myself will go forth to meet you, and say to you, May your coming be in peace."<sup>13</sup>

The same emphasis appears in Extract 1362:

When R. Johanan b. Zakkai was ill, his disciples went in to visit him. On beholding them, he began to weep. His disciples said to him, "O lamp of Israel . . . Wherefore dost thou weep?" He replied to them " . . . now, when I am being led into the presence of the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who lives and endures for all eternity, whose anger, if He be wrathful against me, is eternal, whose imprisonment, if He imprisoned me, would be everlasting, whose sentence, if He condemned me to death, would be for ever, and whom I cannot appease with words or bribe with money--nay, more when before me lie two ways, one towards the Garden of Eden and the other towards Gehinnom, and I know not towards which I am to be led--shall I not weep?" They said to him "Our master, bless us!" He said to them, "May it be His will that the fear of heaven be upon you [as great as] the fear of flesh and blood." His disciples exclaimed, "Only as great!" He replied, "Would that it be [as great]; for know, that when a man intends to commit a transgression, he says, 'I hope nobody will see me.'"<sup>14</sup>

With these citations, the range of rabbinic thought concerning the ethically motivating fear of God has been indicated--as far as it is possible to determine this from a study of A Rabbinic Anthology. If Montefiore and Loewe's work indeed sets forth representative rabbinic

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<sup>13</sup>Montefiore and Loewe, p. 587.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 478.

teachings, including the religious thought of early first-century Palestinian Judaism, as it purports to do,<sup>15</sup> then the following summary observations may be made. The rabbis of the period a century-and-a-half before and a like period after Paul do not frequently mention the fear of God which promotes holiness in living. Nor do they explain or elaborate upon this fear. One reason for this may have been that the fear of which the writers speak is the fear about which the Old Testament teaches, and with which they assumed their Jewish readers were acquainted. As in the Old Testament, the fear which the rabbis inculcate is a response of the pious heart to the righteous wrath and judgments of the holy God, which are visited upon sin and sinners, both in this life and in eternity. It functions to restrain sinning and foster godliness of behavior. It is to be generated in the heart along with the ethically motivating love of God.

#### Paul Speaks of This Fear as a Christian

Paul, who was first known as Saul,<sup>16</sup> may have been thirty years old, when he experienced his conversion to Christianity. On the way to

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<sup>15</sup>Montefiore writes, p. xi, in his "Introduction" that in A Rabbinic Anthology he attempts "to put the main facts about the religious conceptions of the old Rabbis, in as simple a form as possible, before the public." Loewe, who worked with Montefiore in the compilation of the Anthology, is agreed that the selected extracts do present the chief aspects of rabbinic thought; cf. p. lv.

<sup>16</sup>Acts begins to designate Saul, the apostle, as Paul at 13:9. Paul is in Paphos on Cyprus with Barnabas, on the First Missionary Journey.



Syria with letters from the high priest in Jerusalem for the synagogues in Damascus, "so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1),<sup>17</sup> Saul suddenly saw a blinding light from heaven, which caused him to fall to the ground. He heard a voice from above and began to speak with the glorified Christ, against whom, he was told, his activity as persecutor of the church had been directed. The stricken man then began to realize that he had been utterly mistaken in his bitter opposition to the church and its message; that, conversely, it was the Christians who were right before God in their testimony to, and worship of, the living and exalted Christ, the Son of God. This heavenly Lord was now calling him to faith, to forgiveness, to life, and to a career of missionary service in his Kingdom. Saul arose sightless and was led into the city of Damascus nearby. Three days later he was baptized, recovered his vision, and began to proclaim the Christ whom He had learned to know in the dramatic, transforming encounter on the Damascus Road. There followed in due time the ministry in Antioch, the missionary journeys, and Paul's letters to various Christian congregations and to pastoral assistants in the work of the Lord.

For the rest of his life Paul contemplated the grace of that Lord who had called him to faith and the apostleship. He surrendered his

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<sup>17</sup>Unless otherwise specified, the New Testament passages, phrases, and terms the writer cites in the English in this chapter are quoted from the Revised Standard Version.

life to God. Paul never forgot his wicked past, however. Writing to the Corinthians, for example, he stated (1 Cor. 15:8-10):

Last of all, as to one untimely born, he Christ appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me.

Conscious of what divine grace had done for him, Paul went into the world of his day and proclaimed the Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ to everyone who would give him a hearing, Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, learned and illiterate, slave and free alike. He sought to bring men to a saving trust in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

Now this same Paul, who rejoiced to present the great themes of God's love for all people, the atonement, justification by faith, and the blessedness of being "in Christ" by faith, was also the apostle who pointed to the necessity of Christians' standing in a holy dread of the Almighty. The proclaimer of divine grace emphasized the fear of God as a factor in the motivation of the obedience of the faithful. What was his teaching in this regard?

We proceed now to an investigation of the concept of the fear of God as ethical motivation in the Pauline corpus and come to the heart of our study. A word should be said as to the extent of the corpus. The writer of this dissertation accepts the view of those scholars who hold that the thirteen New Testament epistles which have been traditionally

ascribed to the apostle Paul as author--including Ephesians<sup>18</sup> and the three Pastoral Epistles<sup>19</sup>--are Pauline. Accordingly, these

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<sup>18</sup>Feine, Behm and Kueimmel list as a sampling of modern supporters of the genuineness of Ephesians the Catholic scholars (of whom Alfred Wikenhauser is a prominent representative); also Appel, Albertz, Henshaw, Lo Bue, Michaelis, Rendtorff, Simpson, J. N. Sanders in Cross, Cornelius Schille, Dahl, Klijn, Percy, and Guthrie. Among those who deny the authenticity of Ephesians are Sparks, Heard, Beare, Masson, Dibelius and Grennen, Maurer, Allan, D. E. Nineham in Cross, Kaesemann, Pokorny, F. Lang, C. K. Barrett, Harrison, Bornkamm, Conzelmann, Mitton, Goodspeed, Riddle and Hutson, Lake, W. L. Knox, S. G. F. Brandon, and J. Knox. For the sake of completeness, Feine, Behm, and Kueimmel call attention also to a number of scholars who leave the question undecided, namely, Juelicher, McNeile and Williams, and Cadbury; and to others who combine the supposition of authenticity with the limitation that Paul entrusted a pupil with the finishing touches of the writing, namely, Appel, Albertz, Benoit, and Rigaux. See Paul Feine, Johannes Behm, and Werner Georg Kueimmel, Introduction to the New Testament, translated by A. J. Mattill, Jr., from the 14th revised German edition (New York: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 252.

I agree with the summary statement of Martin H. Franzmann in The Word of the Lord Grows: A First Historical Introduction to the New Testament (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), p. 136: "In general it may be said that the arguments [against the authenticity of Ephesians] have often been overstated in the eagerness of debate; that the differences in vocabulary and style are in themselves far from being conclusive proof that the letter is not authentic, as is being increasingly recognized by most scholars; that the alleged differences in teaching tend to disappear upon closer examination and that the novelties supposedly introduced by the imitator are seen to be fresh and original restatements of genuinely Pauline themes; that the connection between the Letter to the Colossians and the Letter to the Ephesians is so intricate and deep-rooted that the most natural explanation is that both letters were written by one man, Paul, at approximately the same time . . . ." The most important argument in favor of the genuineness of Ephesians is the very fact that in all manuscripts of the epistle the writer gives his name (at 1:1 and 3:1) as Paul. The counter-argument that Ephesians is a pseudepigraphical work is pure conjecture.

<sup>19</sup>The group of modern scholars convinced of the Pauline authorship of the Pastorals in their entirety include, in addition to the Catholic theologians, men like Albertz, de Zwaan, Schlatter, Jeremias, Feine and Behm, Michaelis, Guthrie, Klijn, and L. Goppelt. Among those rejecting Paul's authorship are Juelicher, Goodspeed, Dibelius and Conzelmann, Bultmann, W. Bauer, Gealy, Maurer, v. Campenhausen, Mueller and Bardorff, Schweizer, Kasch, and Wegenast. Scholars who hold the intermediate position, the

thirteen letters constitute the primary source material for the investigation in this chapter.

The apostle expressly refers to the ethically motivating fear of God fifteen times, in as many passages scattered through seven of the thirteen letters. These passages are the following: Rom. 3:18; 11:20-21 (taken together as one passage); 13:7; 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 5:11; 7:1,11,15 (three passages); Eph. 5:21,33 (two passages); 6:5; Phil 2:12-13 (one passage); Col. 3:22; 1 Tim. 2:10; 5:20. In them God (or the Lord, or Christ) is either expressly named or implied as the object of fear. We shall consider each of these passages in succession, taking into account their immediate and wider context in the epistles where they are found. We shall study specific features of the fear of God they present and other Pauline material related to and illuminating the apostle's understanding of this concept. Then it will be possible to offer some summary statements regarding Paul's

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supposition of the incorporation in the Pastorals of genuine Pauline fragments, are these: Appel, Goguel, Harrison, Falconer, McNeile and Williams, Henshaw, Heard, Sparks, Easton, Scott, Michel, Schmithals. Feine, Behm and Kuemmel, p. 262.

As in the case of Ephesians, satisfactory replies have been, and continue to be made to the arguments against the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles--the arguments based on the peculiarities of vocabulary and style in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; the presupposed historical setting of these epistles; the highly developed organization of the Church they reflect; the heresies they combat; and their theology. The early and practically unanimous testimony of the whole Church until the beginning of the nineteenth century has been that the Pastoral Letters are Paul's. Not enough evidence has been adduced by later scholars to negate this view. The chief argument for the genuineness of the Pastorals is that in the first verse of each of the letters, according to all manuscripts containing the texts of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, Paul is named as the writer.

view of the fear of God as motivation for ethical living. Conclusions as to the source(s) for the apostle's concept of this fear will be provided. Because the matter of motivation for godly living is a prominent concern of Paul's theology, the relationship of the ethically motivating fear to the other motives for sanctification indicated by the apostle will also be noted.

Romans 3:18

There is no fear of God before their eyes.

It will be convenient for our purposes to take up those Pauline passages in which reference is made to the ethically motivating fear of God, in the order of their occurrence in our Bibles, beginning with those in the epistle to the Romans. Our first meeting with a "fear of God" phrase is at Rom. 3:18, where we read the words: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." The Nestle and Aland Greek New Testament gives the sentence: οὐκ ἔστιν φόβος θεοῦ  
 ζιτέοντες τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν.<sup>20</sup> This verse is a quotation of Ps. 36:1(b)<sup>21</sup> in its Septuagint rendering,<sup>22</sup> except for the number of the personal pronoun in the genitive. In Romans the plural

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<sup>20</sup>Eberhard Nestle, Erwin Nestle, and Kurt Aland, editors, Novum Testamentum Graece (25th edition; Stuttgart: Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1963). This text is that from which all succeeding Greek New Testament quotations in this chapter will be taken.

<sup>21</sup>The verse numbering is that of the RSV.

<sup>22</sup>See Alfred Rahlfs, editor, Septuaginta, II (Stuttgart: Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, c.1935), ad loc.

$\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\upsilon$  appears in place of the Septuagint's singular,  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  ; the latter in turn, accurately renders the Hebrew  $\text{לִפְנֵי יְיָ}$  (at Ps. 36:2).<sup>23</sup>

In Chapter II, Ps. 36:1 was listed<sup>24</sup> with passages under the category "Derived Significances of the Phrase 'Fear of God'" (in the Old Testament). It was there indicated that in Ps. 36:1 the expression "fear (or dread) of God" (  $\text{לִפְנֵי יְיָ} \text{ אֱלֹהֵינוּ}$  ) signified not the emotion of fear as directed toward God but, by metonymy, the punitive judgments of the Almighty which inspire fear and are the objects of human dread.  $\Phi\acute{o}\beta\omicron\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  has the identical "derived" meaning of "punitive divine judgments" in Rom. 3:18.

The reason for adopting the figurative interpretation of  $\phi\acute{o}\beta\omicron\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  as the one here required becomes apparent, if we consider the phrases "fear of God" and "before their eyes" together and seek to establish their meaning in combination. William Beck, commenting on  $\phi\acute{o}\beta\omicron\varsigma$  in 3:18, explains:

Since fears are within us (2 Cor. 7:5), we raise the question: Can anyone in good English, Greek, or Hebrew speak of fear as being before the eyes? There is a blind spot in the commentaries on that point. For some time I thought the difficulty had to be solved by taking "before the eyes" to mean "I am conscious of" or "I feel." But Biblical usage is against that interpretation; it speaks

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<sup>23</sup>The Hebrew text of 36:2(b), in its entirety is as follows:  
 $\text{לִפְנֵי יְיָ} \text{ אֱלֹהֵינוּ} \text{ אֲנִי} \text{ אֲדַבֵּר} \text{ וְלִפְנֵי} \text{ מַלְאָכָיו} \text{ אֲנִי} \text{ אֲדַבֵּר}$   
 The citation is from Biblia Hebraica, edited by Rudolf Kittel, et al., II (Stuttgart: Wuerttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1945), ad loc.

<sup>24</sup>Supra, p. 20.

of that which is extraneous to a person as being before his eyes: Psalm 18:24 (=2 Sam. 22:25) speaks of David as being before the eyes of God; Psalm 5:5, of boasters before God; Psalm 101:7, of a liar before the Psalmist; Job 4:16, of a spirit before Eliphaz; Psalm 101:3, of a wicked thing which the Psalmist hates. The closest parallel is found in Psalm 26:3, where David says to the Lord, "Your kindness is before my eyes." Like this "kindness," the "fear of God" is something in God, and so it is "before the eyes" of man. That is why Brown-Driver-Briggs under nagadh say of Psalm 36:1 (this is the only direct support that I found): "He has no eye to discern God's awe-inspiring judgments."<sup>25</sup>

It should not be supposed, however, that reference to the human emotion of fear is not intended, when the *φόβος θεοῦ*-phrase is employed metonymically in 3:18. On the contrary, the very figurative usage directs attention by implication to this fear--as the correlative, subjective response of people who properly consider the threatened and inevitable divine punitive judgments for sin. A consideration of the broader and narrower context of this passage in Romans will make that point clear. /

The theme of the epistle to the Romans (1:16-17) may be stated in the words "The Righteousness of God Revealed in the Saving Gospel Through Faith, for Faith." Paul proceeds in the first major division of his letter, 1:18 to 3:20, to discuss the thesis that there is a universal need of the divinely prepared righteousness, because of the

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<sup>25</sup> William Beck, "Φόβος", Rom. 3:18," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXII (July 1951), 511. Beck holds that "fear of God" in Ps. 36:1 means "a terrifying God whom the sinner fails to keep before his eyes." I have preferred, like Brown, Driver and Briggs, to have  $\tau\tau\delta$  refer to the punitive judgments from God, which He sends upon sinners.

universality of human sin and concomitant condemnation. In the last fifteen verses of chapter 1 the apostle lays down the fact of the sinfulness of the whole world of men and shows how the wrath of God is being revealed against sins and the sinners who commit them. He shows that men have been endowed by their Creator with a basic "natural" knowledge of Himself, of his existence, many of his divine attributes; his acts in the realm of nature and in the divine government of the cosmos; and his will for their lives. The fundamental human evil<sup>26</sup> is this, that men keep this knowledge from influencing their behavior. They, indeed, suppress it by their wilful sinning, refusing to honor God as God and to thank Him for his blessings.

The divine response to this ungodliness and unrighteousness of men is God's wrath,<sup>27</sup> which reveals itself in retributive judgments. God gives men up to their foolish, senseless reasonings and darkens their hearts. Operating according to a principle of "punishing sin with sin," the Almighty judicially removes restraints to sinning, one after another. In a progressive degeneracy, men formulate and express moronic ideas concerning the deity, then produce idols and practice the grossest idolatry. They commit sexual sins of many kinds and disgusting perversity. With heart, lip, and life they perpetrate

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<sup>26</sup>That is, the fundamental evil spoken of in the context. "Original Sin" is referred to in 5:12-13.

<sup>27</sup>Supra, Chapter II, p. 23.



flagrant violations of the holy will of God in a vast diversity of ways, of which the vice catalogue in verses 28 to 31 gives a sampling. The tragic extent of man's moral deterioration is seen in the fact that, though they realize that people who transgress in all these ways are worthy of death (temporal and eternal) at the hands of an angered God, they nevertheless continue in their wickedness and applaud others who do the same (1:32).

What strikes one in the Pauline description of human depravity is the utter perversity with which men are said to proceed deliberately, and heedless of dire consequences, into successive courses of sinning. Men have an understanding of the nature of God, of his opposition to transgression, of his punishment of sin and sinners. Yet they turn their backs upon Him, act as if He does not exist and as though they were not accountable to Him, and rush headlong and without interruption into their iniquities. Obviously there is something missing in their moral "make-up": they fail to fear! They are wholly bereft of the fear of God and his wrathful judgments, which would deter them from their evildoing.

Paul's indictment of humanity as sinful applies, indeed, to all men--even to the moralists among mankind, who in a superior way sit in judgment upon fellowmen, from whose conspicuous sinfulness they feel themselves to be distantly removed. Dealing with the self-righteous moralists, both pagan and Jewish, in Romans 2, Paul shows that they who are judging others are guilty of the same sins themselves and thus are under the same wrath of God and liable to the same

punishment of perdition, as are the rest of men. The moralists, too, lack a proper fear of God, which could serve as a restraint on their sinning.

What Paul has been saying about the universal sinfulness of mankind is really nothing new. Similar observations had been made centuries before by writers of Old Testament Scriptures. Beginning the third chapter of Romans with a discussion arising from the consideration of the question of Jewish advantage in times past as the favored people of God, Paul proceeds in verses 10 to 18 to cite Old Testament declarations concerning the evil of all men. He quoted passages from the Psalter, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Isaiah. Some of these speak of the fact of the worldwide human wickedness itself (in verses 10 to 12); several mention specific sins of word and deed committed by people everywhere (verses 13 to 16); and then finally, two, Is. 59:8 and Ps. 36:1, point to the sinful human heart as the source of disobedience in behavior (verses 17 to 18). Both of these passages refer specifically to men's faulty intellect, which does not reckon with the way to live in true peace with God and fellowmen; and which does not hold before the mind's eye the terrifying punitive judgments for sin and the angry God who administers them. A proper contemplation of divine judgment would evoke an appropriate fear of God in the heart, which in turn would restrain sinning and serve as motivation for ethical behavior.

We may now note that the thought expressed in Ps. 36:1 is actually germane to the whole of the Pauline argument in 1:18-3:20, which posits

and analyzes the sinfulness of humanity. One of the fundamental deficiencies of men's character, which is responsible for the notorious transgressing of the divine will to which people give themselves, in their refusal to "keep conscious" of God, to reckon with his wrathful punishments for wickedness, and cultivate the perfective fear which leads to the avoidance of wrongdoing and fosters righteousness of behavior. "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

If unconverted men do not have the ethically motivating fear of God, may it be supposed conversely, then, that only when people become regenerate are they divinely empowered to, and do, generate this fear? This apparently is what Paul implies. In pertinent passages yet to be examined, he directs exhortations to "fear God" to the believing people of God in the various churches to whom he sends epistles.

#### Romans 11:20-21

They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe [fear]. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

In chapters 9 to 11 of Romans, the fourth major division of the epistle, Paul discusses the subject of the tragic failure on the part of many of his Jewish contemporaries to obtain the righteousness of God. Along with this, he also takes up the blessing of the Gentiles and Jews who by divine grace have received the righteousness through faith. Chapter 9 brings the revelation that the gracious and merciful

elective decree (verse 11) of God is a factor primarily involved in the reception of the divine righteousness by believing Jews and believing Gentiles. Paul also argues that the behavior which kept most of the Jews from receiving this righteousness is their pursuit of work-righteousness in unbelief; their desire through supposedly meritorious efforts of their own, by their endeavor to fulfill the divine law, and apart from trust in Christ, to provide themselves with a righteousness which will avail before God.

Chapter 10 speaks of the unbelieving Jews' rejection of, and believing Gentiles' submission to, God's offer of righteousness in the Gospel. Comments on the elect Jewish remnant of the New Testament era, provided especially for the benefit of Gentile Christians, are recorded in chapter 11.

From verses 17 to 24 of chapter 11, as he nears the close of his remarks in the fourth section of Romans, the apostle resorts to the rhetorical device of addressing a Gentile Christian. Paul speaks about certain "branches broken off." The latter, in context, are Jews who had been separated from meaningful connection with Abraham and with his spiritual descendants, the faithful in the Israel of Paul's day. "They," the apostle says in verses 20 and 21, "were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe [fear]. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you." By employing the stylistic device of speaking rhetorically to a single

Gentile Christian Paul in reality, of course, addresses all believing Gentiles, of whom the individual is representative.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the instruction not to become proud, the Gentile addressee receives the directive to fear: *μη̄ ὑψηλὰ φρόνεις, ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ. Φοβέω*, which in the active means basically to "terrify," "frighten," "scare away," "put to flight by terrifying" (scare away), signifies in the passive to "fear," "be afraid," "be struck with fear," "be seized with alarm."<sup>29</sup> The passive voice expresses the emotional activity of fearing.<sup>30</sup> The present tense signifies duration. The imperative mood, accordingly, may be translated "keep on fearing." The activity of fearing is to continue constantly.

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (2nd revised edition; New York: George H. Doran Company, 1915), p. 678.

<sup>29</sup> See the lexica under *φοβέω*, e.g.: Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, et al., A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, c.1940), II, 1946. Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament; a translation, revision, and enlargement of Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti (New York: American Book Company, c.1886), pp. 655-656. Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated and adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 870-871.

<sup>30</sup> *Φοβέομαι* and the noun *φόβος* expresses the idea, and refer to the emotion, of fear, just as do *יָרָא* and many other Hebrew roots in the Old Testament; cf. Supra, II, pp. 9-10. *Φοβέομαι* frequently appears in the LXX as the rendering of *יָרָא*; *φόβος*, of *יָרָא*, *יָרָא*, *יָרָא*, and other nouns related in meaning.

According to Paul, what or whom is the Gentile Christian to keep on fearing? Indication of the object of the required fearing is given in the words: "For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you" (verse 21). God, therefore, is to be feared.

In order to understand Paul's point clearly, it will be well to note the significance of his imagery pertaining to the cultivated olive tree, its root, and several kinds of branches, as the apostle employs this in 11:16-24. Principal features of the Pauline picture are the following: The cultivated olive tree represents the believing Israel of Paul's day, in fellowship with Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church. At the base of the olive tree are the Jewish patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (called the "fathers" in verse 28), who in combination constitute its root (verse 16). It was to Abraham that God promised a vast progeny, a believing people who would be drawn from Israel and from many other nations so that he might be the father of many nations (Romans 4). This covenant promise was confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, who with Abraham were regarded as patriarchal "fathers."

The natural branches (verse 21) of the cultivated olive tree are ethnic Jews of the period in which Paul lived. They are physical descendants of Abraham who began their lives as members of God's covenant people and comprise the believing progeny of the fathers, that is, the spiritual Israel of God living at the middle of the first century.

That some of these natural branches "were broken off" (verse 17), as Paul states, is indicative of the fact that certain of the Jews who had earlier helped comprise the existing Israel of God had, after this, been separated from connection therewith and reverted to a condition of spiritual death. The reason for this is given in verse 20: "They were broken off because of their unbelief."

As the result of the fact that some natural branches had been broken off the cultivated olive tree, there was room for an engrafting of "wild olive shoots." The latter symbolize contemporary Gentile converts to the Christian faith, who became members of the true Israel in Paul's day. One such is the Gentile believer, a representative of the whole class addressed by the apostle in verses 17 to 24. As an engrafted shoot he is said now to share the richness, or sap, of the olive tree. That is, he together with the believing Jews, is now made partaker of the great covenant gifts God had originally given to Abraham and the two succeeding patriarchs.

There is a third type of branch which the cultivated olive tree is able to bear: a natural branch which had been broken off but which is then, surprisingly, grafted back again into its own olive tree (verses 23 to 24). The apostle makes it clear that it is possible for some of the Jews of his day who had become unbelievers to return to the saving faith and be reinstated in spiritual Israel. The same possibility of Jewish conversion exists throughout the New Testament era (11:25-32).

Paul warns the Christian addressed in 11:20-21 not to become proud in connection with his newly established status<sup>31</sup> in the true Israel of God. Let him not entertain feelings of superiority with reference to, or vaunt himself in any way over, the Jewish believers with whom he has been placed into fellowship. Such vainglory is both foolish and extremely dangerous. It leads to false security and threatens faith itself. It amounts, indeed, to a repetition of the fault of the Jews who became unbelieving because they inordinately prided themselves on their nationality and supposed moral excellence, and in the process failed to "submit to God's righteousness" through faith in Jesus Christ (10:3-4). "They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast only through faith. So do not become proud . . . . For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you." The same God who broke off natural branches from the olive tree could and would under provocation speedily sever an engrafted branch.

Escape from such a tragic eventuality, suggests Paul, is to be sought in fearing God. The Gentile Christian is to fear the judgment of the Almighty which could remand him again to a condition of

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<sup>31</sup>The verb  $\epsilon\gamma\tau\eta\kappa\alpha\varsigma$  is employed in 11:20. Otto Michel in Die Brief an die Roemer, Fourth section in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament begruendet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (11th edition; Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1955), p. 246, comments: "der Pneumatiker 'steht,' dann nur durch seinen Glauben. Das 'Stehen' ist ein bekannter, von Pls uebernommener Ausdruck ( $\tau\upsilon\sigma\tau\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ), der den bestaendigen Heilsbesitz zum Ausdruck bringt." Cf. the concept of "standing" in Rom. 5:2; 1 Cor. 7:37; 10:12; 15:1; 2 Cor. 1:24.



spiritual death. His fear should exert a restraining influence on his behavior, lest by sinning he antagonize the deity. It should, according to the context, prevent him from allowing a reprehensible attitude of superiority to arise or remain in his heart.

The fear, the arousal of which is required in verse 20, is, we may then observe, a precautionary, morally perfective emotion. It is to be directed toward God and his death-dealing judgment on sin.<sup>32</sup> It may be classified as ethically motivating fear, since it fosters ethical behavior as prescribed by the divine will. Paul implies that God's people can, indeed, generate this fear.

#### Romans 13:7

Pay . . . respect [fear] to whom respect [fear] is due.

The next passage containing a reference to the ethically motivating fear of God is Rom. 13:7, and specifically the words: ἀπόδοτε . . . τὰς ὀφελίας . . . τῷ τὸν φόβον τὸν φόβον. This directive, issued to the Roman congregation, is found at the end of Paul's discussion concerning the Christian's behavior under secular government, Rom. 13:1-7, which occurs in the "practical" section of the epistle. The apostle, from 12:1 to 15:13, in the fifth major division of Romans, is presenting admonitions with regard to various

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<sup>32</sup>That spiritual death is the stringent, terrible divine punishment meted out upon believers who continue in sin without repentance has been previously taught or implied by Paul in Rom. 6:23; 7:7-13; 8:13; and 9:30 to 10:4.

aspects of the godly life which those who possess the righteousness of God and its blessed effects which are mentioned in Romans 5 to 8 should cultivate.

Paul states that "governing authorities"<sup>33</sup> at every level of administration in the state have been placed in their ruling positions by God. To obey government is to obey the command of God. Any resistance to authority and to the regulations issued by those who administer it, on the other hand, in very fact constitutes resistance of God himself. It makes everyone who resists liable to divine judgment. The judgment from God with which those who disobey governing officials are threatened is frequently executed by the Lord through the agency of government itself, by way of the penalties for "law-breaking" which the officials inflict upon wrong-doers (13:2-4). Now it is natural for everyone to desire to escape punishment, and, therefore, in one's interest to avoid violating the law of the state, so as not to incur retributive penalties at the hands of governing

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<sup>33</sup> *Ἐξουσίαι* in Rom. 13:1 means civil authorities. Cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, who states in his A Commentary on Romans 12-13, No. 12 in the series of Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers edited by T. F. Torrance and J. K. S. Reid (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), p. 65: "It is, of course, quite clear and agreed by all scholars that the civil authorities are referred to." Cranfield proceeds to call attention to the dispute as to "whether there is in *Ἐξουσίαι* a double reference--to the civil authorities and also to angelic powers standing behind, and acting through, the civil authorities." Proponents of this idea are K. L. Schmidt, G. Dehn, K. Barth, O. Cullmann, and others. The suggestion, which has come to be especially closely associated with Cullmann, has met with a generally unfavorable reception among commentators. The case for a double reference has not been proved. Arguments pro and con are summarized by Cranfield, pp. 66-68.

authorities. This is legitimate and enlightened self-love. The Christian, however, says Paul, should be moved to obey government additionally by a higher consideration. His behavior should be especially controlled by the realization that in observing the law of the state he is complying with the ordinance of God. He gave rulers the right and responsibility to provide and enforce legislation on behalf of the citizenry. Conversely, if a citizen is disobedient to the authorities whom the Lord has placed over him, he acts contrary to the divine will, he resists an institution which God has established. In the words of the apostle: "Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath [government's punishment, which amounts also to an execution of the divine wrath] but also for the sake of conscience" (verse 5).

It is in this context, then, that Paul offers the concluding admonition of verse 7: "Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect [literally, fear] to whom respect [fear] is due, honor to whom honor is due." Our interest is in the third of these "dues" to be paid. The apostle instructs: "Pay . . . respect to whom respect is due"; or, rendering the original more literally than does the Revised Standard Version, we may say: Direct fear toward him to whom this stance is due. The reference in the designation "him to whom fear is due" is, of course, in view of the previous verses, to any official in the state who is charged with the duty of law enforcement and the punishment of evil-doers. He is representative of all such officials in authority. This individual is to be feared.

The fearing here involved is evidently of the godly, virtuous kind,<sup>34</sup> since it is enjoined by Paul. According to the context, it is assuredly evoked by a recognition of the divinely revealed relationship of God to governing authority. The definite implication is that one who rules is to be feared, because he serves as God's agent in the administration of civic justice and punishment; he is, as it were, to be a recipient, in part, of the fear that is continually due God and his divine wrath. Fearing the official who has authority in the state is thus the equivalent, to an extent, of fearing God. This is ethically motivating fear, inasmuch as it forestalls sinning along the lines of civil law violation. Combining these thoughts, we may say that Paul bids the Roman Christians to fear divinely ordained earthly ruling authority.

#### 1 Corinthians 2:3

And I was with you in weakness  
and in much fear and trembling.

There are students of the New Testament who hold that Paul's words (1 Cor. 2:3) *Καὶ γὰρ . . . ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ*

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<sup>34</sup>This virtuous fear, which the apostle enjoins, must not be confused with the other kind of fear referred to previously in this section, in the following expressions: *οἱ . . . ἀρχόντες οὐκ εἰσὶν φόβος τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἔργῳ ἀλλὰ τῷ κακῷ* (verse 3a); *θελεῖς δὲ μὴ φοβεῖσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν* (verse 3b); and *ἐάν δὲ τὸ κακὸν πολῆς, φοβοῦ* (verse 4). Such fear is aroused because of anticipated punishment at the hands of government in consequence of evil which has been perpetrated. This may be classified as a secular fear which accompanies wrongdoing. It is not God-pleasing. Its very presence in the heart constitutes a part of the divine judgment for sin and is demonstrative of a frequently employed divine judicial procedure, namely this, that God punishes sin with sin.

ἔγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς

describe a personal shortcoming, a moral failing, of the apostle.<sup>35</sup> Therefore they would not adduce this passage as one containing a reference to the ethically motivating fear of God.

There nevertheless are significant considerations which lend support to the view that the apostle does, indeed, have the latter fear in mind in 2:3. These we shall note after first picking up the thread of the apostle's thought in the prior context.

Chapters 1 to 4 of 1 Corinthians present Paul's response to the party contentions in Corinth which had been brought to his attention by "Chloe's people" (1:11). Probably four groups had formed within the congregation, with members of each claiming a particular adherence to a specified leader. The apostle writes: "Each one of you says, 'I belong to Paul,' or 'I belong to Apollos,' or 'I belong to Cephas,' or 'I belong to Christ'" (1:12). In attaching themselves respectively to Paul, Apollos, and Peter, the people of the first three parties manifested an undue admiration of mere human beings and of their achievements in the Church. They esteemed their teachers and leaders in unwarranted degree. Those who composed the Christ-party were probably persons who had come to Corinth from the outside and brought with them attractive, persuasive kinds of liberalism and rationalism,

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<sup>35</sup>E.g., F. W. Grosheide, Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, in The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, c.1953), p. 60.

the influence of which is reflected in both Pauline epistles to the Corinthians.<sup>36</sup> One reaction of the apostle was to regard all this factionalism, and the ideas which prompted it, as representative of a kind of "worldly wisdom," a wisdom of this age, which had gained currency in Corinth and which could only work to the detriment of the Gospel in their midst.

After offering an introductory appeal for like-mindedness in the congregation instead of contentions (1:10-17), Paul enters upon an extended discussion in which he contrasts the wisdom of God (the Gospel centering in the message of the cross) and the wisdom of men (the wisdom of this age) (1:18-2:16). The antithetical character of, and results of adherence to, the wisdom of God and the wisdom of men are shown (1:18-31).

Then Paul takes them back to the beginning of his ministry in their midst and calls attention to the contents, style, and goal of his missionary preaching and teaching, through which they were brought to faith. He writes in 2:1-5:

When I came to you, brethren, I did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in much fear and trembling; and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of

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<sup>36</sup>This characterization of the "Christ party" in Corinth is based upon Martin H. Franzmann's reconstruction in The Word of the Lord Grows: A First Historical Introduction to the New Testament (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), pp. 81-87. Cf. C. K. Barrett, "Christianity at Corinth," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, XLVI (March 1964), 274-275.

the Spirit and power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

When Paul came to Corinth and presented his Gospel message, he was, for one thing unable to rely for success in his effort to evangelize the people upon any natural personal appeal he might have had for the Corinthians: he happened to be physically sick after arrival in their midst. Furthermore, he deliberately did not have recourse to the device of eloquent, persuasive oratory so as to gain acceptance for his message; nor did he, in order to achieve this purpose, endeavor to render his proclamation plausible by appealing to arguments of the Greek philosophical (or other) wisdom of the day, tempting as the use of this technique might have appeared. On the contrary, he followed one course exclusively and continually; namely, that of thinking and preaching Christ and Him crucified. He reveals additionally that he spent his time with the Corinthians and conducted his ministry to them "in much fear and trembling."<sup>37</sup>

This activity of fearing and trembling appears to be best understood as referring to a fearing of, and trembling before, God which motivates to godly behavior. Now it is true that the phrase *ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ* is joined closely, by a *καὶ*, to the phrase *ἐν ἰσθμῶν* in 2:3. Furthermore, there is the

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<sup>37</sup>The Greek text has *ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ*, literally, "in fear and much trembling." The RSV rendering, "in much fear and trembling" may be adopted, however, as smoother, while still correctly conveying the Pauline thought.

possibility that, since the term *ἀσθενεία* suggests a physical illness of some kind, the designations *φόβω* and *τρόμω* might be construed as descriptive of a moral failing of the apostle's, of an undue anxiety on his part over his personal safety in the face of existing dangers. Acts 18:9 might be cited as corroborative evidence for this interpretation.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, it is equally possible to suppose that Paul gave himself to a particularly intense and precautionary fearing of his Lord, when he came to and labored in Corinth, so as effectively to carry out his divinely commissioned apostolic work amidst the challenging conditions in that city.

Such an interpretation is supported by the following considerations. First of all, nowhere else in 1 Corinthians or in the rest of Paul's letters or in the account of his activities in the Acts is there an indication that the apostle, who was exposed to countless dangers throughout the course of his missionary ministry, was on occasion given to cowardly fear for his life. Nor do hostile environmental circumstances in Corinth appear to have been of a kind uniquely threatening to the safety of the apostle's person, so as to excite in him an extraordinary fear and trembling. On the contrary, many passages in the Pauline corpus indicate that, when Paul did contemplate the prospect

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<sup>38</sup>Other possibilities have been mentioned by commentators--e.g., fear of the Gospel, or the message of the cross, which Paul had to preach; or "a trembling anxiety to perform a duty." See Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians in The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), pp. 31-32.



of his dying, he thought of departure from this life in terms of desirable blessing (Phil. 1:21-23, 2 Cor. 5:1-9, and 2 Tim. 4:6-8).

Secondly, in the immediate context, 2:1-5, Paul is speaking to the Corinthians concerning the manner in which he had discharged his apostolic ministry to them. In verses 1, 2, 4, and 5 he recalls and mentions approvingly the goals he had established for himself and the procedures he had employed in first presenting his message and proclamation to them. It is because he regards these methods as having been right that he rehearses them for the benefit of the Corinthians. There is, then, a likelihood that, when he mentions his fearing and trembling in verse 3, he does so approvingly. Paul would thus endeavor to inform the congregation of the godly motivation which possessed him as he pursued his course at Corinth. The only fear and trembling known to Paul as virtuous is that which has the Lord as its object. With fear of God and trembling before Him, as the apostle puts it, he lived among the Corinthians and endeavored to serve their spiritual needs. That the apostle's inward motivation should be an intense fear of God is consonant with his condition of weakness or illness ( *ἐν φόβῳ κυρίου* ). Especially in circumstances of physical infirmity would he seek to avoid the Lord's displeasure and make application for divine help in the work assigned him at Corinth.<sup>39</sup>

Thirdly, there are three other verses in the Pauline corpus in which a form of the noun *τρόμος* is joined in a single phrase with a

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<sup>39</sup>Compare the apostle's statements in 2 Cor. 12:9-10.

form of the noun *φόβος*. These are 2 Cor. 7:15; Eph. 6:5; and Phil 2:12. All three passages record the words *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου*. This expression closely resembles *ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ* of 1 Cor. 2:3. God appears as the object of the fear and trembling in the three verses which offer phrases with *φόβος* and *τρόμος* in the genitive.<sup>40</sup> This will be shown in the discussion of these passages which is yet to follow. Since this is the case, there is a reasonable probability that God is the object of the fear and trembling which Paul mentions in 1 Cor. 2:3. The apostle's usus loquendi of the *φόβος-τρόμος* combination outside of 1 Corinthians suggests this conclusion.

For all the above-stated reasons, we conclude, then, that Paul speaks of fearing God and trembling before God in 1 Cor. 2:3. Trembling is the physical counterpart and consequence of fearing. It is indicative of intense fear and refers to the physical tenseness or slight quivering of the body which accompanies this fear. When Paul informs the Corinthians that he was with them and conducted his ministry to them "in much fear and trembling," he means to say that he proceeded to present the message of divine Gospel-wisdom to them

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<sup>40</sup> All four of these *φοβος-τρόμος* phrases, in which God appears as the object of the fear and trembling, may have a common derivation in the words of Ps. 2:11. The Hebrew here is:

:סַדְוּ יְהוָה בְּיָדָם יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ יְהוָה בְּיָדָם יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ

The LXX has: δουλεύσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἑγκαλλιᾶσθε αὐτῷ ἐν τρόμῳ.

in precisely the way God wanted this to be proclaimed, so that it might take effective root in the hearer's hearts. He continually reckoned with the righteous God who punishes sin in his wrath, feared and trembled before Him, and accordingly avoided doing or saying anything displeasing to the Lord which would evoke negative, or punitive, divine judgment on his own person and on his apostolic work. For, if such judgment were meted out, it would mean among other things a setback to the progress of the Gospel in Corinth. The dread that possessed Paul while he labored among the Corinthians was, indeed, the ethically motivating fear of God.

2 Corinthians 5:11

Therefore, knowing the fear of  
the Lord, we persuade men . . . .

Paul's statement in 2 Cor. 5:11, "Knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men," has an import which closely parallels a central point of his remarks in 1 Cor. 2:1-5, a group of verses briefly treated in the previous section. The exegesis of 2 Cor. 5:11 tends to corroborate the interpretation given the words *ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ πρὸς ὑμᾶς* in 1 Cor. 2:3.

By means of his second epistle to the Corinthians<sup>41</sup> Paul seeks to complete the healing of the breach between the congregation at Corinth

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<sup>41</sup>It is my assumption that 2 Corinthians is a unity; a single, authentic Pauline letter. The integrity of the epistle has been challenged, however, in the most diverse ways. Feine, Behm and Kuemmel offer this summary of the scholarly debate (p. 212): "inasmuch as there . . . comes to light in II 10-13 a completely different position

and himself. In the process he calls attention to the kind of ministry he and his assistants had rendered in their midst. Let the

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of Paul in respect to the church from that in II 1-9, since the time of J. S. Semler . . . II 10-13 has been viewed as an independent epistle or as a fragment of an epistle, that was written either later than II 1-9 (so Semler, and recently Windisch, and Pherigo, who removes this epistle to the end of Paul's first stay in Rome, and hesitatingly Juelicher), or between I and II Corinthians ("intermediate epistle," first by A. Hausrath [1870], recently, e.g., Goguel, de Zwaan, Hering, Filson, Cleary, T. W. Manson, Dodd, Dean, Sparks, Bultmann, Dinkler, Schmithals, Klijn, and others). Many scholars go yet a step farther and point out that in 2:13 the discussion of the settlement of the untoward incident is interrupted by a long defense of Paul's apostolic office and not resumed until 7:5, where once again we find clear linguistic harmony with 2:13. . . . the general exhortation in 6:14-7:1 produces the effect of an extraneous insertion into the personal address to the congregation (6:11-13; 7:2-4). And both appeals in behalf of the collection (chaps. 8, 9) seem not to have belonged together originally. Consequently some declare as unavoidable the supposition that not only II 10-13, but also II 2:14-7:4; II 6:14-7:1, and II 9, stem from one or more other epistles of Paul, whereby either 2:14-6:13; 7:2-4, together with chaps. 10-13, are regarded as fragments of the intermediate epistle (Bultmann, Dean, Dinkler), or 2:14-6:13 and 7:2-4 were drawn from an epistle preceding the intermediate epistle (Mitton . . . Bornkamm, Schmithals), whereas ch. 9 represents an isolated epistolary fragment (additional hypotheses in Goguel . . . and Guthrie . . . )."

Feine, Behm and Kuemmel reject these literary-critical hypotheses on two basic grounds: the transmitted text compels no supposition of a secondary combination of Pauline letters or fragments to form 2 Corinthians; and no convincing motive for such a combination can be suggested. The authors state, p. 214: "Viewed as a whole, the best supposition remains that II Corinthians as transmitted forms an original unity. . . . Precisely when we understand II Corinthians as an actual epistle out of the uniqueness of a developing historical situation does it become comprehensible as a historical entity. And there are not lacking in it connecting threads between the various parts." Cf. also Franzmann, pp. 107-108. Other scholars who accept the integrity of 2 Corinthians are Wikenhauser; and Dibelius, Munck, Lietzmann, and Guthrie, according to the report of Feine, Behm and Kuemmel, p. 213.

facts form the basis on which they judge and evaluate him and his assistants, Paul counsels.

In the first five chapters of the second letter Paul declares that the apostolic ministry in Corinth had been marked by a holy sincerity on the part of the ministers and also by a notable God-given success. Appreciation for the divine mercy they have received, joy over the glory of the Gospel ministry itself, hope of the heavenly life to come, the fear and love of the Lord, and faith in the regenerative effects of union with Christ--all these motivations, Paul says, have sustained and encouraged him and his co-workers and impelled them faithfully to discharge their Gospel ministry.

Now the fear of God as ethical motivation in the labors of the apostle and his associates is plainly referred to in the passage before us (2 Cor. 5:11a). The words in the original read: *Εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου ἀνδρώτους πείθεμεν.* Paul and companions have a deep consciousness of the fear which should possess their hearts as they proceed with their Gospel ministries. It is a fear, we may note, which is specifically directed to "the Lord," that is, to the Lord Christ (in context). Furthermore, it is a fear which concerns itself in particular with the Lord's judgment. The *οὖν* in verse 11 introduces a conclusion drawn from the previous verse. There the apostle asserted: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body." The last judgment is, of course, here referred to. Then every servant of God in the professional ministry, as well as every other Christian, will be required

to give an account of his stewardship to his Master and Judge.<sup>42</sup>

Awareness of this fact has taught Paul and his assistants constantly to fear the Lord, to let this fear control their private lives and the public ministries through which they seek to persuade men to embrace Christ and his Gospel in saving faith. By this fear they are led to go about their tasks with utmost<sup>t</sup> care, seriousness, and sobriety. They shrink from offending Christ, who is God, and calling forth his retributive judgment upon themselves and their ministries.

In the consideration of 1 Cor. 2:3 it was observed that Paul feared God and presented his Gospel message to the Corinthians in the divinely directed manner, so as not to evoke the punitive judgment of the Lord on his own person and his apostolic work. Such judgment, if it were meted out, would negatively affect him and the progress of the Gospel in Corinth. We perceive that the apostle's fear as mentioned in 1 Cor. 2:3 was concerned particularly with the present judgment of the Lord, which deals in on-going manner and continuously with the activities of his people, apostles included. Paul dreaded divine, judically assigned penalties which had to be endured already in the course of this earthly life.<sup>43</sup> It is likewise the emphasis of the

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<sup>42</sup>For similar thoughts on the final judgment as comprehending also God's Gospel ministers and their work, compare 1 Cor. 3:10-17 and 4:4-5.

<sup>43</sup>Many passages in the Pauline corpus teach that God constantly administers justice. They indicate that He metes out divine punitive judgments upon his own believing people already in the course of their earthly lives (long before Judgment Day), if and when they are given to sinning. Compare, for example, in addition to those which have been or are yet to be considered in this treatise, the following: the verses listed in Footnote 18--Romans 6:23; 7:7-13; 8:13; and 9:30-10:4--; Rom. 14:23; 1 Cor. 8:10-11; 9:27; 10:5-12; 11:27-32; 2 Cor. 1:8-10; Gal. 5:4,

Pauline teaching, we have seen, in Rom. 11:20-21 and 13:7 that the ethically motivating fear of God is generated by Christians in response to threatened, divine, punitive judgments for sin which are visited already in this life. Now in 2 Cor. 5:11, the passage at hand, the fear of God is spoken of in relationship to the last judgment. The conclusion may be drawn, then, that the fear of God as ethical motivation is aroused in a believer's heart both when he contemplates his Lord as the righteous God who judges men throughout the course of their lifetime on earth and when he considers the prospect of having to stand before God on the last day, as the divine Lord pronounces final judgment upon the universe of men. The perfective fear of God concerns itself with the entire range of divine judicial operation.

#### 2 Corinthians 7:1

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.

That the proper fear of God promotes sanctification is stated clearly by Paul in 2 Cor. 7:1. In the participial phrase *ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ*, the apostle bids the Christians to "bring holiness to its goal in the fear of God." He says that each member of

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19-21; 6:7-8; Eph. 5:3-6; 6:9; Col. 3:5-6; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; 2 Thess. 1:4-5; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; 5:11-12. A study of these passages reveals that the negative divine judgments mentioned are of several kinds. Some are visitations which afflict a man's physical or psychical nature, occasioning physical illness, for example, or mental and emotional distress. Some are visitations destructive of an individual's spiritual strength, or even of his very spiritual being and life. Some are visitations which affect a person's external circumstances and are recognized in terms of monetary and property loss (as in the time of persecution), and the like.

the congregation is to bring his own state of holiness to completeness. This is to take place in the sphere of or in connection with the fear of God. The Revised Standard Version translates: "Make holiness perfect in the fear of God."

2 Cor. 7:1 is the concluding statement of the paragraph that began at 6:14, as is indicated in Nestle and Aland and in the paragraphing used by the Revised Standard Version. Together with 7:2 it rounds out the admonitory section of the epistle which extends from 6:1 to 7:2. All that Paul has been saying from 3:1 onward to 5:21 about himself, his assistants, and the kind of ministry they had rendered among the Corinthians comes to a climax in his appeal of 6:1 and the appeals which follow in 6:13,14,17; 7:1 and 2.

Paul and his associates have opened their mouth wide to the Corinthians (6:11). They have told them (3:1 to 6:10) all about the inner feelings and motives of the apostle and his assistants, as they conducted their Gospel ministry. These missionaries have indeed expanded their hearts to take the Corinthians into them. Let the Corinthians, in turn, now reciprocate and open their hearts in loving reception of Paul and his helpers (6:13). Such reciprocation, however, includes the obligation that the Corinthians completely and finally separate themselves from all persons who are ranged in opposition to the founder and first minister of their congregation. Thus Paul pointedly delivers the directive: *Μὴ γίνεσθε ἕτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις* which may be rendered "Do not be incongruously yoked up with unbelievers." He asks the Corinthians to separate themselves from the fellowship of those who do not believe. They are to withdraw from any and every association with unbelievers, which



involves a participation in their unbelief or in the unfruitful works proceeding therefrom. The unbelievers in question are those found in the world generally. Some may turn out to be found in the Corinthians congregation, namely, Paul's opponents who are perversely seeking to undermine his influence and authority there. If the members of the church will do this, then God, according to his promises, will continue to be their God and Father, to be with and bless his people.

Here follow, then, the words of 7:1: "Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God." The apostle includes himself in this exhortation. Heartened by the divine promises just given, Paul says, let God's people cleanse themselves from everything that would defile either body or spirit. Let each strive to bring his own state of holiness nearer to completeness with the aid of the fearing of God. The reference obviously is to the fear of God which motivates to ethical living. This promotes the progress of Christian sanctification. It is the fear which reckons with the divine retribution for transgression as meted out in the spiritual sphere, and evident in the deterioration of spiritual life and strength. Such fear prevents participation in any sinful associations and activities which would result in the defilement of flesh or spirit and could result in a loss of the grace of God altogether.

#### 2 Corinthians 7:11 and 15

Verse 11: For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm [fear], what longing, what zeal, what punishment!

Verse 15: And his [Titus'] heart goes out all the more to you, and he remembers the obedience of you all, and the fear and trembling with which you received him.

Verses 11 and 15 of 2 Corinthians 7 are the next two in the series of Pauline passages which contain an explicit reference to ethically motivating fear. As a matter of convenience we may look at these verses together. Both are found in the same unit of context, consisting of verses 5 to 16, and both refer to the same fear of God aroused in the hearts of the Corinthian Christians after their reception and reading of Paul's so-called "severe" letter to Corinth.

The apostle had instructed Titus to determine the reaction of the Corinthians to the severe letter Paul had sent them and then report the same to him. Titus was able to rejoin Paul in Macedonia. Much of what the former had to relate was good. It is over this that Paul rejoices and is comforted, as he relates in chapters 2 and 7. The Corinthians had repented in accordance with the directives of Paul's letter; they had disciplined the man who had offended the apostle; when that individual had subsequently repented, they were ready to forgive him, pending Paul's approval. They had fully submitted themselves to Paul's authority and expressed a longing to see the apostle again. It is this response and evidence of genuine repentance on the part of the membership that Paul has in mind as he writes in 7:11: "For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm [fear], what longing, what zeal, what punishment!"

These words suggest that the Corinthians had for some time treated the offender and his offense against Paul with careless indifference; that they had been unconcerned about the hurt done Paul, the damage the sinner had wrought in his own spiritual life, and the unwholesome effect their inaction was having upon themselves as a congregation. Now, however, after they had read Paul's severe letter, all this had immediately changed. Thoroughly ashamed, they had aroused themselves to earnest and busy activity, with the intent of correcting their behavior and clearing themselves. In righteous anger they had administered the required disciplinary penalty upon the man who had injured Paul (probably expelling him from the congregation). It is at this point that the apostle mentions the Corinthians' fear.

Ἴδού γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ κατὰ θεὸν λυπηθῆναι  
 πένθος] κατεργάσατο ὑμῶν . . . φόβον . This  
 may be literally translated: "For this very thing, your being grieved  
 in God's way--see what fear it worked in you!" Here is another fruit  
 of repentant grieving in God's way, to have fear. The fear in question  
 is mentioned with approval; it is represented as virtuous. Fear of  
 whom, and of what? it may be asked. Hardly of Paul, with regard to  
 whom, as the next noun indicates, the Corinthians are said to have had  
 an ἐπιπόθησον , a "longing." It is rather--since their  
 grieving had to do with God--fear of God. Their fear was prompted by  
 the thought of the Lord, his will for their lives, his judgments;  
 specifically his punishments for sluggishness and lethargy in the

matter of attending to spiritual responsibility. This fear would serve to spur them in their activity of producing the fruits of repentance. It would impel them the more earnestly to put away from themselves all wrong-doing in the way of omission or commission. It would lead them in the present situation to a most careful self-examination, as to whether everything had been done in terms of the rectification of congregational behavior that ought to be done. The fear signified in verse 11 is the fear of God which motivates to godly living.

The same fear is referred to in verse 15. A part of the cheering news Titus brought Paul from Corinth had to do with the fine reception the Corinthians had accorded the former as the representative of the apostle and bearer of the latter's severe letter to the congregation. On the way to the city Titus had been uncertain and uneasy about the treatment he might experience there. All his misgivings, however, had been quickly dispelled. He had found a people ready to accept severe, admittedly deserved rebuke and correction from Paul, the founder of their church, who, they knew, spoke for the Lord and to whom they now clearly held in firm allegiance. The members of the congregation had been eager, furthermore, to welcome Titus into their midst as the apostle's delegate and obey all the Word of God he brought from Paul. The latter in verse 15 happily makes a point of mentioning Titus' fond recollection of "the fear and trembling with which you [the Corinthians] received him," *ὡς μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου ἔδέξατο αὐτόν.* It would seem that the intense fear expressed

in the phrase *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου*<sup>44</sup> has as its object not Titus' person as such (in consideration, for example, of the fact that as the Lord's minister he is a representative of God), but rather God Himself, whose instruction, given through the apostle Paul, Titus had brought to Corinth. Their fear had to do with offending Him in any way--even through a slightest mistreatment or disrespect of his Gospel emissary temporarily residing with them. It was ethically motivating.

Ephesians 5:21 and 33

Verse 21: Be subject to one another out of reverence for [fear of] Christ.

Verse 33: Let the wife see that she respects [fears] her husband.

The letter to the Ephesians provides Paul's revealed understanding of the church. In the second half of the epistle, Paul refers to the obligations devolving upon members of the church in Ephesus. A group of directives is presented in the section extending from 4:17 to 5:21. These, together with all supporting material, may be arranged into four paragraphs, which begin, respectively, at 4:17; 4:25; 5:1; and 5:15. Then there is a further group of admonitions (a Hauستafel) in 5:22-6:9, containing directives for special classes in the church: for

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<sup>44</sup>As has been pointed out, the combination in one phrase of the word *τρόμος* with the word *φόβος*, is found four times in the Pauline corpus, here and in 1 Cor. 2:3; Eph. 6:5; and Phil. 2:12. For a discussion of the significance of *τρόμος* as thus joined by Paul to *φόβος*, see pp. 78 and 79 of this Chapter IV.

wives and husbands, 5:22-33; for children and fathers, 6:1-4; for slaves and masters, 6:5-9.<sup>45</sup> A closing admonition encouraging all the Ephesians to stand fast in the strength of the Lord against the powerful enemies of the church is recorded in 6:10-20.

It will be seen that the two passages whose locations (5:21 and 33) have been placed at the head of this section belong, respectively, to the fourth paragraph of general directives for the entire church (5:15-21) and to the group of admonitions intended for wives and husbands (5:22-33). The passages may be considered together because of their proximity in the text of Ephesians and their close relationship in the developing thought of Paul in the closing section of the fifth chapter. The latter observation will be substantiated in the

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<sup>45</sup>It should be noted that some scholars--probably without grammatical warrant--begin a new paragraph at ὑΠΟΤΑΓΓΟΜΕΝΟΙ in 5:21, regarding the participle as an imperative. Ernst Gaugler writes in Der Epheserbrief (Zuerich: Evz-Verlag, 1966), p. 207: "Dieser Vers [21] stellt den Uebergang zur christlichen Haustafel dar. Formal (grammatikalisch) gehoert er noch zum Vorhergehenden, sachlich aber fuehrt er einen neuen Gesichtspunkt ein, den des Verhaltens der Christen untereinander und zueinander. Darum ist er mit dem Folgenden sinnghemaesz zu verbinden." Heinrich Schlier in his Der Brief an die Epheser (3rd revised edition; Duesseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1962) states, p. 250, that 5:21 is "eine Ueberschrift ueber dem ganzen naechsten Abschnitt, 'enthaltend das allgemeine Prinzip, welches der Apostel im folgenden auf die einzelnen Verhaeltnisse des haeuslichen Zusammenlebens anwendet' (Bisping) . . . . Das ὑΠΟΤΑΓΓΟΜΕΝΟΙ reicht als Ueberschrift ueber die folgenden Ausfuehrungen so weit nach vorne, dasz aus ihm sogar fuer V. 22 das Verb zu ergaenzen ist." If the view that 5:21 is the topic sentence for the Haustafel is adopted, then it could be observed that Paul is here explicitly urging his addressees to employ the fear of Christ as motivation for obedience to all the admonitions of the Haustafel (5:22-6:9) which are governed by initial ὑΠΟΤΑΓΓΟΜΕΝΟΙ .

succeeding paragraphs. Both 5:21 and 33 contain a reference to the ethically motivating fear of God. The one is explicit and the other implicit.

The paragraph in which 5:21 is found (5:15-21) may be titled, "The Apostle's Admonition to Exercise Wisdom." Paul tells the Ephesians to behave as wise people, and this by making the most of the time at their disposal for service of the Lord; by becoming thoroughly acquainted with his will for their lives; by avoiding drunkenness; by each having his spirit filled with the divine Word and Holy Spirit to such an extent that the spirit simply causes heart and voice to overflow in songs and hymns of joyous praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, while the Ephesians at the same time subject themselves to one another out of a fear of Christ.

Verse 21 in the Greek is a participial phrase, reading:

ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ.

We may note three things regarding the fear here spoken of. First, that Christ is named as the person toward whom the fear is to be directed (compare 2 Cor. 5:11). Secondly, the implication in the immediate context (5:18-21) is that this fear is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. It results from his operation in the regenerate human spirit (πνεῦμα, verse 18). Thirdly, this fear supplies an impulse for godly conduct. It prompts a Christian's humble subjection of himself to his fellows in the faith. The readers are to glorify the Lord as indicated in the immediately previous verses, while in a relationship of God-pleasing harmony with one another.

None is to engage in self-exaltation, rivalry, a "lording it over" the rest of the members, or in the exhibition of any behavior which might prove destructive of the unity of the church. Members are mutually and reciprocally to serve each other. The fear of Christ which aids in this process should be classified as ethically motivating. It has in view the Lord's will (5:17) that governs the matter of Christians' relationships with one another, and the retributive divine judgments which threaten transgressors of that will.

With verse 22 the Haustafel begins. Paul continues to stress the virtue of subjection, but not the qualifying feature of reciprocity. Wives are instructed to be subject to their husbands (verses 22 to 24), but not husbands to their wives (verses 25 to 33). In the same way children and slaves are directed, respectively, to obey their parents and masters, although the latter are not asked to obey their children and slaves (in 6:1-9). Wives are voluntarily to subject themselves to their husbands, because, Paul explains, according to divine arrangement "the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body" (verse 23). Therefore, "As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands" (verse 24); and this self-subjection, says the apostle, is to be rendered "as to the Lord" (verse 22). It is to be consciously entered upon and maintained in deliberate obedience to the Lord's will, in order ultimately to please Him.



What is said in verses 22 to 24 prepares us for an understanding of verse 33. After Paul exhorts husbands to love their wives "as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (verse 25) and elaborates this admonition in succeeding passages, he concludes his remarks regarding husbands and wives with the words: "Let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband." The Greek for the second part of verse 33 is  $\eta \delta \epsilon$  *γυνὴ ἵνα φοβῆται τὸν ἄνδρα . Ἴνα* and the subjunctive is occasionally employed in the New Testament as a substitute for the imperative.<sup>46</sup> Verse 33-b, accordingly, may literally be translated: And let the wife fear her husband.

The translation of *φοβῆται* as "fear" is accurate, not unduly harsh in context, and to be preferred over the weakened Revised Standard Version rendering "see that she respects," for the following reason. Wives are to be subject to their husbands, as the Church is subject to Christ (verse 24). A part of the Church's subjection to Christ, we have just noted, is the Church's fearing of Christ (verse 21). In the same way every wife, Paul says in verse 33, is to fear her husband-- specifically to fear offending him through insubordination and disobedience, through perpetrating any violation of his will in defiance of his headship in the conjugal relationship. And this, because a

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<sup>46</sup>F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, a translation and revision of the ninth-tenth German edition incorporating supplementary notes of A. Debrunner by Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, c.1961), p. 195, 387(3).

refusal to be subject to the husband amounts to an unwillingness to be subject to Christ, who has sanctioned the divinely established arrangement of the husband's being the wife's head and of whom--to be precise--the husband is representative in the estate of marriage. This being the case, we may infer that the fear a wife is asked to have for her husband is to be of the same kind as that which she has for Christ; to be prompted by her fear of Christ; is to be the concomitant of, and to an extent indeed coincident with, her fear of Christ. In other words, for a Christian wife to fear her husband is for her to fear the Lord in the sphere of the marital relationship. This fear of hers is nothing less than the ethically motivating fear of Christ, spoken of in verse 21 (and discussed above).

**Ephesians 6:5 and Colossians 3:22**

**Ephesians 6:5:** Slaves, be obedient to those who are your earthly masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as to Christ.

**Colossians 3:22:** Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord.

Eph. 6:5 might have been treated in the preceding section together with Eph. 5:21 and 33, since it appears in the same section of the epistle. We have elected, rather, to examine Eph. 6:5 together with Col. 3:22, and to study in combination the references to the ethically motivating fear of God both verses contain. We do this

because the wording of the two passages is very similar.<sup>47</sup> They are obviously parallel directives to Christian slaves, which appear in similar admonitory sections of the letters to the Ephesians and to the Colossians. The two verses, as well as the immediate sections from which they are taken, are also complementary and mutually illuminating.

Colossians emphasizes the glory, completeness, and all-sufficiency of Christ and of the Gospel. Paul seeks to crush a Gnostic type heresy that had arisen in Colossae. The letter has its own plan and details and thus differs in basic theme, purpose, and minor particulars from the epistle to the Ephesians. It will not be necessary, however, for an understanding of Col. 3:22 (or its relationship to Eph. 6:5) to trace at any length the larger context of this verse in the Colossian epistle. The immediate context in which this passage is found affords sufficient background information for its correct interpretation. That context, Col. 3:22-25, reads as follows:

Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

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<sup>47</sup>Ephesians and Colossians are very closely related epistles. It has been calculated that "some 70 percent of the Colossians Letter has parallels in the Letter to the Ephesians" (Franzmann, p. 135). The likelihood is that both epistles were written by Paul at approximately the same time, during a certain imprisonment experience.

We may compare with this the words of Paul's full charge to slaves in Eph. 6:5-8:

Slaves, be obedient to those who are your earthly masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that whatever good any one does, he will receive the same again from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.

The correspondence of Eph. 6:5-8 to Col. 3:22-25 in many points is striking.

As the preceding translation shows, Eph. 6:5 begins one long sentence which continues through verse 8. The single, main directive *Οἱ δούλοι, ὑπακούετε τοῖς κατὰ ἄρκα κυρίοις* in verse 5 governs the whole. It is qualified by the series of prepositional and participial phrases in all the verses comprising the sentence. Three of the modifying phrases are found in verse 5: the slaves are to keep obeying those who are their earthly masters *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου*, *ἐν ἐπιλότῃ τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν*, and *ὡς τῷ Χριστῷ*. The third is of broadly encompassing significance. Much more is meant by *ὡς τῷ Χριστῷ* than is suggested by some commentators, namely, that slaves are to serve their masters with the conviction that by their obedience they are serving and obeying Christ.<sup>48</sup> When Paul asks the Christian slaves to be obedient to their

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<sup>48</sup>This is the explanation of von Hofmann, who is quoted with approval by George Stoeckhardt in the latter's Commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, translated from the German by Martin S. Sommer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1952), p. 251. Cf. the comment

earthly masters "as to Christ," he is directing these slaves to obey masters in the same way as they are obedient to Christ, the one who sustains social structures as a way of preserving life and existence. The Pauline requirement, understood in this way, opens up a wide spectrum of responsibility. For example, according to the apostle's instructions given elsewhere, slaves, like other Christians, are to render obedience to Christ with unswerving allegiance to their divine Lord (2 Cor. 10:5); with an earnest, sincere desire to do his will perfectly (Rom. 1:9; 12:1,11; 2 Cor. 1:12; 2:17); and with the single aim in mind of pleasing Him. In their service they are to employ the proper, divinely appointed motivation for all sanctification (faith in the self's death and resurrection with Christ; fear and love of God; and trust in the divine promises of blessing upon godliness).

Now the two phrases preceding ὡς τῷ Χριστῷ, namely, *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου* and *ἐν ἐπιλότῃ τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν*, specify and thus stress two particular features of the way slaves are to render obedience to earthly masters as they render obedience to Christ. Paul requires that they serve and obey

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of T. K. Abbott, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, in The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 178: "so that your service to your master is regarded as a service to Christ." Also that of S. D. F. Salmond, The Expositor's Greek Testament (New York: George H. Doran Company, n.d.), III, 378: "with an obedience regarded as rendered to Christ Himself."

masters "with fear and trembling" before God, or Christ;<sup>49</sup> and with the single purpose of heart to please the Lord. Verses 6 and 7 amplify: "Not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to men." That the fear and trembling in question is the one which is directed to God, or Christ (here in context), is to be inferred from the consideration that this is the one kind of fear and trembling which is acceptable to Christ (compare 5:21); it is the only kind the apostle Paul elsewhere sanctions and inculcates. Christian slaves are always to keep in faith's vision the divine Lord whose they are, whom they ultimately serve and whose will it is that they obey their earthly masters. They are to set their thoughts upon his wrath against, and his threats of punishment for, sin. With an intense fear (fear accompanied by physical trembling) of his holiness and majesty they are to carry out meticulously the tasks which their masters assign and to which they are, therefore, also appointed by God.

If there is any question as to whether the ethically motivating fear of God is referred to in the phrase *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου*, it should be set aside when this expression in 6:5 is compared with what Paul writes in Col. 3:22: "Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not with eyeservice, as

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<sup>49</sup>Cf. 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 7:15; and Phil. 2:12. The significance of *τρόμος* as joined to *φόβος* is discussed on pp. 78 and 79.

men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord." The point of significance here is that the slaves are directed to render their masters complete obedience "fearing the Lord"; *Οἱ δούλοι, ὑπακούετε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς κατὰ ἄρκα κυρίοις . . . φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον.* The Lord Christ is expressly mentioned as the object of the fear with which slaves are to discharge the obligation of obeying their masters. And the reason for fearing the Lord is indicated in verse 25, his punitive judgment. Whereas Eph. 6:8 and Col. 3:24 stress the favorable divine judgment and blessing which follow upon slaves doing the Lord's will in the matter of obeying masters, in Col. 3:25 Paul declares: "For the wrongdoer [in the same matter] will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality." The agent in this "paying back" is obviously God, or Christ, who is no respecter of persons in pronouncing judgment and meting out rewards or penalties corresponding with his verdicts, whether these are rendered in this lifetime or at the end of the world.

#### Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Phil. 2:12-13 is the third passage in the Pauline corpus where the phrase *μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου* appears as

indicative of the fear of God which motivates to ethical behavior.<sup>50</sup> An interesting feature of Phil. 2:12-13 is the phraseology of the Pauline directive that the Philippians work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; also the reason assigned for this, namely, that God was at work in them causing them to will and to work in behalf of his good pleasure.

After his opening remarks to the Philippians in 1:1-11, the apostle writes them some good news concerning himself and the cause of the Gospel, 1:12-26. Though he is still in prison,<sup>51</sup> the first stages of his trial appear to have turned out favorably for him; he expects eventually to be released and to visit the congregation in Philippi again. In the next paragraphs, from 1:27 to 2:18, Paul offers the membership a series of general admonitions. His basic directive is that the Philippians continue to conduct themselves in

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<sup>50</sup>In 2 Cor. 7:15 the Corinthians are said to have received Titus "with fear and trembling." Paul directs slaves in Eph. 6:5 to obey their earthly masters "with fear and trembling." As was pointed out in the discussion of 1 Cor. 2:3, in which the words "fear" and "trembling" are combined as modifiers of the preposition "in" (*ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ*), trembling is the physical counterpart of fearing. It is indicative of intense fear and refers to the physical tenseness or slight quivering of the body which accompanies this fear.

<sup>51</sup>The location of this imprisonment is either Ephesus, Caesarea, or Rome, probably Ephesus. The questions as to where the "Captivity Letters" (Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philippians) were written and whether they were all written during the same imprisonment experience has been, and will continue to be, extensively debated by scholars.



a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ (1:27a). They are to do this, he says, in unity of spirit, especially in the face of persecutions they presently are enduring, when they are required to stand firm and jointly to contend for the faith of that Gospel (1:27b-30). Each member should cultivate the humility and self-effacement which Christ exemplified, and which make true Christian unity possible (2:1-11). By pursuing such a way of life, the apostle indicates, the Philippians will be working out their own salvation. He urges them to undertake the latter responsibility continually, and with fear and trembling before the Lord (2:12-13).

Verses 12 and 13 of chapter 2 in the original are as follows:

Ἔγνωτε, ἀγαπητοί μου, καθὼς πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε, μὴ ὡς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου μόνον ἀλλὰ νῦν πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ ἀπουσίᾳ μου, μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε. θεὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας.

Ἔγνωτε harks back to the entire preceding admonitory context and marks 2:12-18 as the last paragraph in the hortatory section presented in 1:27 to 2:18. The reference in verse 12 to Paul's presence with, and his absence from, the Philippian church recalls the phrase εἴτε ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπὼν in 1:27. The reference to the Philippians' obedience (πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε) is related to the mention of Christ's obedience in

2:5-11 (ὑπήκοος in verse 8). The reference to salvation (σωτηρίαν) in 2:12 is connected to the same term appearing as a genitive (σωτηρίας) in 1:28. "So then," says Paul, in effect signifying:

As I have given you directions for conduct in the previous paragraphs and as you have always obeyed my words for you from God in the past, so now follow all these instructions diligently. Keep on in this way working out your own salvation.

Two expressions in verse 12 point out the manner in which this "working" shall be done. One is "with fear and trembling." This is fearing and trembling before God (as verse 13 makes clear). The other expression is the subordinate clause, "So now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence." Its intended meaning in relation to the main clause of verse 12 is: Keep on working out your own salvation with fear and trembling; not just as you do this when I am present with you but do so also now that I am absent from you--and πολλῶ μᾶλλον, with even greater care and zeal, and with uninterrupted constancy.

What precisely is the significance of the directive τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε? Σωτηρία is a concept rich in meaning in Paul's writings. For Paul, salvation denotes not only the Christian's anticipated enjoyment of heaven in the condition of eternal glorification but also the saved state into which he is ushered by faith at the moment of his conversion and in which he remains throughout his lifetime on earth, prior to his final glorification and residence in heaven. It signifies his rescue from all the destructive forces which before his spiritual rebirth held

absolute sway over him and which still oppose him in this life even after his coming to faith. It includes the blessings and the forgiveness of sins and liberation from God's condemning wrath; peace and fellowship with God; eternal life; sonship with the Father; union with Christ; the power to overcome the sins of heart and behavior for which Christ's cleansing has been received, together with the righteous life itself which results from the use of this power; freedom from the law; the Holy Spirit's guidance; the supply of all real personal needs through life, help in time of trouble; hope for the hour, and deliverance in the moment, of physical death. All these aspects of salvation, which follow upon justification by faith, are the subject matter of Romans 5 to 8.

As was indicated above, one of the blessings of salvation is the Christian's deliverance from the dominion of sin through union with Christ (compare Rom. 6:1-14); his possession of strength to overcome recognized transgressions and enjoy the freedom of living a life of righteousness to the glory of God. It is this freedom from sin and for obedience to the Lord which Paul has in mind, as he urges the Philippians to work out their salvation. He means that, using the powers of the new life received in their baptismally established union with Christ, the members of the congregation are fully to exploit their God-given potential for spiritual fruit-bearing, for the production of the good works which please the Lord. To proceed from the possession of a potential for obedience to actual living the godly life itself is for a Christian to "work out" his salvation, and to enter more fully

into his salvation. Thus, if the Philippians in obedience to Paul's admonition would put forth effort, in Christ, to carry out all the apostle had asked them to do in 1:27-2:11, then it could rightly be said of them that they were working out their salvation.<sup>52</sup>

To the evangelical directive, "Work out your own salvation," Paul has added the qualifying phrase "with fear and trembling" and the following explanatory statement: "For God is the One who is working among you both the willing and the working in behalf of his good pleasure" (my translation). The  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$  with  $\acute{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$  in the phrase  $\delta\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\rho\chi\acute{\omega}\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$  might be regarded as local, if consideration were to be given only to the following  $\tau\acute{o}\ \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu$ --which is an inner operation. Because of the companion expression  $\tau\acute{o}\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\rho\chi\acute{\epsilon}\iota\nu$ , however, which refers surely in part to external behavior, the

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<sup>52</sup>There is no hint of "work righteousness" in Paul's exhortation "Work out your own salvation." The apostle is speaking of a working which takes place exclusively after conversion, after justification by faith alone and the reception of salvation by the free grace of God. This is sometimes referred to as the synergism of the Christian's new man, who is brought into being in regeneration. The good works performed by God's people have saving faith as their principal constitutive element. To suppose that Paul is in Phil. 2:12 issuing a directive to perform works which are done with a view to earning salvation is preposterous in the light of the context; and in view of what the apostle writes in Phil. 3:7-9 and his entire discussion in Galatians and in the first eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Romans. The truth as regards good works, according to Paul, may be expressed as follows: Christians do good works, not in order to be justified, but because they have been justified. Through the performance of these works they wish to glorify God and enter into the enjoyment of an ever increasing freedom from the presence, power, and consequences of sin.

*ἐν ὑμῶν* is better translated, as suggested, "among you" (and understood in the sense of "in your case").

The divine *εὐδοκία*, or "good pleasure," is God's gracious, saving and sanctifying good will; his free determination to save (now and hereafter), as directed toward his own people, the elect, the members of the church. This meaning of *εὐδοκία* is clearly established by the use of the term in Eph. 1:5,9. For the Philippians, to will and to work "in behalf of" or "in the interest of" God's good pleasure, *ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας*, is for them to live a holy life (which is the same thing as working out their salvation). It is for them to live in such a way as to let the saving and sanctifying divine will have its way in their lives, allowing it to lead them on paths of righteousness here on earth to ultimate perfection and joy in heaven, that is, to eternal salvation. The opposite of willing and working in behalf of the divine good pleasure is sinning. The latter interferes with God's saving purposes and determination; it constitutes a resistance of the Lord.

Now it is apparent why Paul admonishes the Philippians to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. They are to realize that God is the One who is bringing them to obey his will and who is intent upon their being obedient continually and increasingly. He is the One who is constantly supplying them with the power for godly living. The inference to be derived is that failure to work out salvation is to oppose and resist God, which, in turn, arouses his anger and calls forth his righteous retribution. Elsewhere the apostle

indicates that protracted and unrepented disobedience can result for Christians in the divinely inflicted penalty of spiritual death (Rom. 8:13; 1 Cor. 9:27), which is the precursor to eternal death in hell. The implication of Paul's directive then is that the Philippians ought have regular recourse to the forgiving and empowering grace of God. They should in his might arouse in their hearts an intense, filial fear of the holy God and maintain consistently godly conduct in a progressive sanctification of their lives. They must beware lest by indifference and sluggishness in the matter of spiritual performance they displease the Lord, incur divine judgments of various kinds, and ultimately forfeit their salvation.<sup>53</sup>

The fear and trembling which the apostle recommends to his readers in Phil. 2:12 is unquestionably that which motivates to ethical behavior.

1 Timothy 2:10

[Women should adorn themselves] by good deeds, as befits women who profess religion [fear of God].

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<sup>53</sup>It should be pointed out that, although the main reason for Paul's offering the explanatory statement of verse 13 is to make clear the necessity of the Philippians' working out their salvation with fear and trembling and to warn them against indifference as regards their sanctification, the same statement viewed from another standpoint would supply these Christians with strong comfort and encouragement. They would be heartened by the realization that God was intent upon sanctifying and saving them, his people; that He was graciously and continually operative in the inner being of each one, supplying impulses to godliness, so that his divine determination to save them, in time and eternity, could and would be progressively realized. By yielding to his divine working continually, they would assuredly be brought to heavenly blessedness.

As we proceed to a consideration of the verse above, and next to 1 Tim. 5:20, it will be well to state at the outset once again<sup>54</sup> that the writer regards the Pastorals as Pauline. In the first verse of each of the letters, according to all manuscripts containing the texts of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, Paul is named as the writer. The early and practically unanimous testimony of the whole Church until the beginning of the nineteenth century has been that the Pastoral Epistles are Paul's. The arguments advanced by later scholars against their genuineness are, in my opinion, not persuasive.

The Greek text of 1 Tim. 2:10 is: [Βούλομαι . . . γυναικας . . . κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς . . . (from verses 8 and 9)] δὲ πρέπει γυναιξὶν ἐπαγγελλομέναις θεοσέβειας, ὡς ἔργων ἀγαθῶν. The word translated by the Revised Standard Version as "religion," and for which the rendering "fear of God" is offered in the brackets above, is θεοσέβεια. It is a New Testament hapaxlegomenon. (An adjective θεοσεβής is found only in John 9:31.) "Fear of God" is its fundamental meaning<sup>55</sup> and the one which may well be selected as preferable for the rendering of θεοσέβειας in 1 Tim. 2:10.

<sup>54</sup>See p. 55, footnote 19.

<sup>55</sup>θεοσέβεια, to which Liddell and Scott give the meanings "service or fear of God" and "religiousness" (I, 791), evidently comes from the combination of θεός with σέβομαι (cf. Thayer, p. 288). To the latter word these lexicographers assign the basic significance "feel awe or fear before God," stating that the verb's probable original meaning was "I shrink from." Then in the passage of time, they indicate, σέβομαι also took on the derived meanings of "revere" and "worship." The original and fundamental idea





(chapter 2). The dress, adornment, and the conduct of women worshippers at church services, is the subject of Paul's remarks in 2:9-15, the section in which the passage we are considering occurs. Paul begins his instructions by telling Timothy, "[I desire] also that women should adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire" (verse 9), adding "but by good deeds, as befits women who profess"--and here we now provide the translation suggested as preferable for *θεοεβειαν* --"fear of God" (verse 10). The apostle means to say: good taste, a sense of modesty and sobriety, and the principle of having external attire and adornment reflect genuine humility of heart, should guide women in their choice of apparel for church, since this befits formal appearance in the presence of the living God at public worship. To dress, display jewelry, or have the hair done up in such a manner as to attract undue attention to her person is unbecoming of any Christian woman. In the matter of preparing themselves for worship, the best thing women can do is to be busily engaged in doing good works. These glorify the Lord and serve as the highest adornment. Such activity eminently befits all women members of a Christian congregation who profess fear of God.

"Fear of God," an optional translation of *θεοεβειαν*, as has been mentioned, appears to be the desirable rendering of this word in verse 10, because it is coupled with the participle *επιπαγγελομεναις*--to which the meaning "professing" or "who profess" is correctly assigned here. Most frequently, when a "profession" is made,

it is made concerning what is in the heart. It reveals a way of thinking, feeling, or "willing," which it is otherwise impossible for others to perceive. In the case of a Christian's profession of *Θεογέβεια* the prominent activity in the heart as the term suggests, may be considered that of fearing; fearing God (as object). To let *Θεογέβεια* refer to this suffices. There is no need of offering a metonymical rendering of the word, such as "religion" or "godliness" (King James Version). The Revised Standard Version's translation of "religion"<sup>57</sup> may include in this broader term also the idea of fearing God, but it does not precisely specify this concept, as the combination of *Θεογέβειαν* with *ἐπιταγέλλομενάς* would seem to require.

Paul's thought in verse 10, then, is this: If Christian women profess to have the fear of God; if they affirm that they have a holy dread of displeasing the Lord through sinning, then let them demonstrate the presence of this virtue in their hearts. Let each one employ this holy motivation to godliness for the performance of all kinds of good works which please the Lord--and, in the process, invest her own person with the most attractive possible adornment.

*Θεογέβεια* thus understood has a significance practically the equivalent of the concept of *φόβος Θεοῦ* in the Pauline

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<sup>57</sup>Perhaps following G. Bertram, who thus translates *Θεογέβεια* in Gerhard Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, edited and translated from the German by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), III, 126.

passages which we have previously considered. It is employed in 1 Tim. 2:10, we may conclude, as a synonym of φόβος Θεοῦ and designates the ethically motivating fear of God.

#### 1 Timothy 5:20

As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.

Chapter 5 of the first letter to Timothy contains further instructions for Paul's younger assistant. Timothy is told how to deal with various age groups and classes in the church, including widows and the elders who labor among the Ephesian Christians. In verses 17 to 25 Paul treats the matter of honoring, correcting, and selecting elders. The apostle says in part (verses 19 and 20):

Never admit any charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.

Timothy has just been advised (verses 17 and 18) to see to it that the office of elder and those who occupy it are held in honor by the church at Ephesus. Verse 19 charges him with the responsibility of protecting the honor due the eldership in a specific way. It could occur that someone in the church's membership might out of personal ill will or vindictiveness trump up a charge against an elder and desire to present this to Timothy. To prevent anyone's pressing such a charge, which would to some extent damage the office and work of an accused elder, Timothy is instructed to accept no accusation

against an elder except on the basis of evidence presented by two or three witnesses. On the other hand, if and when an elder has sinned and witnesses substantiate this fact as Paul has prescribed, then verse 20 directs Timothy to rebuke the offender in the presence of all his fellow-elders, with this purpose in mind, literally, "that also the rest may go on having fear." This verse in the original is:

Τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας ἐνώπιον πάντων ἔλεγε,  
ἵνα καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ φόβον ἔχωσιν.

For the interpretation of verse 20, the following points may be noted. Paul is speaking about elders in verses 17 to 19 and again in verse 22, where he touches upon the matter of their ordination or induction into office. So it is best to see references to elders in the *Τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, πάντων*, and *οἱ λοιποὶ* of verse 20, as has been suggested in the preceding paragraph. The context of verse 20 is determinative of the fact that Paul does not have in mind members of the congregation generally, as some commentators have suggested.<sup>58</sup>

The sinning of certain of the elders could not be wrong-doing of the gravest kind, then, such as would necessitate the disciplinary procedure of bringing the elders' cases before the whole congregation and require their expulsion from office (or even from the church).

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<sup>58</sup>E.g., Newport J. D. White, "The First and Second Epistles to Timothy," The Expositor's Greek Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (New York: George H. Doran Company, n.d.), IV, 136.

The directive ἐλέγχε , "rebuke," furthermore, connotes a chiding that brings shame upon an offender and, according to Paul's usage of the verb elsewhere in the Pastoral Epistles (2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:13; 2:15), brings about the prompt rectification of behavior.

What Paul is saying, then, is that, if an elder is actually found to be guilty of sinning, Timothy is not to accord him the protection afforded by being reprovved in private. Timothy is rather to administer a "public" rebuke, that is, one in the presence of the rest of the elders. The reason for this is supplied: "So that also the rest may go on having fear," says the apostle. The present tense of ἐχωσεν has a durative connotation. The Revised Standard Version for some reason does not translate καὶ , which should be rendered as "also" in context. This word is important for an understanding of Paul's meaning here. Not only are the other elders, who observe Timothy's rebuking the erring elder, to gain an incentive for continued fearing, but so, indeed, is the elder himself to whom the reproof is administered. He is the one who has had to endure the humiliation of being censored in the presence of fellow-elders and this by Timothy, an assistant of the apostle Paul and superintendent of the church's work in Ephesus. The shame of this experience coupled with the admonition and warning of God's Word which Timothy would doubtless have applied in his rebuke would affect the elder who sinned first of all, moving him to repentance and to the exercise of a precautionary fear, lest he fall again into transgression through indifference and carelessness.

The fear here meant can be none other than the fear of God which affords motivation for ethical living. In the case of the offending and reprovved elder, this fear would be aroused by his realization that the very shame and embarrassment Timothy's rebuke occasioned him were really a part of the divine punitive judgment for his past wrong-doing. The unpleasantness of experiencing this penalty, as well as contemplation of the graver divine judgments for repeated sinning, would prompt the cultivation and maintenance of the perfective fear of God in his heart. The other elders, perceiving the seriousness in the Lord's sight especially of sins committed by the church's leaders, would likewise be impelled to "go on having fear," to keep cultivating the ethically motivating fear of God in their hearts as a deterrent to heedless transgression on their own part.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> 1 Tim. 5:20 is the last of the fifteen passages in the Pauline corpus in which the apostle expressly refers to the ethically motivating fear of God. Now this godly fear would appear to be a requisite prompting factor in Christians' obedience to many of the Pauline ethical directives in which φόβος or one of its derivatives is not mentioned-- such as those with the imperatives βλέπω and βλέπετε, as in 1 Cor. 3:10; 8:9; 10:12; Gal. 5:15; and Col. 2:8; those with the imperatives φεύγε and φεύγετε, as in 1 Cor. 6:18; 10:14; and 2 Tim. 2:22; and others. The same fear, too, would be a basic consideration leading Paul to act as he relates, e.g., in 1 Cor. 9:19-23, 26-27. The fear of God as ethical motivation is an implied concomitant, it may be assumed, of virtues described or enjoined in many verses and contexts of the Pauline letters; it is expressly referred to only in the fifteen passages indicated and discussed above.

Forms of the noun φόβος or the verb φοβέομαι or derivatives of these words are found also in other passages of Paul's epistles. These words have not been treated in this chapter, because they refer to a fear other than the ethically motivating fear of God. Thus, the fear mentioned in Rom. 8:15 is sinful, servile fear or dread of the Almighty, the kind of fear that is divorced from faith in the Lord. That signified in the following passages, is sinful, servile fear of

The Fear of God As Ethical Motivation  
in Pauline Theology

We now have reached the point in our study at which we may draw together the observations made in previous pages concerning Paul's understanding and use of the concept of the fear of God, and offer a number of summary statements and conclusions regarding the fear of God as ethical motivation in Pauline theology. They follow herewith.

First, the fear signified in the apostle's "fear of God" expressions is the human emotion of fear. The fear of God mentioned in four passages (1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 7:15; Eph. 6:5; and Phil 2:12) is one that is, or is to be, accompanied by trembling, the physical counterpart of the emotion of fear. This indicates that the fear which Paul has in mind in these verses, and no doubt also whenever he speaks of the ethically motivating fear of God (as is suggested by Phil 2:12), is an intense emotion of dread. This emotion is aroused by an expectation that God may or will cause pain or distress.<sup>60</sup>

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men or things (negative circumstances, punishments, etc.): Rom. 13:3-4; 2 Cor. 7:5; 10:9; Gal. 2:12; Phil. 1:14; and 2 Tim. 1:7 (the noun *δελιλία*, "cowardice," is employed in this last verse). The fear referred to in 1 Cor. 16:10; 2 Cor. 11:3; 12:20; and Gal. 4:11 is fear in the sense of strong concern, born of love for and interest in others; a legitimate feeling of uneasiness or misgiving regarding fellow Christians, as prompted by circumstances threatening their spiritual well being. (It is possible that in both 1 Cor. 16:10 and 2 Cor. 7:5 there is a reference to two kinds of fear--the sinful, servile fear of men and the strong concern for the welfare of others.)

<sup>60</sup>The fear of God in the New Testament is the same as that in the Old Testament. Cf. the characterization of the Old Testament fear, supra, Chapter II, pp. 9-10.

Secondly, Paul refers to the fear of God also as the "fear of the Lord" (meaning Christ) or the "fear of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:11; Eph. 5:21). He does this because for him Christ is God.

Thirdly, this fear is presented as a virtue pleasing to God. Paul inculcates it in his epistles. It is to be distinguished from the sinful, servile fear of God (and of men and things as well) which is also mentioned in the apostle's writings.<sup>61</sup> The proper fear of God is ethically motivating (as 2 Cor. 5:11 clearly shows); it promotes sanctification, as will be mentioned again below.

Fourthly, the only persons in whose hearts the ethically motivating fear of God can be aroused are God's people, the converted Christians whom Paul directs to exercise this fear continually. The fear of God (or Christ) is presented as a fruit of godly grief and repentance (2 Cor. 7:10-11), of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer (Eph. 5:21). It is a fear of God which is connected with, and flows from, faith and which may therefore be designated filial fear. People who are not under the Spirit's sanctifying influence have none of the holy fear of God in their hearts (Rom. 3:18). The latter deficiency lies at the root of the general sinfulness of humanity.

Fifthly, the fear of God which prompts godliness concerns itself specifically with the punitive judgments which the just and holy God administers in his wrath against sin and sinners. The divine penalties feared are of several kinds--some meted out to men during the course of

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<sup>61</sup>See the first half of the second paragraph of footnote 59.



their earthly life; others, of infinitely greater severity, in eternity. As far as Christians are concerned, the most serious temporal divine judgment for sin to be feared is the gradual removal or loss of the Holy Spirit's influence and power in a child of God's inner being and spiritual life which leads ultimately to spiritual death and separation from God. Every sin constitutes resistance of God (or his Holy Spirit; compare 1 Thess. 5:19; Eph. 4:30<sup>62</sup>), who is constantly trying to work in his believing people both the willing and the working in behalf of his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). Paul warns Christians (Rom. 8:13) that if they keep living in accordance with the flesh, the unregenerate nature which still attaches to them even after their conversion; if they keep satisfying its desires and transgressing the commandments of God, they will die (spiritually).<sup>63</sup> Nor is the apostle himself immune from this punitive judgment of the Almighty. He states (1 Cor. 9:27): "I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified," literally "be disapproved" (by God), or "become reprobate."

Other temporal visitations of the Lord in consequence of sin, which are to be feared by the Christian, are the whole wide range of what may be called the "psychical," the "physical," and the "circumstantial" counterparts of the spiritual judgments God frequently sends along with the latter. Paul specifically mentions or refers, for

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<sup>62</sup>Also, Acts 7:51; Heb. 10:29.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. Rom. 6:23; 7:7-13; 9:30-10:4; 11:20-21.

example, to such chastisements as the public rebuke and corresponding embarrassment and shame experienced by an erring elder (1 Tim. 5:20); punishments for law-breaking imposed by God through the agency of government (Rom. 13:1-7); the withholding of divine blessing upon apostolic missionary labors (1 Cor. 2:3); perilous circumstances (2 Cor. 1:8-10); persecutions (2 Thess. 1:4-5); physical weakness, sickness and death (1 Cor. 11:27-32); and so on. These visitations include the many kinds of afflictions and sufferings God brings upon his people, earthly reverses, disappointments, privations, losses, sorrows, and other judgments. Whereas the penalties for transgressions administered in the spiritual sphere may not always be perceived, those meted out in the physical, for example, cannot escape the notice of the sinning believer.

The Christian's fear of God is concerned ultimately with the day of final divine judgment and the punishment of eternal condemnation for the reprobate (2 Cor. 5:11; compare Rom. 1:32; 1 Cor. 3:12-17). It thus has in view as its object the entire range of divine judgment for sin.<sup>64</sup>

Sixthly, as ethically motivating fear, the fear of God prevents sinning (in the way of omission or commission), prompts to holiness of living, and perfects sanctification. It thus helps preserve spiritual life and strength and prepares for divine blessing in the life on earth and that in heaven. These observations are suggested by Rom. 11:20-21;

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<sup>64</sup>Cf. Col. 3:25.

13:3-4,7; 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 7:1,11,15; Eph. 5:21; 1 Tim. 2:10-- in fact, all the passages previously studied in this chapter, and many more in the Pauline corpus which speak of divine blessing for godliness, the purpose of the Lord's chastening, and so on.

Seventhly, since the Lord regards as especially serious the sins which are committed by leaders in the church, such leaders should take particular care constantly to fear God and his punitive judgments. This is a conclusion which may be drawn from Paul's admonition in 1 Tim. 5:20.

Eighthly, fear is to be directed to certain persons whom God has placed over Christians in positions of temporal authority or headship, such as officials of government and the husband as head of the wife (Rom. 13:7 and Eph. 5:33). Christians' fearing of such persons is actually an extension or equivalent of their fear of God.

Ninthly, Paul's understanding of the fear of God that fosters the sanctified life appears to be derived chiefly from the canonical Old Testament. The primary source of the Pauline concept does not appear to be the literature of the intertestamental period, the hellenistic Jewish tradition upon which Philo drew, or the religious teaching of the early (pre-Pauline) Christian Church. Of the theological literature and traditional teaching to which Paul had access, the Old Testament alone--we have shown--had an elaborately developed doctrine of the ethically motivating fear of God. These Scriptures, it may also be added, were the literature he studied devotedly not only before, but with special diligence after, his

conversion. They were of paramount influence on his theological thought, as all his writings reveal.

We have noted various particulars in the Old Testament doctrine of the fear of God in Chapter II. There it was stated in summary that

According to the Old Testament Scriptures, the fear with which the pious in Israel stand in dread of Yahweh is concerned specifically and simultaneously with the divine holiness and wrath against sin, and with the divine righteousness and judging activity--with all these in conjunction. The Almighty, because of his holiness and wrath, is fiercely, relentlessly opposed to all sin; because of his justice, is disposed to deal with human beings in accordance with the norm, the threats, and the promises of his holy law. He is continually engaged in surveying the works of all men--including those of his own people--and bringing punitive judgments upon such as violate his will. He it is, with his retributive judgments, therefore, toward whom the godly cultivate a holy, perfective, filial fear. And this fear prompts the pious to avoid sin and live the life pleasing to the Lord.<sup>65</sup>

It is this same holy fear of God which Paul inculcated and extolled in his epistles and which he himself practiced. The fear of God in Paul's writings has as its object or focal point the same categories of wrathful divine judgments, as does the fear of God in the books of the Old Testament. In both the Old Testament and in the Pauline corpus the fear of God is one which is aroused only in the hearts of true children of God, who have received the forgiveness of their sins and enjoy peace with God through faith in the Gospel. It is wholly compatible with, indeed it is complementary to, the love for God which his

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<sup>65</sup>Supra, p. 26.

people likewise cherish in their hearts. It is a precautionary, morally perfective emotion, which promotes sanctification.

While it must be observed that the ethically motivating fear of God does not enjoy the same relative prominence in Paul's epistles that it has in the Old Testament Scriptures, the apostle's matter-of-fact introduction of this concept into his letters without further explanation, or without any extensive discussion, for example, of the advantages or disadvantages attaching to the practice thereof (such as is found in the Old Testament), suggests the conclusion that Paul presupposed his readers to be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the concept from their reading of the Old Testament. It may be assumed that Paul sought in his letters simply to build upon his addressees' understanding of the will and Word of God. The apostle's main purpose in his oral and written presentations was, after all, to relate the facts concerning the fulfilment of the Old Testament Gospel predictions in the person and work of Jesus Christ and then to apply the whole counsel of God--both that long perceived and that recently learned--to the church and its specific needs and problems on the contemporary scene.

Tenthly, an allowance should be made for some, though probably not a considerable, influence of rabbinic thought on Paul's concept of the fear of God as ethical motivation.<sup>66</sup> At the beginning of the

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<sup>66</sup>This judgment runs counter the verdict of the Jewish scholar Hans Joachim Schoeps, who in his Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History, translated from the German by Harold Knight (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), goes so far as

chapter it was observed that the fear which the rabbis inculcated was the virtuous fear recommended in the Old Testament. But they spoke of this fear only infrequently and in most cases, it appears, almost incidentally. A reason for this, no doubt, was that much of Palestinian Judaism during the century-and-a-half before Paul, and at his time, was "work-righteous." Jewish religious teachers and writers believed themselves to have merited favor and an acceptability with God through their observance of ordinances of Old Testament law and Jewish tradition.<sup>67</sup> Possessed of a conviction that they were worthy in the Lord's sight, they would not be disposed to become overly concerned about the possibility of divine punishment for sin in their lives and about the exercise of the holy, precautionary fear of God which the Old Testament enjoins. Such an attitude would carry over into their theological writings. The mention of this fear would be regarded as necessary, because of the Old Testament's emphasis on this virtue--but not a repeated or extensive reference to the same.

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to allow for absolutely no influence of the rabbis upon Paul's understanding of the ethically motivating fear of God. Schoeps offers the startling observation, pp. 187-188: "Judaism has always held fast to the tenet that man was created to do the will of God, as it is presented in the Torah . . . . The right fulfilment of the law, of course, always implies the creaturely situation of the fear of God (  $\text{יָרֵא} \text{ אֱלֹהִים}$  ), which the doing of the law ever renews. But Paul does not seem to know this idea of the fear of God . . . ."

<sup>67</sup>Cf. Davies, pp. 268-273. A person's obedience to the Torah was conceived of as providing merits which benefitted not merely himself, but also his contemporary Israelites, those who preceded him, and those who would follow him.

Now, as a former Pharisee and rabbi, Paul would certainly have been acquainted with rabbinic views concerning godly fear, just as he would also have learned of this fear from his study of the Old Testament. In view, however, of what has been said about the relative and generally prevailing Jewish disinterest in the fear of God, and of the paucity of reference to this fear in the literature of Palestinian Judaism available to Paul, it would be incorrect to conclude that the rabbinic teaching had a strong or decisive moulding influence on the apostle's concept of the fear of God. It should not be supposed that his later Christian understanding of this fear, and his apostolic instruction on the subject, ought be traced in particular to his background in rabbinic Judaism. There is no discernable indication in the Pauline teaching of any definite dependence upon the doctrine of the fear of God as presented in the rabbinic writings.

A more accurate supposition is that, once Paul had encountered the living Christ and learned to trust his grace, he then for the first time came to a full understanding of the real meaning, and his personal need, of fearing God. He realized the terrible seriousness of the divine wrath and judgments for sin and how narrowly he, in his unbelief and wilful opposition to the Lord, had escaped the penalty of condemnation. In fervent, grateful devotion to Christ, his Savior, and drawing on that Lord's power for godly living, Paul began in earnest to practice the precautionary and perfective fearing of God. His was a dread, lest through any sinful folly on his part he should

lose the blessing of the salvation now possessed. As a man "in Christ," the apostle contemplated God as He really was--righteous, holy, full of wrath against sin, and therefore to be feared; yet, at one and the same time, also loving and gracious, with pardon for transgressions, supplying strength for the sanctified life, and therefore to be loved. Christ had placed his approval on the Old Testament as the Word of God, and Paul studied the sacred text, its historical record, precepts, and promises, with renewed zeal and determination. He wanted to derive the most comprehensive understanding possible of all its truths, particularly now from the point of view of a Christian. It was here in the Scriptures of Moses and the Prophets that the apostle reviewed--and in the study of them intensified his grasp of--the prominent concept of the fear of the Lord as ethical motivation. In accordance with the Old Testament stress on this virtue, Paul through his sermons and epistles urged fellow-Christians to generate the holy fear of God.

#### The Relation of the Fear of God to Other Motivations for Ethical Living

Precautionary fear of God is but one of the motivations for sanctification which the apostle presents and inculcates in his "ethical system."<sup>68</sup> There are others, principally three others--the

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<sup>68</sup>Strictly speaking, "Paul has . . . little concern for ethics in a systematic sense"; Victor Paul Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul (New York: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 209. The designation "ethical system" is used above in a general sense, as indicating "the study,



love for God; the hope for reward, arising out of trust in God's promises as recorded in the Scriptures; and faith in the Gospel assurance of the Christian's baptismally established union with Christ and spiritual participation in the latter's death and resurrection. A brief consideration of these additional motivations, and the relationship of the fear of God to them, will help us to see this fear in proper perspective in the theology of Paul.<sup>69</sup>

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first of all, of the theological convictions which underlie Paul's concrete exhortations and instructions and, secondly, of the ways those convictions shape his responses to practical questions of conduct," p. 212. Cf. Furnish's discussion, "Is there a 'Pauline ethic'?" pp. 208-212.

<sup>69</sup> Some commentators point to a variety of ethical motivations in the Pauline writings. Rudolf Schnackenburg, e.g., in his The Moral Teaching of the New Testament, translated from the 2nd revised German edition by J. Holland Smith and W. J. O'Hara (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965) speaks of "the great motives of God's saving work" (p. 300); of "the plentitude of motives flowing from the wealth of the world of Pauline theological ideas" (p. 273). He mentions "union with Christ . . . divine election and vocation, reconciliation with God, the gift of the Spirit" (p. 273); "joy and gratitude," "liberty . . . gained from justification by God" (p. 275); "judgment according to works" (p. 279); "hope" of "full inheritance and final justification" (p. 282); a conviction of the ultimate victory of the Lord and the forces of righteousness over all opposing "superhuman spiritual powers, angelic-demonic forces" (pp. 284-286); "conscience" (p. 289); the awareness of being "the community of salvation of the last times, the true 'Israel of God'" (pp. 178, 181); love for the neighbor (pp. 218-219); and others. A careful consideration of the many specified motivations, however, will indicate that each one ultimately can be associated with one of the chief motivations designated above--the fear of God, the love for God, hope for reward, and faith in the believer's baptismally established union with Christ. Our concluding discussion, accordingly, will briefly treat of the latter three motivations and of their relationship to the fear of God.

The love for God as ethical motivation is mentioned, for example, in Phil 1:9 and 16; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:7 and 13. It is the believer's grateful response to Christ's love and saving blessings, or to the love of God for him in Christ (2 Cor. 5:14; Rom. 8:28). This *ἀγάπη*, directed by the Christian toward God, is patterned after God's love for men. It is a love which moves the lover to keep God and his will continually in mind, to have the constant purpose of doing that which is pleasing to and glorifies the Lord, and to serve Him even at the expense of personal sacrifice. It is at one and the same time both a good work--in fact, the greatest of good works, the supreme obedience rendered God--and also a motivation to other works. This love prompts the loving of fellowmen. Frequently, when Paul mentions *ἀγάπη*, the love both for God and fellowmen (the latter flowing from the former) are referred to; or, if the latter is primarily indicated by the context, the former is at least connoted.<sup>70</sup>

Hope may be defined as desire accompanied by expectation of fulfillment. The ethically motivating hope for reward which appears in the Pauline writings is one which arises as the heart's response to, especially from its trust in, the various promises of blessing found in the divine Word. These blessings range from the eternal heavenly inheritance to bounties and benedictions of many kinds for the life here on earth. Hope as prompting (an aspect of) godliness is

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<sup>70</sup> 2 Cor. 8:7,8; Eph. 1:4; 3:17; 6:23,24; 1 Thess. 5:8; 1 Tim. 1:14; 6:11; Philemon 5.

expressly mentioned in 1 Cor. 9:10; 1 Thess. 1:3; 5:8. This hope is indicated by the verbs in Rom. 8:25. It is presupposed in passages like the following: Col. 3:23-24; 1 Cor. 9:25; 15:58; 2 Cor. 4:16-5:9; 9:5-12; 1 Tim. 4:7-8. As in the case of the love for God, this hope of reward is pictured both as a good work itself and also as a stimulus to other good works. Both these aspects of hope should be kept in mind, whenever it is mentioned in the Scriptures. In passages like Rom. 5:2; 12:12; 2 Cor. 3:12; Eph. 2:12; Col. 1:5; 1 Thess 4:13; Titus 2:13, hope in the objective sense (that which is hoped for, the object of hope) is referred to, but the "subjective hope" (the emotion in the heart) is always also connoted.<sup>71</sup>

The Pauline passage which presents in extenso the apostle's teaching concerning the union of the believer with Jesus Christ is Rom. 6:1-14.<sup>72</sup> In the first ten of these fourteen verses Paul explains that in the sacrament of Baptism a person is joined to Christ and participates (spiritually) with Him in his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and continuing life. In the sacrament's washing his "old man" (verse 6), that is, his old "self" is killed off and is immediately

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<sup>71</sup>Additional passages having to do with various aspects of the ethically motivating hope of reward are: Rom. 2:6-7; 1 Cor. 3:10c, 14; Eph. 6:7-8; and 2 Tim. 2:8-12.

<sup>72</sup>The paragraphs which follow present a short summary of the writer's interpretation of the theology of Rom. 6:1-14. For an extensive exegetical study and discussion of these verses (including presentation of other interpretative viewpoints), see the writer's S.T.M. Thesis, "The Christian Under Grace, According to Romans 6:1-14" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1967).

replaced with a newly created "self," which like the resurrected Jesus is "living to God" (verse 11). Application of these Gospel facts is made in verses 11 to 14. Paul instructs the Romans first to "reckon" (λογίζεσθε) themselves to have died once-for-all to sin but to be continually living to God "in [that is, 'in union with'] Christ Jesus." Secondly, they are told that for this very reason-- because they have died and risen and are living in Christ--they are not to let sin reign in their body or its members but to yield themselves, their body and its members to God for service of the Lord. The apostle provides assurance that the believers can do what Paul here directs them to do, in the declaration: "Sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."

Thus it will be seen that in Rom. 6:1-14 Paul inculcates a "faith-motivation" ("reckon," "consider," verse 11) for sanctification. The Christian in effect is to believe essentially two things concerning himself. The one is that by virtue of his baptismally established union with Christ and participation in the Lord's death, resurrection, and continuing life he himself is continually alive to God "in Christ." This means that despite all contrary inclination arising from the still unregenerate part of his person, his still sinful nature or "flesh," he himself really and constantly wants to do the whole will of the Lord (Rom. 7:18-22). Confidence in this fact supplies him with basic motivation for ethical living. If he should ask "Why ought I to avoid sinning and cultivate godliness?" he then may respond in the assurance of faith: "Because I myself really don't want to sin; in my real inner self I truly and continually desire to please the Lord."

Then secondly the Christian is to believe that through his union with Christ he is always possessed of the power sufficient to devote himself, his body, and the body's "members" (eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet; intellect, emotions, will,<sup>73</sup> and so on) to the service of the Lord. To reckon in faith with this fact provides him with ultimate power for sanctification. Employing the motivation and power for ethical living which Romans 6 brings to his attention, every follower of the Lord can proceed resolutely to the doing of the divine will, in full anticipation of victory over sin.

Paul presents similar teaching in Eph. 4:17-25 and Col. 3:1-10. There are allusions to Romans 6 theology in many occurrences of the *ἐν Χριστῷ* formula and its variants (*ἐν κυρίῳ*, *ἐν αὐτῷ*, and others), as these appear throughout Paul's writings. Examples are found in Eph. 6:1; Phil. 4:1,4,13.

Two sections in Paul's epistles bring all four of the motivations for ethical living--fear of God, love for God, hope for reward, faith in the Gospel facts revealed in Romans 6--into close proximity in the apostle's presentation. One is 2 Cor. 4:13-5:21: Hope is presupposed in 4:13-5:9; fear is referred to in 5:10-11; love, in 5:13-15; and the "in Christ" motivation, in 5:16-17. Another is Eph. 6:5-10: fear is referred to in verse 5; love is presupposed in verses 6 and 7; hope, in verse 8; and the "in Christ" motivation is mentioned in verse 10. The

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<sup>73</sup>Justification for an inclusion of these three components of the human psychical nature among the "members" of the "body" (Rom. 6:12-13) is furnished in *ibid.*, pp. 90-95.

apostle's placing of the four motivations in juxtaposition in the same context, as he does in 2 Corinthians 4-5 and Ephesians 6, is certainly indicative of their total compatibility, according to the thinking of Paul. The question arises, however: what else can be said about the relationship of these motivations to one another? And, with specific reference to our study, it may be asked: what is the relationship of the fear of God to the other motivations for sanctification?

It has been stated that the fear of God, the love for God, and the hope for reward, besides being motivations to ethical living, are also good works in themselves. As such, and like the rest of the good works in the Christian's life, they require appropriate motivation for their steady production. They are not always present in strength. Sometimes they are absent from the heart altogether, and the latter is filled with sinful emotions and desires. Now it is just to this problem concerning the continuing generation of the holy emotions of fear, love, and hope that the words of Paul in Romans 6 may also be regarded as having relevancy. When the Christian is urged in Romans to consider himself dead to sin but alive to God, and therefore, to battle sin in the body and its members, this includes battling sin also in the heart. This means yielding the heart, too, as an instrument of righteousness to God; stirring up within it the sanctifying emotions of fear, love, and hope. It may be concluded, then, that the faith-motivation of Romans 6 is basic to the generation of the emotional

motivations.<sup>74</sup> The former is the ultimate or fundamental motivation for sanctification; the latter may be termed "second level" motivations for sanctification. Every Christian is, in effect, urged by Paul to employ the fundamental faith-motivation for the cultivation of the second level emotional motivations; and then, possessed of the full complement of divinely approved motivations, to proceed with the production of the good works that glorify God, in abundance.

To the particular question "What is the relationship in Pauline theology of the fear of God to the other motivations for ethical living" we may answer: as a second level motivation, the fear of God is regarded as dependent for its continuous generation on the ultimate motivation, the faith-motivation of Romans 6. To the other second level motivations this fear is seen simply as co-ordinate and complementary. Fear is the response to the holiness and justice of God; love, the response to the grace and love of God; hope, the response to the truth and faithfulness of God. As the divine holiness, justice, and love coexist in the deity, so the human responses to these attributes and to the divine acts which flow from them should be, and are, simultaneously generated in the pious believer's heart.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Passages like 1 Tim. 1:14 and 2 Tim. 1:13, e.g., bear out this observation.

<sup>75</sup> Among the three motivations--the virtues of the fear of God, the love for God, and the hope for reward--the love for God may be regarded as fundamental to the other two. Love continually draws the Christian's thoughts to the deity; leads him to contemplate the Lord and his nature as revealed in Holy Writ--not only his grace and mercy, but also his holiness and righteousness, and his truth and faithfulness. Thus functioning, love actually helps to evoke the perfective fear of God as an

appropriate response to the Almighty's holy nature, will, and wrath; to his righteousness and just judgments. Love also helps to evoke trust in the promises of the Lord and godly hope for proffered divine benedictions. Thus it may be observed that true love for God is in the final analysis a prompting factor in the generation of the fear of God and the hope which is founded on the divine promises, as recorded in the Scriptures. In the hierarchy of motivations to ethical living as presented in the Pauline corpus, then, the Romans 6 faith--motivation may be said to rank first; love for God, second; and both the fear and hope motivations, third.



## CHAPTER V

### THE FEAR OF GOD AS ETHICAL MOTIVATION IN THE GOSPELS AND NON-PAULINE EPISTOLARY LITERATURE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND IN THE WRITINGS OF THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

In this chapter we shall consider the concept of the ethically motivating fear of God which occurs in the Gospels and non-Pauline epistolary literature of the New Testament and in the works of the Apostolic Fathers. The occurrences of the concept in the Book of Acts have already been noted in Chapter III. The final section of the chapter will compare the Pauline view of this fear with that which obtains in the writings of other New Testament authors as well as of Christian thinkers in the post-apostolic period.

It is the opinion of the writer of this dissertation that the epistle of James was composed about the year 45 A.D.<sup>1</sup> The Johannine

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<sup>1</sup>For argumentation in support of this early date for James, see Martin H. Franzmann, The Word of the Lord Grows: A First Historical Introduction to the New Testament (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), pp. 20-26. Feine, Behm and Kuemmel list names of scholars who "understand the Epistle as the word of a man of the first generation." Among these are Feine, Behm, Zahn, Schlatter, Michaelis, Sparks, Heard, Ross, Tasker, Stauffer, Kittel, Lackmann, Michel, Elliott and Binns, Klijn, Guthrie, the Catholic scholars, and others. Kuemmel, however, opts for a time of composition "at the end of the first century." A dating in the second century is to be rejected. See Paul Feine, Johannes Behm, and Werner Georg Kuemmel, Introduction to the New Testament, translated by A. J. Mattill, Jr., from the 14th revised German edition (New York: Abingdon Press, 1966), pp. 285-291.

literature is now generally regarded as having been written during the nineties of the first century or at the very beginning of the second century.<sup>2</sup> The remainder of the non-Pauline literature of the New Testament was produced during the same period in which the apostle Paul's writings appeared, namely, from about 49 to 64 or 65 A.D.<sup>3</sup> The documents which have come down to us from the Apostolic Fathers may be dated between 90 and 155 A.D.<sup>4</sup>

### The Fear of God in the Gospels

The concept of the fear of God is found infrequently in the synoptic Gospels, and the concept of ethically motivating fear almost

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<sup>2</sup>See Franzmann, pp. 247-285; Feine, Behm and Kueimmel, pp. 175, 312, 316, 329.

<sup>3</sup>The writer regards Galatians as the first Pauline epistle, composed in the year 49 (cf. Franzmann, p. 54), and 2 Timothy as the last, written shortly before Paul's death in 64 or 65. See footnotes 18 and 19, Chapter IV, pp. 55 and 56, on the writer's view concerning the genuineness of Ephesians and the Pastorals. Many of the reasons for dating the remainder of the non-Pauline literature (the synoptic Gospels, Acts, Hebrews, 1 and 2 Peter and Jude) between 50 and 65 A.D. are provided in Franzmann's New Testament introduction, at the places the author discusses these other New Testament works. Feine, Behm and Kueimmel assign datings between 70 and 100 for the same books--except for 2 Peter, the time of whose composition they set at 130.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. the datings of the writings suggested in the introductory remarks preceding Kirsopp Lake's English translation of each of the Greek documents in The Apostolic Fathers (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, c.1912) 2 vols. See also: Erwin L. Lueker, "Apostolic Fathers," Lutheran Cyclopedia (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), pp. 44-45.

not at all. Matthew reports that, when God the Father's voice spoke from the cloud at the Transfiguration, the disciples were filled with a great fear (17:6). According to the same evangelist an angel of the Lord caused the guards at Jesus' tomb to tremble with fear, and the faithful women visitors were frightened at the sight of the angel (28:4,5,8,10). The latter is the fear of a (heavenly) creature closely associated with the Lord, which is, in fact, the fear of God.<sup>5</sup> The centurion and his soldiers at Calvary are said to have feared exceedingly when they saw the earthquake and the other supernatural events which occurred at the time of Jesus' death on the first Good Friday (27:54). Theirs was a fear of mighty acts of God.<sup>6</sup> The one direct reference in Matthew's Gospel to the fear of God as ethical motivation is Chapter 10, verse 28. There Jesus tells his disciples: "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."<sup>7</sup> In this passage the holy, perfective fear of God is to be aroused by the specific consideration of the final, damning, divine judgment for disobedience to the Lord's will.

The Gospel according to Mark contains no explicit reference to the fear of God which motivates ethical behavior. The evangelist

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<sup>5</sup>Cf. Supra, Chapter II, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Supra, pp. 11-12.

<sup>7</sup>Unless otherwise specified, the New Testament passages the writer cites in the English in this chapter are quoted from the Revised Standard Version.

alludes, however, to the fear of God which is present in the hearts of the Gerasene citizens after Jesus' miraculous healing of the demoniac (5:15) and to the fear which is the reaction of Peter, James, and John to the theophanic transfiguration of Christ and the presence of Moses and Elijah with Him on this occasion (9:6). He also refers to the fear which is the disciples' response to the mighty act of Jesus' stilling the tempest on the Sea of Galilee (4:41).<sup>8</sup> The fear which gripped the women early Easter morning, was aroused, when they encountered the angel at the open tomb (16:5,6,8). When 11:18 reports that the chief priests and the scribes sought a way to destroy Christ "for they feared him," the holy, sanctifying emotion of fear is not, of course, referred to.

In the Gospel according to Luke, the presence of an angel, or of angels, is said to have excited the fear of God in 1:12 (on the part of Zechariah), 1:29-30 (the Virgin Mary), 2:9 (Bethlehem's shepherds), and 24:4-5 (the women at the open tomb). The presence of Christ, assumed to be a spirit being, is reported to have occasioned this fear in 24:37. Various mighty acts of God and of Christ, according to the same evangelist, aroused the fear of God in the hearts of certain

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<sup>8</sup>The fear and trembling with which the woman who had been healed of her hemorrhage came to Jesus, according to 5:33 (also Luke 8:47), was probably prompted more by her shame at having to make known in public the fact of her embarrassing affliction and how she had sought a cure by touching Christ than by amazement on her part at the mighty work of healing which the Lord had done.

observers. The loosing of Zechariah's tongue after the birth of John the Baptist occasioned this fear in the case of the neighbors (1:65). The filling of the disciples' nets with the miraculous draught of fishes evoked this fear on the part of Simon Peter (5:10). The healing of the paralytic brought such fear to the hearts of all the Jews who beheld the miracle (5:26). The raising of the widow's son at Nain caused the disciples and the crowd from the city to fear (7:16). The stilling of the tempest aroused the disciples' fear (8:25). The exorcising of the demoniac filled the Gerasene citizenry with fear (8:35,37). The clouding over of the Mount of Transfiguration was a fear-inspiring event in the case of Peter, James, and John (9:34).<sup>9</sup> Reference to the ethically motivating fear of God, however, is made only in three passages. In 1:50, Mary's Magnificat includes the statement "His [God's] mercy is on those who fear from generation to generation." The second and fourth verses of chapter 18 (considered as a single passage) are part of a parable in which Christ tells of "a judge who neither feared God nor regarded man" and has the judge himself state: "I neither fear God nor regard man." According to 12:5, the Lord directs his disciples: "I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear him!"<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> With regard to the woman's fearing and trembling as reported in 8:47, compare the remarks in the previous footnote.

<sup>10</sup> The penitent malefactor's rebuke of the criminal crucified to Christ's left on Calvary, "Don't you even fear God, seeing that you are in the same judgment" (my literal translation of the Greek), 23:40,

Only once does the concept of the fear of God present itself in the Gospel according to John, and that is at 19:8. There Pilate is said to be filled with fear over the possibility that the thorn-crowned Christ standing at trial before him may be the Son of God. No express mention of the fear of God which prompts to ethical living, however, appears in this evangelist's record.

We may note, however, that numerous passages in all the Gospels record Christ's observations concerning the inevitability of divine punishment for sin, the need for his followers to "watch" and "take heed" to themselves, to their behavior, and to their status in the Kingdom. It should be added that what Jesus says in such Gospel sections is, no doubt, designed in part to arouse ethically motivating fear in the hearts of his faithful hearers.<sup>11</sup>

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strictly speaking does not provide a reference to the ethically motivating fear of God, since it is directed to an unbeliever. The speaker is, no doubt, simply asking his fellow-felon to take cognizance of the fact that the punishment for his crimes he is enduring is ultimately visited by God, is the precursor of more terrifying penalties to come. Let these thoughts, the penitent criminal suggests by implication, give rise in the companion malefactor to a measure of sobriety in his desperate situation and restrain his unbridled taunting of the crucified Christ.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. e.g., Luke 21:34-36: "But take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a snare; for it will come upon all who dwell upon the face of the whole earth. But watch at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of man." Cf. the first paragraph of footnote 59, Chapter IV, p. 114.

The Fear of God As Ethical Motivation  
in the Non-Pauline Epistles<sup>12</sup>

The writer of Hebrews speaks in 12:18-21 of the terror of the Israelites at hearing the divine voice from Sinai. He adds: "Indeed, so terrifying [*φοβερὸν*] was the sight that Moses said, 'I tremble with fear.'" It is stated in Rev. 11:13 that persons were led to fear God because of a mighty divine act, the sending of an earthquake. With the exception of these two passages, every explicit reference to the fear of God (that is, in expressions employing the term *φόβος*, or one of its cognates or parallels, and associated with *θεός* as expressed or clearly implied) in the non-Pauline epistles of the New Testament is specifically to the fear which motivates to ethical behavior. Express references to this fear are found in five of nine epistles--Hebrews, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, and Revelation. No mention is made of it in James and 1, 2, and 3 John.

In Heb. 4:1 the writer has the precautionary fear of God in mind, when he admonishes his Christian addressees: "Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest remains, let us fear lest any of you be judged to have failed to reach it." Jesus is said to have possessed this fear during his lifetime on earth, when He "offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to

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<sup>12</sup>As a matter of convenience, our study will investigate the non-Pauline epistles (for occurrences of the concept of the ethically motivating fear of God) in the order of their appearance in the New Testament.

save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear" (5:7). The word for "godly fear" in the Greek text is *εὐλάβειω*, which signifies the fear elicited from a devout individual.<sup>13</sup> The prospect of falling into the hands of the living, judging God because of deliberate sinning is termed a fearful thing (*φοβερόν*) in 10:31, and must, therefore, be regarded as a dreadful destiny. Its consideration would prompt ethically motivating fear. According to 11:7, the Old Testament patriarch Noah was filled with godly fear (*εὐλαβηθεὶς*), when he was warned by God of impending destruction. He began building the ark. That attitude is presented as exemplary. The Lord's people are urged at 12:28-29 to "offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe" (*μετὰ εὐλαβείας καὶ δέους*, literally "with godly fear and dread") in view of the fact that "our God is a consuming fire." Besides these five passages, the epistle to the Hebrews, it may be added, contains many warnings concerning divine punishments for sin, temporal and eternal, and the necessity for readers to give the most careful attention to remaining in faith and obedience to the will of God.<sup>14</sup> To conclude that the response expected included the reader's cultivation of a healthy, perfective fear of God would be in keeping with the admonitory passages of the epistle, which specifically inculcate this fear.

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<sup>13</sup> For the basic significance of this term, see Richard Chenevix Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), pp. 36-37; 173-174.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. e.g., 2:1-3; 3:5-19; 6:1-8; 10:23-39; 12:1-29.



While the mention of the ethically motivating fear of God does not occur in the letter of James, there are warnings of divine judgment against sin and sinners (2:12-13; 3:1-2; 5:8-9) which would suggest the importance to Christian readers of their generating this holy fear in their hearts.

In five passages the First Epistle of Peter expressly directs attention to the fear of God as motivation to sanctification. After admonishing his readers to holiness of life, the apostle writes: "And if you invoke as Father him who judges each one impartially according to his deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile" (1:17). A series of imperative statements in 2:17 includes the directive: "Fear God." In the next verse, household servants are instructed to be submissive to their masters "with all fear" (ἐν παντὶ φόβῳ). According to 3:1-2, the pure conduct of Christian wives, which is governed by their fear of God (τὴν ἐν φόβῳ ἑστῆν ἐναετροφὴν ὑμῶν), is to serve as an attracting influence on their husbands, to help win them for the faith. God's people are always to be prepared, to witness concerning their Christian hope, when called upon, and to do this in meekness and fear, says Peter in 3:15-16. It may also be pointed out that the "sanctifying of the Lord Christ in the heart," to which the readers are enjoined in 3:15, may be thought of as including a holy fearing of Christ.

One single clear reference to the ethically motivating fear of God is made in 2 Peter at 2:10, where heretical leaders are described

as "bold and wilful." It is said that "they are not afraid to revile the glorious ones." A literal translation of the last statement might be the following: "They do not tremble [οὐ τρέμουντες] when speaking evilly of glories [δόξας]" (meaning, in context, the glories of Christ's exalted nature, or angelic beings as representing authority, or human dignitaries in the church or in the world; or a combination of these interpretations). In the case of these leaders there is a total absence of sin-preventing fear of God. It may be assumed, however, that this fear is being inculcated when the readers are urged in 3:14 to "be zealous to be found by him without spot or blemish" and in 3:17 to "beware lest . . . [they] be carried away with the error of lawless men."

The three Johannine epistles do not allude directly to the fear of God which promotes Christian sanctification, though the importance of its cultivation would appear to be suggested by the stern reminders that no one can keep on sinning and expect to continue having fellowship with God (1 John 1:6), to know Him (1 John 2:30), to be in the light (1 John 2:9), to have the love of the Father in him (1 John 2:15). The readers are warned that none of them can transgress recklessly and continue to abide forever (1 John 2:17), to abide in Him (1 John 3:6), to have eternal life abiding in him (1 John 3:15), to be of God (3 John 11), and so on. To generate a sanctifying fear in

the heart may well be regarded as a part of a Christian's "looking to himself," lest he lose his heavenly reward (2 John 8).<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>It may be noted in passing that verse 18 of 1 John 4 has often been misinterpreted. The opinion is expressed that here John is making a general and axiomatic statement on the subjects of love and fear, to the effect that where a Christian's love for God is fully developed all fear, including all fear of God, has no place in the heart, is completely removed. Thus, e.g., A. E. Brooke comments at this verse in A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Johannine Epistles in The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), pp. 124-125: "Fear, which is essentially self-centered, has no place in love, which in its perfection involves complete self-surrender. The two cannot exist side by side. The presence of fear is a sign that love is not yet perfect. 'Love cannot be mingled with fear' (Seneca, Ep. Mor. xlvii. 18)." He continues: "κόλασιν ἔχει] not only 'includes the punishment which it anticipates,' but is in itself of the nature of punishment. Till love is supreme, it is a necessary chastisement, & part of the divine discipline, which has its salutary office." Again: "Love must altogether banish fear from the enclosure in which her work is done"; and, "Till fear has been 'cast outside,' love has not been made perfect."

Verse 18 must be considered together with verse 17. The fear spoken of in verse 18 is the opposite of the "boldness in connection with the day of judging" mentioned in verse 17; it is servile, sinful fear of God. Furthermore, the love referred to in verse 18, in the phrase φόβος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ, is the same as the love referred to in the two verses previous (16 and 17), namely God's love for his people. The thought of verses 17 and 18, then, is this (as given in a free paraphrase of the verses): God's love has been brought to its goal (τελειώται) in the case of us his people, when in thinking of judgment day we have boldness, a boldness based on our realization that even as the exalted Christ (ἐκεῖνος) is enfolded by the Father's love, so also are we despite our being yet in this world. There is no fear (in the sense of shrinking at the thought of the impending judgment and its punishments for the wicked) connected with this love of God for us, that is the love of which John is speaking, the love which has attained its goal in furnishing us with boldness. On the contrary, this goal-attaining love (ἡ τελεία ἀγάπη) casts out this fear, because this fear has to do with punishment. The person who still shrinks at the thought of judgment day has not been brought to the goal (of boldness) by the love of God. It will be seen that, since John is speaking of servile and not filial fear of God in verse 18, the apostle is making no statement concerning an incompatibility of holy, ethically motivating fear

Jude has this godly fear in mind, when he states that certain heretical persons have invaded love-feasts (*ἀγάπαις*) and defiled them as blemishes, "gorging themselves without fear" (*βυβρωχούμενοι φόβου*) and tending their own wants exclusively (verse 12). Further on, the same writer directs that if and when fellow church members are negatively influenced and injured by these heretics, the faithful should put forth every effort to gain back those who can yet be reclaimed. On the other hand, those who get beyond help, despite all that is done to recover them from error, are simply to be pitied in fear (*ἐν φόβῳ*), that is, in the holy fear of God (verse 23). In such fear Jude's readers are to avoid these fallen brethren; for further contact with them would increase the likelihood of contamination and infection in the Christian ranks, and consequent visitations of stern, retributive divine justice.

The ethically motivating fear of God is expressly referred to in four passages of the Apocalypse: 11:18; 14:7; 15:4; and 19:5. In 11:18 and 19:5, God's people are characterized as those who fear Him. According to the former verse, John in his visionary experience on Patmos hears the twenty-four heavenly elders praise God after the final judgment for beginning his omnipotent reign and say (in part): "The nations raged, but thy wrath came, and the time for the dead to

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and a Christian's love for God, which is the believer's response to the "goal-attaining" love of God for him. Filial fear and love of God are virtuous complementary emotions. Cf. Supra, Chapter IV, p. 131, footnote 75.

be judged, for rewarding thy servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear thy name." The "name" of God as elsewhere in Scripture means here God Himself, who reveals Himself to his people in his Word and deeds. Chapter 19, verse 5, takes the reader to a similar heavenly scene after judgment day. John reports his hearing a voice which came from God's throne and cried, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great."

In Rev. 14:7 the apostle repeats the Gospel message which he heard an angel proclaiming to all earth-dwellers, namely, "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water." The symbolism of 14:6-7 is best interpreted as signifying the unimpeded progress of Gospel preaching throughout the New Testament era. The Gospel's great invitation is here represented as the evangelical directive to fear and glorify God in view of his judging activity which has begun, is now (in the entire New Testament era) in progress, and will reach its completion at the last day. Of course, the activity of fearing and glorifying God can be entered upon only by those who trust and follow the Redeemer-Lamb of 14:1-6.

Revelation 15:2-4 records John's vision of "those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands." These persons are, as the context shows, the number of saints already in glory and ready to offer praises to God for what they see his providence, represented by the glassy sea, is about to accomplish near the end of

time. That is the visitation of final, terrifying, wrathful divine punishments (the last seven plagues, 15:1,5-8; 16:1-21) upon the wicked, prior to the final and immediately consequent judgment itself. John hears the beast-conquerers singing the following song, which is called "the song of Moses . . . and the song of the Lamb," that is, the song concerning both Moses and the Lamb, especially the mighty acts of deliverance God wrought through Moses and the Lamb, respectively:

Great and wonderful are thy deeds,  
 O Lord God the Almighty!  
 Just and true are thy ways,  
 O King of the ages!  
 Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord?  
 For thou alone art holy.  
 All nations shall come and worship thee,  
 for thy judgments have been revealed.

When the saints ask the rhetorical question "Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord?" it appears in this context that the fear of God referred to is of broad, more inclusive significance. As far as the godly in heaven and on earth are concerned, it is fear prompted by contemplation of the mighty divine acts of judgment and deliverance, as perceived in the past and in the present; but it is also in their case a filial fear, prompting a continuance in holy living. As far as the wicked on earth are concerned, it is fear aroused, in one sense, by the mighty acts of God. At the same time it is also servile, cringing fear of God, evoked of necessity. This fear is accompanied by chagrin and desperation (compare 11:13). The point is that absolutely all men must and will fear God at the end, whether they wish to or not, when the Almighty's righteous judgments are fully revealed. It

is with this in view that the saints ask, "Who shall not fear . . . thy name, O Lord?"

The Book of Revelation contains many warnings to repent and desist from sinning. It issues threats of divine punishment to wrong-doers. Its pages feature predictions and symbolic portrayals of coming catastrophes in which the wicked shall be engulfed, culminating in the final destructive judgment and exhibition of God's wrath against his enemies. The Apocalypse presents descriptions of evil doers' terror, grief, and lamentation, when the penalties of their transgressions overtake them.<sup>16</sup> The purpose of all of this, it may be pointed out, is to instill a holy, perfective fear of God in the hearts of readers, which will prompt them to walk in the ways of the Lord.

#### Fear of God in the Writings of the Apostolic Fathers

There are numerous express references to that fear of God which promotes godly behavior in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. Such references are found in 1 and 2 Clement, Ignatius, Barnabas, Shepherd of Hermas, Didache, and the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philipppians. They are lacking in the Martyrdom of Polycarp, Diognetus, the fragment from the Apology of Quadratus, and the fragments from Papias' reports.

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<sup>16</sup>Cf. e.g., 1:7; 2:4-5.14-16.20-23; 3:1-3.15-19; 6:12-17; 8:7-9:21; 14:9-11.17-20; 15:5-16:21; 19:11-21; 20:7-15; 21:8; 22:18-19.

The author of The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, mentioning past excellences of the Corinthian congregation, states: "You were adorned by your virtuous and honourable citizenship and did all things in the fear of God" (2:8).<sup>17</sup> Plainly, the ethically motivating fear of God is meant. The troublesome situation in Corinth, to which 1 Clement addresses itself, is due in part to the absence of this fear in the hearts of members there, according to 3:4. The picture in the Corinthian congregation is this: envy and strife have developed to the point where Clement writes:

For this cause righteousness and peace are far removed, while each deserts the fear of God and the eye of faith in him has grown dim, and men walk neither in the ordinances of his commandments nor use their citizenship worthily of Christ.

The opening verses of chapter 13 indicate that what the Corinthians need is to reestablish obedience to the Lord's Word and cultivate humility in godly fear, because of the instruction of Is. 66:2, which is quoted in 1 Clem. 13:4 as follows: "On whom shall I look, but on the meek and gentle and him who trembles at my oracles." This thought is then reinforced with the citation of examples of humility from the Old and New Testaments, and the author's assertion (19:1): "The humility and obedient submission of so many men of such great fame, have rendered better not only us, but also the generations before us, who received his [God's] oracles in fear and truth."

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<sup>17</sup>This English translation of the Greek text, as well as the translations given in the quotations to follow, are those provided by Lake.



In a section in which the writer of 1 Clement inculcates Christian virtues, three successive verses, 21:6-8, refer to the fear of God which promotes sanctification:

Let us reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us, let us respect those who rule us, let us honour the aged, let us instruct the young in the fear of God, let us lead our wives to that which is good. Let them exhibit the lovely habit of purity, let them show forth the innocent will of meekness, let them make the gentleness of their tongue manifest by their silence, let them not give their affection by factious preference, but in holiness to all equally who fear God. Let our children share in the instruction which is in Christ, let them learn the strength of humility before God, the power of pure love before God, how beautiful and great is his fear and how it gives salvation to all who live holily in it with a pure mind.

The validity of the previous teaching is confirmed in 22:1-7 with the citation of Ps. 34:11-17. At the beginning of the latter Scripture section, mention is made of the fear that leads to godliness. Chapter 22, verse 1, includes an appeal to Ps. 34:11 and reads: "Now the faith which is in Christ confirms all these things, for he himself through his Holy Spirit calls us thus:--'Come, Children, hearken to me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord.'" As was suggested in Chapter II above,<sup>18</sup> the expression "the fear of the Lord" in Ps. 34:11 may well refer both to the ethically motivating fear of God as emotion and to the pious behavior, the ethical living, in which such fear issues.

In 1 Clem. 23:1, blessings which attach to godly fear and sincerity are mentioned: "The all-merciful and beneficent Father has compassion

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<sup>18</sup> Supra, Chapter II, p. 21.

on those that fear him, and kindly and lovingly bestows his favours on those that draw near to him with a simple mind." According to the context of 28:1, ethically motivating fear ought to be prompted by a consideration of the final resurrection, judgment to come, and the necessity of everyone's appearing before the righteous God. Chapter 28, verse 1, states: "Since then all things are seen and heard by him, let us fear him, and leave off from foul desires of evil deeds, that we may be sheltered by his mercy from the judgments to come." Righteous persons are referred to as "those who feared God" and as "those who live in fear and love [namely, of God]" in 45:6 and 51:2, respectively. The reference in these verses is to the perfective emotion of fear, as this pious wish is expressed near the close of the epistle, at 64:1: "Now may God . . . give unto every soul that is called after his glorious and holy name, faith, fear, peace, patience and long-suffering." The last verse is the eleventh passage in 1 Clement which deals with the fear of God that promotes the holy life.

Three passages in The Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians draw the readers' attention to the fear of God. All three afford instruction for the Christian life, inculcate this fear, and reveal that the recommended fear of God is to be specifically aroused in consideration of the divine punitive judgments which follow upon sin. In 4:4-5 the writer of 2 Clement counsels:

And we must not fear men rather than God. For the Lord [Christ] says: "If you . . . do not my commandments, I will cast you out, and will say to you, Depart from me, I know not whence ye are, ye workers of iniquity."

Chapter 5, verse 4, (supposedly) supplies the record of a conversation between Jesus and Simon Peter, which the writer of the epistle introduces for didactic purposes. 5:4 reads:

Jesus said to Peter, "Let the lambs have no fear of the wolves after their death; and do ye have no fear of those that slay you, and can do nothing more to you, but fear him who after your death hath power over body and soul, to cast them into the flames of hell."

In 18:2 the writer paradigmatically expresses the need he feels of striving to avoid sin, lest he fall into ultimate condemnation. He declares:

For I myself too am altogether sinful, and I have not yet escaped temptation, but I am still in the midst of the devices of the devil, yet I am striving to follow after righteousness, that I may have the strength at least to draw near to it, in fear of the judgment to come.

Bishop Ignatius, who wrote epistles to various Christian churches shortly after the turn of the second century, makes explicit mention of the ethically motivating fear of God only in the epistle to the Ephesians 11:1. He writes:

These are the last times. Therefore let us be modest, let us fear the long-suffering of God, that it may not become our judgment. For let us either fear the wrath to come, or love the grace which is present,--one of the two,--only let us be found in Christ Jesus unto true life.

Ten passages in the Epistle of Barnabas remind the addressees of the fear of God which promotes obedience to the divine will. This fear is commended along with other virtues in the words, "Fear then, and patience are the helpers of our faith, and long-suffering and continence are our allies" (2:2). The fearing of God and the divine activity of

judging are brought into relationship as correlatives in 4:11-12.

Here the writer of the epistle admonishes,

Let us be spiritual, let us be a temple consecrated to God, so far as in us lies let us "exercise ourselves in the fear" of God, and let us strive to keep his commandments in order that we may rejoice in his ordinances,

and then adds, "The Lord will 'judge' the world 'without respect of persons.'" When the pious who avoid "those who seem to fear the Lord, but sin like the swine" are acknowledged as blessed (10:10) and bidden to "Consort with those who fear the Lord" (10:11), it is clear that the author of The Epistle of Barnabas is speaking of the ethically motivating fear of God.

The author does the same in the eleventh chapter, where he discusses supposed Old Testament adumbrations of the sacrament of baptism (and of the cross of Christ). At 11:5 there is apparently a citation of Is. 33:16-18, which contains a reference to the holy, sanctifying fear of God. The prophet is quoted as saying of the righteous man: "His water is sure, ye shall see the King in his glory, and your soul shall meditate on the fear of the Lord." Finding an allusion to baptism in Ezek. 47:1-12, the writer of the epistle explains at 11:11 that the prophet "means to say that we go down into the water full of sins and foulness, and we come up bearing the fruit of fear in our hearts, and having hope on Jesus in the Spirit."

Chapter nineteen of the Epistle of Barnabas provides information on the "way of teaching" known as "The Way of Light." A number of instructions which help comprise the latter recommend to Christians

the generation of the holy fear that prompts God-glorifying behavior.

Verse 2 records the directive: "Thou shalt love thy maker, thou shalt fear thy Creator, thou shalt glorify Him who redeemed thee from death . . . thou shalt not desert the commandments of the Lord."

Verse 5 reads in part: "Thou shalt not withhold thy hand from thy son or from thy daughter, but shalt teach them the fear of God from their youth up." (The fear referred to here is again, no doubt, both the holy emotion and the sanctified behavior to which the emotion is an aid.) The instruction of verse 7 is as follows:

Thou shalt not be double-minded or talkative. Thou shalt obey thy masters as a type of God in modesty and fear; thou shalt not command in bitterness thy slave or handmaid who hope on the same God, lest they cease to fear the God who is over you both; for he came not to call men with respect of persons, but those whom the Spirit prepared.

Contrasting with "The Way of Light" is "The Way of the Black One," which is treated in chapter 20. One of the marks of the latter Way is the absence of the fear of God that prevents sinning. That is immediately seen in the description of "The Way of the Black One" (20:1-2), cited in part as follows:

But the Way of the Black One is crooked and full of cursing, for it is the way of death eternal with punishment, and in it are the things that destroy their soul: idolatry, frowardness, arrogance of power, hypocrisy, double-heartedness, adultery, murder, robbery, pride, transgression, fraud, malice, self-sufficiency, enchantments, magic, covetousness, the lack of the fear of God; persecutors of the good, haters of the truth, lovers of lies, knowing not the reward of righteousness, who "cleave not to the good," nor to righteous judgment, who attend not to the cause of the widow and orphan, spending wakeful nights not in the fear of God, but in the pursuit of vice . . . .

A literary work in the form of an apocalypse, the Shepherd of Hermas consists of a series of revelations made to Hermas in a number of Visions, Mandates, and Parables, which also serve as divisions of the document. The Mandates and most of the Parables are the record of conversations between the shepherd, or angel of repentance, and Hermas, in which the former gives revelations and instructions to the latter. Six of the Mandates and two of the Parables contain ten express references--some rather extensive--to the ethically motivating fear of God.

In Mandate 1:1-2 the shepherd informs Hermas of the primal divine commandments. He says:

First of all believe that God is one, "who made all things to be out of that which was not," and contains all things, and is himself alone uncontained. Believe then in him, and fear him, and in your fear be continent. Keep these things . . . .

Mandate 6:I:1 directs attention again to the first Mandate, as the shepherd says, "I command you . . . in the first commandment to keep faith and fear and continence." Mandate 7 in its entirety is an extended discussion of the precautionary fear of God. The Mandate is given as follows:

"Fear," said he, "' the Lord and keep his commandments.' By keeping, therefore, the commandments of God you shall be strong in every act, and your conduct shall be beyond compare. For by fearing the Lord you shall do all things well, and this is the fear with which you must fear and be saved. But the devil do not fear, for by fearing the Lord you have power over the devil because there is no might in him. But where there is no might, neither is there fear. But where there is glorious might, there is also fear. For everyone who has might gains fear. But he who has not might is despised by all. But fear the works of the devil, because they are evil. If therefore,

you fear the Lord you shall not do them, but depart from them. There are therefore two sorts of fear. For if you wish to do that which is evil, fear the Lord and you shall not do it. But, on the other hand, if you wish to do that which is good, fear the Lord, and you shall do it. So that the fear of the Lord is mighty and great and glorious. Therefore fear the Lord and you shall live in him. And whosoever shall fear him and keep his commandments, shall live to God." "Wherefore, sir," said I, "did you say of those who keep his commandments, 'they shall live to God'?" "Because," said he, "the whole creation fears the Lord, but it does not keep his commandments. Those, therefore who fear him and observe his commandments,--it is they who have life with God. But as for those who do not observe his commandments, neither have they life in him."

The shepherd directs Hermas in Mandate 8:8-9:

Listen, then . . . to the deeds of goodness, which you must do and not refrain from them. First of all, faith, fear of God, love and harmony, words of righteousness, truth, patience; than these there is nothing better in the life of man. If any man keep these things and do not refrain from them, he becomes blessed in his life.

The shepherd contrasts the worldly with the godly in Mandate 10:I and states in 10:I:6:

But they who have the fear of God, and inquire concerning the Godhead and truth, and have their heart towards the Lord, perceive quickly and understand all that is said to them, because they have the fear of the Lord in themselves; for where the Lord dwells, there also is great understanding.

Mandate 12 deals with evil desire and good desire. The shepherd gives Hermas these instructions in 12:II:2-4:

It is necessary therefore, to refrain from the wicked desires, that by refraining you may live to God. But as many as are overcome by them, and do not resist them, shall perish finally, for these desires are deadly. But put on the desire of righteousness and resist them, being armed with the fear of the Lord. For the fear of God dwells in the desire which is good. If the evil desire see you armed with the fear of God, and resisting it, it will flee far from you and will no longer be seen by you, for fear of your weapons.

The dialogue in 12:III:1 is given in this manner:

"I would like, sir," said I, "to know in what way I must serve the good desire." "Listen," said he, "'work righteousness' and virtue, and fear of the Lord, faith and meekness, and whatever good things are like to these. For by working these you will be a well-pleasing servant of God . . . ."

In Mandate 12:VI:3 the shepherd tells Hermas: "Listen, therefore, to me, and fear him who has all power, 'to save and to destroy,' and keep these commandments, and you shall live to God."

Parable 5:I:4-5 presents in part the Shepherd's explanation of the kind of fasting which is pleasing to the Lord, and in the process makes mention of the godly fear which promotes sanctification. These are his words:

But fast to God in this way: do nothing evil in your life, but serve the Lord with a pure heart; 'keep his commandments' and walk in his ordinances, and let no evil desire arise in your heart, but believe in God, that if you do these things and fear him, and refrain from every wicked act, you shall live to God; and if you do this you will fulfil a great fast and one acceptable to God.

The last explicit reference in the Shepherd of Hermas to the ethically motivating fear of God occurs at Parable 8:XII:2. After the shepherd bids Hermas to urge all men to repent, the latter responds: "Sir, I hope that all who hear them [the things which will comprise Hermas' message] will repent. For I am persuaded that each one who recognizes his own deeds and fears God will repent."

A single three-verse paragraph in the fourth chapter of the document known as the Didache, or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, gives explicit instruction concerning the fear of God that prompts



obedience to the divine will. This section (verses 9 to 11) brings the following household duties to the attention of catechumens in the early Church:

Thou shalt not withhold thine hand from thy son or from thy daughter, but thou shalt teach them the fear of God from their youth up. Thou shalt not command in thy bitterness thy slave or thine handmaid, who hope in the same God, lest they cease to fear the God who is over you both; for he comes not to call men with respect of persons, but those whom the Spirit has prepared. But do you who are slaves be subject to your master, as to God's representative, in reverence and fear.

The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians presents the congregation at Philippi with many exhortations to virtue. Among these are the directives recorded in 2:1, 4:2, and 6:3, which include mention of the fear of God that is conducive to sanctification. The instruction of 2:1 is this:

"Wherefore girding up your loins serve God in fear" and truth, putting aside empty vanity and vulgar error, "believing on him who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and gave him glory" . . . [the Christ] who is coming as "the Judge of the living and of the dead," whose blood God will require from them who disobey him.

That recorded in 4:2 is, in part, this: "Next [let us] teach our wives to remain in the faith given to them . . . and to educate their children in the fear of God."

Chapter 6, verse 3, reads:

So then "Let us serve him with fear and all reverence" [μετὰ φόβου καὶ πάσης εὐλαβείας] as he himself commanded us, and as did the Apostles, who brought us the Gospel, and the Prophets who foretold the coming of our Lord. Let us be zealous for good . . . .

With the above verses from the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, we bring to a close our listing of passages in the Apostolic Fathers which contain express reference to the ethically motivating fear of God. It should be stated that in many other places in their writings the Fathers issue warnings concerning divine judgment for evil-doing, advise that readers take earnest heed to their spiritual well-being, and so on. The urgency of Christians' practicing that fear of God which promotes godliness is implied in all such contexts, even though no express mention is made of the fear of God which provides motivation to ethical living.

Summary Observations, Including A Comparison  
with the Pauline Concept of the  
Ethically Motivating Fear of God

We have listed the references to the ethically motivating fear of God in the Gospel and non-Pauline epistolary literature of the New Testament and in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. A number of summary observations are in order. These include a comparison of the concept of this fear as it appears in the Pauline corpus with that which appears in the rest of the New Testament and in the Christian writings that have come down to us from the immediately post-Apostolic period.

Wherever it is mentioned in the rest of the New Testament and in the works of the Apostolic Fathers, the holy, precautionary fear of God is essentially the same kind as that featured in the Pauline epistles. It is presented as a God-pleasing virtue, which every

Christian ought necessarily to cultivate. This fear concerns itself with the punitive divine judgments here on earth and hereafter in eternity which God in his justice and holiness administers against sin and sinners. It prevents sinning, prompts to good works, and prepares for divine blessing temporal and eternal in the lives of those who generate it.

The fear of God which promotes sanctification is expressly mentioned once in the Gospel according to Matthew and three times in the Gospel according to Luke--four times in all, in the New Testament Gospels. This compares to the fifteen explicit references to such fear which occur in seven of the thirteen Pauline epistles, and the seventeen references found in five of the remaining nine New Testament epistles. The Book of Acts, we have noted (in Chapter III), makes mention of this fear four times. It may, therefore, be stated that the (two) Gospels contain only four of the forty New Testament references to the fear of God as ethical motivation. The Gospels' mention of this fear reflects no influence of, or dependence upon, the Pauline presentation of the concept, nor does Paul appear to be influenced by the Gospels' usage. The relative paucity of express references to the ethically motivating fear of God in the Gospels stems doubtless from the fact that Jesus did not teach extensively on the subject. This may be due to the considerable treatment of this virtue in the Old Testament Scriptures, which was well known to the Jews and carefully studied by Jesus' followers. It has already been noted that many of Christ's discourses and warnings issued to his disciples imply

the importance of their cultivating the holy, perfective fear of God.

Almost half (fifteen) of the references to the ethically motivating fear of God which occur in the New Testament epistles are found in Paul's writings. Many of the seventeen that appear in five of the non-Pauline epistles are met with in contexts or applications similar to those in which Pauline fear-of-God passages are featured, though no interdependence of the Pauline and non-Pauline verses is indicated. As in Rom. 3:18, the evil behavior of wicked persons is associated with the absence of the fear of God in the heart in 2 Peter 2:10 and Jude 12. Godly fear is concerned with the divine judicial dealings which will take place at the end of time in Heb. 10:31 and 12:28-29, as in 2 Cor. 5:11; with God's judging activity in the present life on earth in Heb. 4:1; 1 Peter 1:17; Jude 23; Rev. 14:7 and 15:2-4, as in Rom. 11:20-21. Admonitions to fear God are provided directly or indirectly, to Christians as a whole or to classes among them, in 1 Peter 2:17 and 18; 3:1-2; and 3:15-16, as in Rom. 13:7; Eph. 5:21 and 33; 6:5; Col. 3:22; and 1 Tim. 2:10. The fear of God that promotes sanctification is mentioned as a characteristic of God's people in Heb. 5:7 (where the God-fearer is Christ Himself); 11:7; Rev. 11:18 and 19:5, as it is in 1 Cor. 2:3; 7:11 and 15. No parallels are furnished in the non-Pauline epistles for the unique directives regarding the filial, perfective fear of God issued in three Pauline passages, 2 Cor. 7:1; Phil. 2:12-13; 1 Tim. 5:20. It will be seen that the apostle Paul treats the concept of the fear of God as ethical

motivation far more extensively in his writings than does any other single New Testament author. This may, of course, be due to the fact that we have more of his works than we do writings from any other sacred penman. As the early Church grew and many Gentiles were received into the Christian fellowship, most of the sacred writers apparently felt constrained to make increasing reference to this fear.

The same holds true of the Apostolic Fathers, most of whom refer to the ethically motivating fear in their writings. The First Epistle of Clement, the Epistle of Barnabas, and the Shepherd of Hermas mention this fear in eleven, ten, and ten passages, respectively. According to the method of calculation employed by this writer, there are thirty-nine passage-references<sup>19</sup> to the godly, edifying fear in the seven works of the Apostolic Fathers from which citations were made in the previous section of this chapter. As in the case of the Pauline corpus and other New Testament writings, many additional verses in the Apostolic Fathers' works which warn of divine punishment for evil-doing and inculcate obedience to the divine commandments appear to recommend the cultivation of godly fear by implication, without expressly mentioning this fear.

Like Paul and other New Testament writers, the Apostolic Fathers see the absence of the sanctifying fear of God in the heart as a root

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<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, this is the same number of passage references to the ethically motivating fear of God as that found in the New Testament Scriptures.

of human wickedness (1 Clem. 3:4; Barn. 10:10; 20:1-2); regard this fear as the appropriate Christian response to God's judgments, particularly the final judgment (1 Clem. 28:1; 2 Clem. 4:4-5; 5:4; 18:2; Ign. 11:1; Barn. 4:11-12; Polycarp to the Phil. 2:1); and issue instructions to their addressees generally, and also to particular groups among them, concerning the cultivation of this fear (1 Clem. 21:6-8; 22:1; Barn. 19:2.5.7; Hermas, Mandate 7; and other passages as previously noted<sup>20</sup>). Like the apostles, they recognize the holy fearing of God as a distinguishing characteristic of the truly godly. They point to the blessings which attach to its practice (1 Clem. 2:8; 13:4; 14:1; 23:1; 45:6; 51:2; and other passages as previously noted<sup>21</sup>). The Fathers do not cite Pauline or other New Testament fear-of-God passages, though many of their statements appear to be influenced by the sacred authors. That the Fathers' theology of the ethically motivating fear of God is in part derived also from their study of the Old Testament is indicated by their quotation from these Scriptures (compare 1 Clem. 13:4; 22:1; and Barn. 11:5) and the Fathers' mentioning of the blessings which accrue to those who fear the Lord, as do certain Old Testament authors.

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<sup>20</sup>Additional passages: Hermas, Mandate 1:1-2; 6:I:1; 12:II:2-4; III:1; VI:3; Parable 5:I:4-5; Didache 4:9-11; Polycarp to the Phil. 4:2; 6:3.

<sup>21</sup>Additional passages: 1 Clem. 64:1; Barn. 2:2; 10:11; 11:5; 11:11; Hermas, Mandate 8:8-9; 10:I:6; Parable 8:VI:2.

To conclude, it may be said that Paul, the rest of the New Testament writers who treat of the sanctifying fear of God, and the Apostolic Fathers who do the same share the same understanding of this concept and introduce it into their writings often in similar contexts and with similar applications. Mention of the ethically motivating fear appears in more separate and distinct contexts in the Pauline corpus than in the literature left us by any other single writer of the apostolic or immediately post-apostolic period.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It will be useful now to summarize the findings and the conclusions of our study of the fear of God as ethical motivation in Pauline theology. We set out to investigate possible sources of this concept in the thinking of the apostle Paul, beginning with the Old Testament. The Scriptures of the Old Testament were found to be replete with references to the fear of God which prompts ethical behavior. This fear is presented there as a virtue which the people of the Lord are directed to cultivate. It is the human emotion of fear aroused by an expectation that God may or will cause one pain or distress. The fear of God is specifically the response excited in the heart, when the pious in Israel soberly and simultaneously contemplate Yahweh's holiness and wrath against sin, and his righteousness and activity of judging, as the Judge of all mankind. The Almighty is fiercely and relentlessly opposed to all transgression; continually engaged in surveying the works of all men--including those of his own people--rewarding the righteous with blessings, but bringing punitive judgments upon violators of his will. For this reason the godly consciously direct their fear toward God and employ this as a motivation to avoid sin and to live in obedience to the divine commandments.

A survey of the Old Testament reveals that divinely inflicted penalties for wrong-doing are imposed, on the one hand, in the spiritual



sphere. Such punishments consist of God withdrawing his Spirit to a certain extent from a sinning Israelite and a resultant weakening of spiritual life; or, worse yet, the complete removal of the Spirit, which means loss of this life altogether.

Other consequences of transgression are divine visitations in terms of the psychical, physical, and circumstantial judgments which overtake God's people. These are the afflictions and sufferings of many kinds which Yahweh brings upon them. The Scriptures mention the burden of the troubled conscience, mental upsets, physical sicknesses of all types, and earthly reverses. The reverses include privations, losses, and sorrows; failures of friends, oppressions of enemies, and the like. A feature of the divine imposition of such trials and troubles is that in many instances these judgments are meted out to the penitent, or are allowed to continue for them, even after they have received forgiveness for the sins which called forth the punishments. This aspect of the divine judicial procedure serves to impress the godly with the seriousness and the fearfulness of the Lord's retribution for sin, and intensify in them at once the dread of the divine displeasure and the fervent desire to walk in the way of righteousness. The most fearful of the divine punishments for sin are future. They are the eternal rewards of torment for evil-doing which shall be assigned at the final, eschatological judgment and dispensed through eternity.

Nowhere in the Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets is it suggested, however, that fearing God precludes loving the Lord. On

the contrary, Israel is enjoined to exercise both emotions simultaneously and employ both as complementary motivations to godliness. Fear is to be regarded as a proper response to the holiness and justice of God; love, as the response to the divine love, which provides pardon for sin, salvation, and a host more blessings of rich variety--including the helpful correction of behavior through affliction. The punitive divine judgments for residual sin in the lives of the faithful are in actuality to be considered Fatherly chastisements, resulting from the interplay of the three attributes of the deity mentioned. Divine love transforms painful visitations into salutary chastening experiences for the Lord's people, chastisements which are instrumental in preserving their spiritual life. Only the believing and forgiven children of God can faithfully contemplate the deity as the holy, righteous, and loving Lord He is, and can and do direct toward Him the filial fear his Word requires.

Such is the instruction provided in the Old Testament with reference to the ethically motivating fear of God. In the consideration of possible sources of Paul's thought concerning this fear we next turned to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the surviving literary documents of the Qumran community, and Philo. Paul could have been acquainted with the literature of developing Judaism, with the beliefs of the Essene sect at Qumran, and with the hellenistic Jewish tradition on which Philo drew. It was found, however, that the intertestamental writings contain very few references to the fear of God. Wherever these works present the concept of the fear of God that motivates to

sanctification, the significance of this idea is not developed beyond what is offered in the Scriptures of the canonical Old Testament.

Furthermore, Philo's view of this fear differs in an important particular from both the Old Testament and Pauline conception.

Another potential influence on the apostle's thinking was the practical religious teaching and theology of the Christian Church during the earliest years of its existence. The source of information on the theology of the pre-Pauline church is Acts, particularly the first half of the work. Yet only four passages in Acts 1 to 12 were seen to speak of the fear of God which promotes holy living. On the basis of the evidence gathered, the conclusion was reached that any formative influence on a Pauline conception of the fear of God as ethically motivating is less likely to have come from the intertestamental literature, the hellenistic Jewish tradition which influenced Philo, and the religious teaching of the early church than from the canonical Old Testament.

In the opening section of the fourth chapter of our study we took into account one more factor which may have affected the apostle's understanding of this fear. That is his background in rabbinic Judaism. It was demonstrated that a few references to the ethically motivating fear of God appear in the literature of the Palestinian rabbis. These may be indicative of the kind of instruction on the subject the young Paul received during the period of his training under Gamaliel in Jerusalem. Judgment as to the extent of rabbinic influence on Paul's

concept of the fear of God was deferred until the apostle's view had been investigated.

Paul's conversion to Christianity on the Damascus Road meant a complete reorientation of his life and redirection of his career. Having been confronted and commissioned by the living Christ, the apostle went forth into the world of his day no longer as a persecutor of the church but as a dedicated proclaimer of the Christian Gospel. He became the foremost missionary of the New Testament era. Significantly, the same Paul who delighted to discourse on the grace of God and the salvation divinely prepared for, and offered to, a fallen humanity, also provided Christians with earnest instruction concerning the necessity of their standing in a holy dread of the Almighty and employing the fear of God as a motivation for sanctified living.

It was noted that the apostle expressly refers to the ethically motivating fear of God fifteen times in as many passages scattered through seven of the thirteen letters ascribed to Paul. In these verses God, or the Lord, or Christ, as the object of fear, is either expressly named or implied. We proceeded to consider the fifteen verses consecutively and exegetically. A main point of the information provided in Rom. 3:18 is the indication that a fundamental moral failure of unbelieving men, a deficiency which lies at the root of the notorious transgressing of the divine will to which all the unregenerate of humanity give themselves, is their refusal to reckon with God's wrathful punishments for wickedness and cultivate the

perfective fear of the Lord. To the generation of this fear Paul's Christian addressees are urged in Rom. 11:20-21, 2 Cor. 7:1, and Phil. 2:12-13 (where obedience "with fear and trembling" is enjoined), lest they fail of divine grace, and the righteous God cut off their spiritual life. It is stated in 1 Cor. 2:3 and 2 Cor. 5:11 that Paul himself is careful to conduct his ministry in such a holy dread of the Almighty. In the former passage Paul says that a physical trembling accompanied his fearing. The context of the latter makes clear that the prospect of the final judgment is the consideration which arouses his fear.

The Corinthians are commended for the fear of God and the "fear and trembling" which godly repentance had wrought in them (2 Cor. 7:11 and 15). The readers of Ephesians are bidden to be subject to one another in the fear of Christ (Eph. 5:21). In Eph. 6:5 and Col. 3:22 slaves are directed to obey their masters in the same fear (the former passage urging obedience "with fear and trembling"). In the first letter to Timothy women are exhorted to adorn themselves with good works in a manner befitting their profession of the fear of God (1 Tim. 2:10). A lesson to be learned from 1 Tim. 5:20 is that elders of the church, in particular, are to cultivate the fear of God as a deterrent to heedless transgression. According to Rom. 13:7 and Eph. 5:33, respectively, a holy fear is to be directed by the faithful to officials of government, and by the Christian wife to her husband (as to her God-appointed head). The implication is that

the fearing of such persons is actually an extension of, or is tantamount to, the fearing of God.

The following general observations and conclusions concerning Paul's understanding and use of the concept of the fear of God as ethical motivation were set forth. First, the fear signified in the apostle's expression regarding "fear of God" is the human emotion of fear. It is paired in certain contexts with physical trembling. Secondly, when Paul speaks of the "fear of Christ," this means the same thing as the "fear of God," since for him Christ is God. Thirdly, the fear of God is presented as a virtue pleasing to the Lord. Paul inculcates it in his epistles. It is to be distinguished from the sinful, servile fear of God which is also mentioned in the apostle's writings. Fourthly, the only persons in whose hearts the ethically motivating fear of God can be aroused are God's people. This fear is connected with, and flows from, faith and may therefore be designated filial fear. People who are not under the Spirit's sanctifying influence have none of the holy fear of God in their hearts.

Fifthly, the fear of God which prompts godliness concerns itself specifically with the punitive judgments which the just and holy God administers in his wrath against sin and sinners. The divine penalties feared are of several kinds--some meted out to men during the course of their earthly life; others, of infinitely greater severity, in eternity. As far as believing Christians are concerned, the most serious temporal divine judgment for sin to be feared is the gradual removal or loss of the Holy Spirit's influence and power, which leads

ultimately to spiritual death. Other temporal visitations which are to be feared by the Christian, are the whole wide range of what may be called the psychical, the physical, and the circumstantial counterparts of the spiritual judgments God frequently sends along with the latter. These may be such chastisements as Paul specifically mentions: the shame of public rebuke in the church, punishments for law-breaking imposed by God through the agency of government, the withholding of divine blessing upon apostolic missionary labors; perilous circumstances; persecutions; physical weakness, sickness, and death. These visitations may include many other kinds of afflictions and sufferings which God brings upon his people, the earthly reverses, disappointments, privations, losses, sorrows, that overtake them. The Christian's holy fear of God is concerned ultimately with the day of final divine judgment and the punishment of eternal condemnation for the reprobate. It thus has in view as its object the entire range of divine judgment for sin.

Sixthly, as ethically motivating fear, the fear of God prevents sinning, prompts to holiness of living, perfects sanctification. It thus helps preserve spiritual life and strength and prepares for divine blessing in the life on earth and that in heaven. Seventhly, church leaders should take particular care to exercise the fear of God with constancy and intensity, since the Lord regards sins they commit as especially serious. Eighthly, fear is to be directed to certain persons whom God has placed over Christians in positions of temporal authority or headship, such as officials of government and

the husband as head of the wife. Christians' fearing of such persons is actually an extension, or equivalent, of their fearing of God.

Ninthly, Paul's understanding of the fear of God that fosters the sanctified life appears to be derived primarily from the canonical Old Testament, rather than from the literature of the intertestamental period, the religious teaching of the early (pre-Pauline) Christian Church, the theology of contemporary Rabbinic Judaism, or other possible sources of influence on the development of this concept in his thinking. Of the theological literature and teaching to which Paul had access, the Old Testament alone had an elaborately developed doctrine of the ethically motivating fear of God. These Scriptures were the literature he studied devotedly not only before, but with special diligence after, his conversion. The holy fear of God which Paul inculcated and extolled, and which he himself practiced, was exactly the same fear as that enjoined in the Old Testament. It had as its object or focal point identical categories of wrathful divine judgments. In both the Old Testament and in the Pauline corpus the fear of God is one which is aroused only in the hearts of true children of God. It is wholly compatible with, indeed it is complementary to, the love for God which his people likewise cherish in their hearts. It is a holy, precautionary, morally perfective emotion, which promotes sanctification.

While it must be observed that the ethically motivating fear of God does not enjoy the same prominence in Paul's epistles that it has in the Old Testament Scriptures, the apostle's matter-of-fact introduction



of this concept into his letters without further explanation, or without any extensive discussion, suggests the conclusion that Paul presupposed his readers to be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the concept from their reading of the Old Testament. It may be assumed that Paul sought in his letters simply to build upon his addressees' understanding of the Word of God.

Tenthly, an allowance should be made for some, though probably not a considerable, influence of rabbinic thought on Paul's concept of the fear of God as ethical motivation. The rabbis did speak of the virtue of the fear of God, but, as our study has shown, they did so infrequently and in most instances almost incidentally. A reason for this may have been that much of Palestinian Judaism during the century-and-a-half before Paul, and at his time, was moralistic. Possessed of a conviction of their own righteousness, most of the Jewish teachers would not be disposed to become overly concerned about the possibility of divine punishment for sin in their lives and about the exercise of the holy, precautionary fear of God which the Old Testament enjoins. Now the young Paul would certainly have been acquainted with rabbinic views concerning godly fear, just as he would also have learned of it from his study of the Old Testament. In view, however, of the prevailing Jewish disinterest in the fear of God and of the paucity of reference to this fear in the literature of Palestinian Judaism available to Paul, it would be incorrect to conclude that the rabbinic teaching had a strong or decisive moulding influence on the apostle's concept of the fear of God. There is no

discernable indication in the Pauline teaching of any definite dependence upon the doctrine of the fear of God as presented in the rabbinic writings.

A more accurate supposition is this. Once Paul had encountered the living Christ and learned to trust his grace, he came to a full understanding of the real meaning and importance of fearing God. In fervent devotion to Christ, and drawing upon that Lord's power for godly living, Paul began in earnest to cultivate the precautionary, perfective fear of God. Furthermore, Christ had placed his approval on the Old Testament as the Word of God, and Paul gave himself to studying the sacred record with renewed zeal. He desired to derive the most comprehensive understanding possible of all its truths, particularly now from the point of view of a Christian. It was here in the Scriptures of Moses and the Prophets that the apostle reviewed-- and in the study of them intensified his grasp of--the prominent concept of the fear of the Lord as ethical motivation. In accordance with the Old Testament stress of this virtue, Paul also in his sermons and epistles urged fellow-Christians to generate the holy fear of God.

The foregoing series of observations derives from the consideration specifically of the fifteen Pauline passages in which the apostle expressly refers to the ethically motivating fear of God. The same godly fear, it may be added, would appear to be a requisite prompting factor in Christians' obedience to many of the apostle's ethical directives in which φόβος or one of its derivatives is not mentioned-- such as those with the imperatives βλέπετε, φεύγετε ,

and so on. Such fear, it may be assumed, is an implied concomitant of virtues described or enjoined in many verses and contexts of the Pauline letters.

The holy fear of God is but one of the motivations for sanctification which the apostle presents and inculcates in his ethical system. There are others, principally three others--the love for God; the hope for reward, arising out of trust in God's promises; and faith in the Gospel assurance of the Christian's baptismally established union with Christ and spiritual participation in the latter's death and resurrection. As for the interrelationship of these motivations, it was concluded on the basis of Paul's teaching that the faith-motivation is basic to the generation of the other three, the emotions of fear, love, and hope, which may be termed "second level" motivations and regarded as complementary. Fear is the response to the holiness and justice of God; love, the response to the grace and love of God; hope, the response to the truth and faithfulness of God. All three emotions ought be simultaneously generated in the pious believer's heart, according to Paul's instruction.

The final chapter of our study was devoted to an investigation of the concept of the ethically motivating fear of God found in the Gospel and non-Pauline epistolary literature of the New Testament and in the works of the Apostolic Fathers. The purpose of this inquiry was to gain the information which would enable us to compare the Pauline view of this fear with that which obtains in the writings of other New Testament authors as well as of Christian thinkers in the post-Apostolic period.

It was discovered that the holy, precautionary fear of God, wherever it is mentioned in the rest of the New Testament and in the works of the Apostolic Fathers, is essentially the same kind as that featured in the Pauline epistles. It is presented as a virtue; it concerns itself with the full range of divine punitive judgments; it prevents sinning and prompts to good works.

The examination of the evangelists' records reveals that the fear of God which promotes sanctification is expressly mentioned only once in the Gospel according to Matthew and three times in the Gospel according to Luke--four times in all in the New Testament Gospels. This compares with the thirty-six explicit references to this fear in the rest of the New Testament. The relative infrequency of the appearance of the concept of the ethically motivating fear of God in the Gospels stems doubtless from the fact that Jesus did not teach extensively on the subject. This may be due to the considerable treatment of this virtue in the Old Testament Scriptures, which was well known to the Jews and carefully studied by Jesus' followers. Many of Christ's discourses and warnings issued to his disciples, of course, imply the importance of their cultivating the holy, perfective fear of God.

With the exception of one passage in Hebrews and one in Revelation, every explicit reference to the fear of God in the non-Pauline epistles of the New Testament is specifically to the fear which motivates to ethical behavior. Seventeen express references are found in five of nine epistles--Hebrews, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, and Revelation. Many are

met with in contexts or applications similar to those in which Pauline fear-of-God passages are featured, though no interdependence of the Pauline and non-Pauline verses is indicated. It was observed that the apostle Paul treats the concept of the fear of God as ethical motivation far more extensively in his writings than does any other single New Testament author. This may, indeed, be accounted for in part by the fact that we have more of his works than we do writings from any other sacred penman. As the early church grew and many Gentiles were received into the Christian fellowship, most of the sacred writers evidently also felt constrained to make increasingly frequent reference to this fear.

The last statement would appear to apply in the case of the Apostolic Fathers, too, most of whom mention the ethically motivating fear in their writings. According to the method of calculation employed by this writer, there are thirty-nine passage-references to godly, edifying fear in these seven works of the Apostolic Fathers: 1 and 2 Clement, Ignatius, Barnabas, Shepherd of Hermas, Didache, and the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians. As in the case of the Pauline corpus and other New Testament writings, many additional verses in the Apostolic Fathers' works which warn of divine punishment for evil-doing and inculcate obedience to the divine commandments appear by implication to recommend the exercise of godly fear, without expressly mentioning this fear. The Fathers do not cite Pauline or other New Testament fear-of-God passages, though many of their statements appear to be influenced by the sacred authors. A part of the

Fathers' theology of the ethically motivating fear of God is directly derived from their study of the Old Testament.

From the data provided in this dissertation it should be clear that any comprehensive study or treatment of the subject of Pauline ethics should take into full account the considerable instruction in the apostle's letters concerning the fear of God which serves as ethical motivation for Christian living. This has frequently not been done.

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