

Isaiah 41 Chapter 10 v.

"Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed for I am Thy God."

This is one of the most precious promises contained within the lies of the Bible - full of meaning and full of comfort to every disciple of Christ - Indeed the word of God from beginning to end is a series of promises suited to every condition and circumstance of the human family - If we are strangers to God, and alien from the commonwealth of Israel, we are exhorted in the most persuasive language to return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon us, & though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson they shall be as pure as the washed red fleece.

If we are convinced of sin and anxiously enquiring what we shall do to be saved, we are advised to exercise repentance toward God, & faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and we shall be saved from the guilt, power, and dominion of sin.

If we have just entered upon the divine life and embarked for the heavenly world, we are directed to show forth the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end - to be faithful until death and we shall receive a crown of life.

If we are in heaviness through manifold temptations, we are told that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, & experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

If we are the subjects of bodily or mental suffering we are told that no affliction for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are properly exercised thereby.

If we are called upon to give up our friends to the cold and unspanning land of death - If the tide of adversity should sweep away our

possessions, and leave us poor and dependent,  
we are assured that all things shall work to-  
gether for good to them that love God.

If we are surrounded by the most formidable ene-  
mies - opposed by the most <sup>powerful</sup> potent, adversaries -  
assailed by the malignant powers of darkness,  
and threatened by the frantic ravings of the  
coming storm upon the outstretched wings of  
the tempest, yet for our encouragement  
he hath said, "Fear thou not, for I am  
with thee; be not dismayed for I am thy  
God." This promise is peculiarly adapted  
to those who feel their weakness & inability  
to encounter and overcome the host of ene-  
mies which continually oppose their march  
to the heavenly world -

The words of our text were primarily addressed  
to the Jews, and were designed to afford them  
encouragement amid the dangers to which  
they were <sup>constantly</sup> exposed; but with equal propriety  
they may be applied to the people of  
God in every age of the world; for if  
our trust be unshaken who shall say

any thing to the charge of Gods elect? who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, "For says the Apostle Paul, I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In the discussion of this subject we shall consider,  
1. What is implied by the prohibition contained in our text - "Fear Thou <sup>neither</sup> ~~not~~ be those dismayed" - These two <sup>phrases</sup> ~~expressions~~ are of similar import <sup>expressed</sup> and mean the same thing, ~~expressed~~ in different language. The term fear in the common acceptation of the word denotes a painful apprehension of danger, but in a Theological sense it is generally noticed by divines under the distinction of two kinds: Filial & Servile.

The just kind of Fear, which we term filial, is allowable, and indeed should be cherished by every sincere Christian - It is a holy affection wrought in the heart by The Holy Spirit, by which we are disposed to reverence God and keep his Commandments.

This kind of fear should always be felt and cultivated by The Christian - It is like the affection of a dutiful Child towards a beloved Parent: he fears to violate his father's Command lest he should incur his displeasure and give him sorrow and distress.

The Conscientious Christian is alarmed at the very idea of wilfully violating the least Commandment of God, lest he should grieve the Holy Spirit, and render himself obnoxious to the displeasure of his heavenly Father. "For as a Father pitieth his Children even so The Lord pitieth them that fear him" -

This gracious disposition of soul is beautifully described by the Prophet Malachi - "Hear They that fear'd the Lord &c."

2. But that kind of Fear which is prohibited in our text hath Torment - It is frequently called servile fear, because it is like the emotions of a refractory slave towards an austere Master - He dreads the lash because of his conscious guilt, delinquency -

This kind of fear is felt by the <sup>unjudly</sup> ~~carious~~ in view of approaching <sup>danger</sup> death - in view of being forced into the presence of God - He dreads the account which he must give when they have seen the judgments of the Almighty going abroad through the earth - when a district of country has been visited by some destructive disease - when the fearful tornado has been sweeping the earth, and spreading devastation in its train - when the dark and portentous cloud has been seen gathering in the distant horizon, edged with lightning and loaded with destructive thunder - under such circumstances the guilty have feet alarm and tremble at the shaking of Deborah's rod.

The wretched man shrinks back with in-  
ward horror in view of sudden death  
- in view of being ~~and~~ ~~surely~~ forced into  
the presence of God, because he dreads  
the punishment denounced against the  
wicked - He strives to hold on to the crags  
of earth while the world recedes, and the  
awful scene of eternity begins to open to  
his view. "In that dread moment that  
phantic sound raves round the walls of her  
clay tenement, runs to each avenue and  
shrieks for help -

The most of you recollect what a panic  
swept the people three or four years ago  
when it was supposed the day of Jud-  
gment had come. When the heavens  
were illuminated with ten thousand bla-  
zing meteors, like plates of liquid fire  
descending through the air. Thousands  
fell upon their knees, & began to pray  
for the first time in their lives  
Others stood pale, trembling, and confused

waiting in fearful suspense, The Trump  
of God to sound the dread alarm, to pro-  
claim the judgment of the great day.

However Courageous The ungodly may seem  
to be while in health and fancied security,  
yet They will show their cowardice, They will  
discover their alarm, the moment They  
are threatened with danger or sudden death

This kind of Fear is sometimes felt in a  
less degree by the people of God, which arises  
from unbelief, from a distrust of divine  
protection - When They look back upon  
Their journey, and discover the little distance  
They have gained, & the many blunders They  
have made: when They look forward  
upon the wilderness spreading out be-  
fore them, where there are serpents &  
Scorpions, and dangers & afflictions;  
when They consider Their ~~own~~ difficul-  
ties to encounter, and the fearful enemies  
to subdue, They are ready to despair &  
give up the struggle -



Such is the nature of distressing fear - It is a painful apprehension of danger, sometimes arising from a consciousness of guilt, and sometimes <sup>from</sup> unbelief and distrust of divine protection and support - Such a state of mind is painful, distressing, and criminal, and will tend to harden the heart, weaken our faith, and alienate our affections from God.

II. We shall consider in the second place what it is that we should not fear ~~in the sense which we have described in the sense prohibited in our text~~

1. We should not fear <sup>the Almighty</sup> God, in the sense which we have described, - in the sense prohibited in our text - A filial fear is proper and necessary, and should be cultivated by every sincere Christian to the latest period of his life. "For God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints and to be had in reverence of all that are about him."

But slavish fear - distressing alarm, painful anxiety should be avoided as contrary to the experience of the pious and offensive in the sight of God - For if we have experienced a change of heart, we are told by the Apostle that we have not received the spirit of ~~adoption~~ bondage again to fear; but have we? the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father - The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God - And we are told by saint John "that perfect love casteth out fear, and he that feareth is not made perfect in love."

If we fear to stand in the presence of God, we are not yet what we ought to be - How wilt thou keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon thee?

2. The people of God should not fear the  
wrath of man, nor the instruments of  
human cruelty - No weapon formed against  
the righteous will ever prosper - For the Lord  
God is a Sun and Shield, he will give grace  
and glory, and no good thing will he with-  
hold from them that walk uprightly - So  
that we may boldly say the Lord is my  
helper, I will not fear what man shall  
do unto me

3. We should not fear the assaults of  
Satan - nor the combined powers of earth  
and hell - Tho. we have to wrestle  
against principalities & powers, yet the  
captain of our salvation has provided  
for the Christian soldier a suitable  
armor whereby he may wage a success-  
ful warfare against his spiritual ad-  
versaries =

4. We should not fear the sufferings and afflictions incident to human life because they are appointed by a wise and gracious providence, and designed to promote our present and future welfare - "In the world said the Saviour ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." &c &c - - -

5. Finally we observe that we should not fear the approach of death - This is one of the consequences of sin from which none are exempted - It is appointed unto men once to die - The sentence has gone forth from the lips of Eternal Veracity, "dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return"

This solemn change is the terror of our nature - It was dreaded by man in his state of innocence, and to the unrenewed man it ever was, and always will be a just object of Abhorrence -

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only  
sovereign antidote against this universal  
evil. To the believer in Christ its terrors  
cease to be alarming - Its rough aspect  
becomes smooth - Its sting is plucked out,  
and the dark and lonely road becomes  
the road to bliss and life eternal.

"No guilty gloom, no anxious doubt  
Shall damp whom Jesus presence cheers!"  
While the ungodly man shrinks back  
with inward horror in view of approach-  
ing death, the Christian can believe  
and look with triumph on the tomb.

III. We shall consider in the last place why it is That Christians should not fear in the sense prohibited in our text.

1 Because The Lord is Their God who is illimitable in his immensity, inconceivable in his mode of existence, and indiscernible in its essence - His attributes and perfections are exerted in their behalf - He is Their Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer

But he is <sup>with</sup> only their God of his people,  
but he has promised to be with them - That is  
to say, He will give them grace to overcome  
temptation, and afford them ~~every~~ such as-  
sistance as they may require during  
their pilgrimage from this to the heav-  
enly country - from time to eternity, from  
earth to heaven, from the city of destruc-  
tion to the city of the living God -

1. He has given us a map of the  
Country through which we are called to  
travel. The word of God is a ~~light~~ <sup>light</sup>  
to our path and a lamp to our feet -
2. He will be our protection in every  
time of danger. For he is our refuge  
our fortress, & our Strong Tower.
3. We shall occasionally be favored with  
the pleasing prospect of a happy termina-  
tion of our toilsome journey to the heavenly  
world.

4. He will finally give them an abundant ministrations into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ  
- - -

Behold the good man when brought down to the close of life, when called upon to go the way of all the earth - He then reviews his life, examines his heart, his love to God, and all mankind, & upon the examination he can say like dying Stephen Lord Jesus receive my spirit &c.

### Conclusion

1. The Folly of those who seek after happiness in the creature.
2. The Security of God's people.

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