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## 'FEAR' IN ST. MARK

IN a previous note in this JOURNAL (Jan.-Apr. 1946, p. 46) I suggested that *ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ* at the end of the second gospel does not indicate apprehension of evil and is not therefore anticipatory, but describes reverential awe caused by proximity to the supernatural as indicated by the empty tomb with its implication that the crucified Jesus had fulfilled His assurance that He would rise from the dead. The phrase therefore refers to past, not future, happenings. I tried to support this by reference to the narrative of the Transfiguration. There Peter and his companions are seized with the same reverential awe (*ἐκφοβοῦ γὰρ ἐγένοντο*) at the presence of the transfigured Jesus and His heavenly visitors (see my *St. Mark*, pp. 190-1). The present note is intended to support this interpretation by examination of the use of *φοβοῦμαι* in other parts of the second gospel.

In one passage the word implies apprehension of mischief. The civil and religious authorities wished to arrest Jesus, but held their hand because they 'feared the crowd' (xii. 12; cf. xi. 18, 32). A second passage where the word may have a similar meaning is v. 15. The swine-herds had called people out from the surrounding hamlets. These peasants came to see for themselves what had happened. They saw the demoniac strangely altered. He was clothed and sane, 'and they were afraid'. This might mean that they thought that Jesus must be possessed of supernatural powers, and looked upon Him with some sort of religious awe. But the narrative is ambiguous. If the 'they' of ver. 17 includes not only the swine-herds but also the peasants who 'were afraid' when they saw the transformed lunatic they may have feared more destruction of property, and so have joined in begging Jesus to leave their district.

Another perhaps less doubtful passage is v. 33. Here the woman with an issue of blood who had been healed when in the throng she had touched the clothing of Jesus came 'fearing and trembling' to Him when He began to make inquiry who had touched Him. Of course, her fear may have been caused by apprehension of rebuke, or a natural shrinking from being brought into public notice. But more possibly it was the same awe as that felt by the Gerasene country-folk, a reverential awe at the presence of one endowed with such life-giving power.

In another narrative *φοβοῦμαι* certainly cannot mean apprehension of mischief. This is vi. 19-20. Her ewe are told that Herod held John the Baptist in prison, but was unwilling to have him put to death, 'For he feared John, knowing him to be a just and holy man.' *φοβοῦμαι* here certainly implies a sort of awe in the presence of John's moral qualities.

Elsewhere, apart from the phrase *μη φοβοῦ* spoken twice (v. 36; vi. 50) by Jesus, the verb *φοβοῦμαι* is used only of the disciples. And here it should be noted that there is a clear distinction between the reactions of the multitude of people and the disciples of Jesus. The former 'wonder' and 'are astonished' at the authority of His words and the power displayed in His miracles. See i. 22, 27; ii. 12; v. 20, 42; vi, 2; vii. 37; ix. 15. Only once (x. 32), as it would seem, is such wonder attributed to the disciples. But the passage is singularly obscure. In my *St. Mark*, p. 138, I commented thus: 'The striking picture of the Master walking alone in front, the wonder-stricken disciples behind, and, still further in the rear, a group of terrified adherents, is peculiar to this gospel.' Now who were the 'they' at whose head Jesus walked and who 'wondered'? And were those who followed and were afraid the same as the 'wonderers' or a different set of people? In view of the fact that elsewhere 'wonder' is attributed only to the multitude and 'fear' is confined to the disciples I now incline to think that the 'wonderers' were the whole band of people who were accompanying Jesus, and that it was the disciples who, following perhaps immediately behind Jesus, were afraid. The fact that, when Christ had previously (ix. 30-2) foretold His death and resurrection to the disciples they 'were afraid' to question Him supports this. In the decision to go to Jerusalem they saw the beginning of the fulfilment of His words.

'Amazement' or 'wonder' describes the reaction of the multitude to Christ's works or words. They never 'fear' except possibly in the cases of the country-folk at Gerasa and the woman with the issue of blood. In these cases the emotion evoked by Christ's presence may have approximated to the awe of the disciples.

On the other hand, the reaction of the disciples to Christ's power as revealed in His words and actions is one of 'awe'. In iv. 41 after their deliverance from peril of drowning they were seized with a deep sense of awe, saying, 'Who can this be whom nature obeys?' In ix. 5 f. Peter was smitten into bewilderment of utterance, for he and his fellow disciples were awestruck by what happened at the Transfiguration.

Is it not clear that this distinction between the 'wonder' of the multitude and the 'fear' of the disciples confirms the judgement that their 'fear' was a profound awe as they felt themselves to be in the presence of One of more than human power?

And further, does it not justify the conclusion that *ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ* in xvi. 8 implies this same deep religious emotion? And, still further, does it not support the view that this phrase is a splendidly dramatic ending to the gospel? What closing passage could be better than the picture of the trembling women amazed at the sight of the empty tomb and stunned into awed silence as their astonished ears hear the message

that their crucified Master had risen again, and that their adoring eyes would soon look upon Him once more?<sup>1</sup>

WILLOUGHBY C. ALLEN

### ROMANS IX. 5

SANDAY and Headlam, in their commentary on *Romans*, have a long note of five closely printed pages on this verse, beginning with the statement: 'The interpretation of Rom. ix. 5 has probably been discussed at greater length than that of any other verse in the New Testament' (I.C.C., pp. 235-8). In the whole of that note there is no mention of an interpretation of the text which I now venture to suggest, viz. that  $\delta \omega\nu$  is to be taken absolutely, as a proper name, like  $\delta \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$  before it, and  $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  after it, and translated 'I AM'. All commentators, English and foreign, with one exception, have overlooked this simple solution.

In Exod. iii. 14,  $\delta \omega\nu$  is the LXX rendering of יהוה (A.V. and R.V., I AM). This is the name of God self-revealed, further emphasized by: 'This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial for all generations.'

In Jer. i. 6, xiv. 13, xxxii. (LXX, xxxix) 17,  $\delta \omega\nu$  is the LXX rendering of יהוה, an obvious mistake for יהוה. In the only other occurrence of יהוה, Jer. iv. 10, LXX reads  $\omega$ , which may be a slip of the copyist for  $\delta \omega\nu$ , in apposition to יהוה אלהי, for יהוה is never a vocative, but an interjection. The translator of Exodus would not be the same as the translator of Jeremiah. In other words, the traditional Greek equivalent of יהוה was  $\delta \omega\nu$  from the Exodus to the Exile in the canonical books and in Jewish literature up to the time of the Christian era. It is so regarded by Philo and Josephus.

In this part of the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul is addressing the Jews as having received from God special privileges as His chosen people. Would it not have been astonishing if he had omitted from this list the highest privilege of all, the self-revealed name of their covenant God, which was to be His memorial for ever, revealed in the great crisis of their existence to Moses, their leader and law-giver? The reading of Moses and the Prophets in the synagogue every Sabbath day would, for the Diaspora, be in the Greek language, and therefore  $\delta \omega\nu$  would be the familiar and official rendering of יהוה, and not least in Rome to which flocked Jews from all countries.

The verse should therefore be punctuated:  $\kappa\alpha\iota \ \epsilon\acute{\xi} \ \omega\nu \ \delta \ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma \ \tau\acute{o}$

<sup>1</sup> I have not discussed the alleged linguistic difficulty that no writer would end in this way because Professor Lightfoot has made it clear by adducing Greek sentences ending in  $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$  that no such difficulty exists. I do not suppose that any other case of a book so ending will ever be found. But, after all, why should we expect it to be so?