



Fear? Or Awe? Or both?

Rabbi Elliott Karstadt

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Jastrow's Dictionary

יָרָא (b. h.) *to tremble, fear; to revere; to shun*. Sabb. 88^a (ref. to Ps. LXXVI, 9) 'אם יִרְאֶה וְכ' if she (the earth) trembled, how could she be at rest, &c.?—Ber. 16^b שֶׁמֶךְ אֶת שִׁמְךָ לִירְאָה אֶת שִׁמְךָ so as to fear thy name.—(Usu. as participle or adjective) יָרָא m. Ned. 8^b (ref. to Mal. III, 20) 'וְכ' שֶׁהֵן יִרְאִין לְהוֹצִיא וְכ' who are afraid to utter the name of the Lord in vain.—*shunning sin, of careful conduct, conscientious*. Ab. II, 5. Ib. 8; a. fr.—*God-fearing, pious*. Ber. 8^a 'ש' יוֹתֵר מִי שֶׁ יֵשֵׁב עַל הַעֲמֻלָּה הַיְשָׁרָה גָּדוֹל ... יוֹתֵר מִי שֶׁ יֵשֵׁב עַל הַעֲמֻלָּה הַיְשָׁרָה הַיְשָׁרָה he who lives on the (honest) labor of his hand, stands higher than the pious man. Succ. 49^b, v. יָרָע; a. fr.—*Fem.* יִרְאָה, constr. יִרְאֵת. Lam. R. to II, 13 (play on יְרוּשָׁלַם לִי וּמְשׁוֹלֵמַת לִי) הַבַּת שִׁירָאָה וּמְשׁוֹלֵמַת לִי the daughter that fears (me) and is at peace with me. Ib. כִּשְׂאֵת יִרְאָה אֶת מוֹשְׁלֵמַת לִי Ar. (missing in ed.) when thou art God-fearing, thou art at peace with me. Yeb. 62^b.—Part. pass. יִרְאוּי. Ber. 33^b; Meg. 25^a Ms. M. (v. Rabb. D. S. a. l. note).

Nif. - יִנְרָא, fut. יִנְרָא *to be feared*. Koh. R. to IX, 7; Pesik. Ul'kah., p. 183^b, a. e. 'וְכ' לְמַעַן תִּנְרָא וְכ' (Ps. CXXX, 4) 'in order that thou mayest be feared', that the fear of thee be put on mankind.—Part. יִנְרָא *fearful, awe-inspiring*. Ber. l. c. Yoma 69^b 'נ' אָמַר נ' לֹא אָמַר נ' Jeremiah did not say *nora* (only *gadola gibbor*, Jer. XXXII, 18).—*Fem. pl.* יִנְרָאוֹת *awe-inspiring deeds*. Ib. אִיִּה נִרְאוֹתָיו ... נִכְרִים ... נִכְרִים אָתָּא ... נִכְרִים אָתָּא came Jeremiah and said, Strangers dance on His temple ruins, where are His awful deeds?; Y. Ber. VII, 11^c. Ib. 'וְכ' לִזְהַר נִרְאוֹתָיו לְקִרְוֹת נִרְאוֹתָיו בְּנֵי וְכ' (Daniel said) Him it is becoming to call awe-inspiring for the awful deeds He performed for us &c.; Midr. Till. to Ps. XIX; a. fr.

Hithpa. - יִתְיָרָא, , *Nithpa.* (1) *to be feared, revered*. Zeb. 115^b (ref. to Ps. LXVIII, 36) בְּשַׁעָה ... מִתְיָרָא וּמִתְעַלָּה when the Lord executes judgment on His saints, He is feared and praised &c.; Yalk. Lev. 525. —(2) *to be afraid*. Ber. 61^b 'וְכ' מִפְּנֵי וְכ' מִפְּנֵי וְכ' art thou not afraid of the (Roman) government?—Midr. Till. l. c. וְכ' נִתְיָרָאוּ שְׁנֵי וְכ' שְׁנֵי וְכ' the enemy entered His house and were not afraid (of the Lord). Ex. R. s. 29 'וְכ' אִם הַמַּטְרוֹנָה מִתְיָרָאת וְכ' if the queen is afraid, what shall the servants ... do?; a. fr.

Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a-b

אמר ריש לקיש: מאי דכתיב "והיה אמונת עתיך חוסן ישועות חכמת נדעת וגו'". "אמונת" – זה סדר זרעים. "עתיך" – זה סדר מועד. "חוסן" – זה סדר נשים. "ישועות" – זה סדר נזיקין. "חכמת" – זה סדר קדשים. "נדעת" – זה סדר טהרות. ואפילו הכי, "יראת ה' היא אוצרו".

Resh Lakish¹ said, 'What is [the meaning of] "Faithfulness to Your time was wealth, wisdom and knowledge [triumph, fear of the Eternal – that was his treasure]" (Isaiah 33:6)? "Faithfulness" – this is the Order of Seeds,² "Your time" – this is the Order of Appointed Times,³ "wealth" – this is the Order of Women;⁴ "salvation" – this is the Order of Damages,⁵ "wisdom" – this is the Order of Sacrifices,⁶ "knowledge" – this is the Order of Purities.⁷ But despite this, "fear of the Eternal – that was his treasure".'

אמר רבא: בשעה שמכניסין אדם לדין, אומרים לו: נשאת ונתת באמונה? קבעת עתים לתורה? עסקת בפריה ורביה? צפית לישועה? פלפלת בחכמה? הבנת דבר מתוך דבר? ואפילו הכי, אי יראת ה' היא אוצרו – אין, אי לא – לא. משל לאדם שאמר לשלוחו: העלה לי כור חיטין לעלייה. הלך והעלה לו. אמר לו: עירבת לי בהן קב חומטון? אמר לו: לאו. אמר לו: מוטב אם לא העליתה.

Rava⁸ said, 'When they escort a person to their [final] judgment, they say to them, "Did you do business faithfully? Did you fix times for Torah [study]? Did you occupy yourself with procreation? Did you wait in expectation of salvation?"⁹ Did you delve into wisdom? Did you infer one thing from another? But despite this, if "they fear the Eternal – that was his treasure", then yes; if not, then no. This is to be compared to a person who says to their agent, "Bring for me a *kor*¹⁰ of wheat to the attic." They brought it up to them. They said to them [the agent], "Did you mix for me a *kav*¹¹ of *chumton* [into the wheat]?"¹² They replied, "No." They said to them [the agent], "It would have been better if you had not brought it up [at all]."

תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: מערב אדם קב חומטון בכור של תבואה, ואינו חושש.

The House of Rabbi Yishmael taught: A person may mix a *kav* of *chumton* into a *kor* of wheat, and need not be concerned.

¹ Resh Lakish (a nickname for Shimon ben Lakish) was one of the pre-eminent sages in the Land of Israel in the mid-3rd century CE.

² The Order of Seeds [*Seder Zeraim*] is the first order of the Mishnah, dealing with agricultural laws.

³ The Order of Appointed Time [*Seder Mo'ed*] is the second order of the Mishnah, dealing with Shabbat and festivals.

⁴ The Order of Women [*Seder Nashim*] is the third order of the Mishnah, dealing with the laws of women and matrimony.

⁵ The Order of Damages [*Seder N'zikin*] is the fourth order of the Mishnah, dealing with the laws of tort.

⁶ The Order of Sacrifices [*Seder Kodashim*] is the fifth order of the Mishnah, dealing with the laws of the Temple and the offerings that we made there.

⁷ The Order of Purities [*Seder Tahorot*] is the sixth and final order of the Mishnah, dealing with the laws of purity and impurity.

⁸ Rava (full name Rava bar Yosef bar Chama) was one of the most important sages in Babylonia in the late-3rd and early-4th centuries CE.

⁹ This is generally understood to mean waiting in expectation of God's salvation through the saving acts of the future messiah.

¹⁰ A *kor* is a unit of volume, equalling around 220 litres.

¹¹ A *kav* is a unit of volume, equalling around 1.2 litres.

¹² *Chumton* was a type of earth high in salt content, which would be used to preserve the wheat and stop it from becoming infested while in storage.

אמר רבה בר רב הונא: כל אדם שיש בו תורה ואין בו יראת שמים, דומה לגזבר שמסרו לו מפתחות הפנימיות ומפתחות החיצונות לא מסרו לו, בהי עייל? מכריז רבי ינאי: חבל על דלית ליה דרתא ותרעא לדרתא עביד. אמר רב יהודה: לא ברא הקדוש ברוך הוא את עולמו אלא כדי שייראו מלפניו, שנאמר: "והאלהים עשה שייראו מלפניו".

Rabbah bar Rav Chuna¹³ said, 'Any person who has Torah and does not have fear of heaven, is similar to a treasurer to whom the keys to the inner [chamber] have been given, but the keys to the courtyard have not been given – how can they gain entrance?' Rabbi Yanai¹⁴ proclaimed, 'Woe to anyone who does not own a courtyard, but makes a gate for a courtyard!' Rav Yehudah¹⁵ said, 'The Holy Blessed One only created the Universe for the sake of those who feared God, as it is said, "And God has done so that they may fear God" (Ecclesiastes 3:14).'

רבי סימון ורבי אלעזר הוו יתבי. חליף ואזיל רבי יעקב בר אחא. אמר ליה חד לחבריה: ניקו מקמיה, דגבר דחיל חטאין הוא. אמר ליה אינדך: ניקו מקמיה, דגבר בר אוריין הוא. אמר ליה: אמינא לך אנא דגבר דחיל חטאין הוא, ואמרת לי את בר אוריין הוא!?

Rabbi Simon¹⁶ and Rabbi Elazar¹⁷ were sitting together. Rabbi Ya'akov bar Acha¹⁸ came and walked by. Said one to his fellow, 'Let us rise before him, as he is a man who fears sins.' Said the other, 'Let us rise before him, because he is a Torah scholar.' He said to him, 'I said to you he is a man who fears sins, and you say to me he is a Torah scholar!'

תסתים דרבי אלעזר הוא דאמר דגבר דחיל חטאין הוא. דאמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי אלעזר: אין לו להקדוש ברוך הוא בעולמו אלא יראת שמים בלבד, שנאמר: "ועתה ישראל מה ה' אלהיך שואל מעמך כי אם ליראה וגו'", וכתיב: "ויאמר לאדם הן יראת ה' היא חכמה וגו'" – שכן בלשון ינאי קורין לאחת "הן". תסתים.

Conclude that Rabbi Elazar was the one who said 'he is a man who fears sins', for Rabbi Yochanan¹⁹ said in the name of Rabbi Elazar, 'The Holy Blessed One has nothing in this world, but the fear of heaven alone, as it is said, "Now, Israel, what does the Eternal your God ask from you? Only to fear [the Eternal your God, to walk in all God's ways, to love God, and to serve the Eternal your God with all your heart and with all your soul]" (Deuteronomy 10:12); and it is written, "And he said to the human: Behold [*hein*]! Fear of the Eternal is wisdom [to turn aside from evil is understanding]" (Job 28:28). Indeed, in the Greek tongue they call the number one '*hein*'. This [therefore] can be determined.

¹³ Rabbah bar Rav Chuna was a sage in Babylonia in the late-3rd and early-4th century CE.

¹⁴ Rabbi Yanai was a sage in the Land of Israel in the mid-3rd century CE.

¹⁵ Rav Yehudah (bar Yechezkel) was one of the distinguished teachers in Babylonia in the late-3rd century CE.

¹⁶ Rabbi Simon is probably another spelling of Rabbi Shimon (bar Yochai) – for information see below.

¹⁷ Rabbi Elazar (ben Shammua) was an important sage in the Land of Israel in the mid-2nd century CE.

¹⁸ Rabbi Ya'akov bar Acha was a relatively lesser known contemporary of Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Elazar (above).

¹⁹ Rabbi Yochanan (bar Nappacha) was one of the pre-eminent sages in the Land of Israel in the 3rd century CE, teaching at Sepphoris and later in Tiberias where he was the head of the rabbinic academy.

Yehudah Amichai

I declare with perfect faith
that prayer preceded God.
Prayer created God
God created human beings,
human beings created prayers
that create the God that creates human beings.

Pesikta d'Rav Kahana 12:6

ואתם עדיי נאם ה' ואני אל. תני ר' שמע' בן יוחי אם אתם עדי נאם ה', אני אל, ואם אין אתם עדיי
כביכול אין אני ה'.

'You are My witnesses and I am God' (Isaiah 43:12). Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught, 'If you are my witnesses, I am God; and if you are not my witnesses, it is as if I am not God.'