

Deuteronomy 31:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

Analysis

This exhortation contains one of Scripture's most beloved promises of divine presence and faithfulness. The command *chizqu ve'imtsu* (חֲזַקוּ וַיִּמְצוּ, 'be strong and of good courage') combines two Hebrew verbs emphasizing inner fortitude and resolute determination. The double negative—'fear not, nor be afraid'—reinforces the command to reject anxiety. The Hebrew *lo tira ve'lo ta'arots* (לֹא תִירָא וְלֹא תִפְּרֹץ) literally means 'do not fear and do not be terrified.' The basis for courage is not self-confidence but divine presence: 'the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee' (YHWH Elohekha hu haholek immakh). The verb *halakh* (הָלַךְ, 'go') in participial form indicates continuous action—God is constantly accompanying His people. The double promise—'he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee' (*lo yarpka ve'lo ya'azveka*)—uses two verbs meaning 'let drop/abandon' and 'forsake/leave behind.' This assurance has echoed through redemptive history, quoted to Joshua (Joshua 1:5), referenced in Hebrews 13:5, and providing comfort to countless believers facing daunting circumstances.

Historical Context

Moses spoke these words on the plains of Moab as Israel prepared to cross the Jordan and conquer Canaan. The immediate audience faced the intimidating prospect of warfare against fortified cities and powerful nations. Moses, their leader for forty years, was about to die, leaving them to proceed under Joshua's leadership. The transition from Moses to Joshua, from wilderness wandering to

military conquest, from known routines to uncertain battles—all created anxiety demanding divine reassurance. The 'them' who might inspire fear refers to the Canaanite nations listed in Deuteronomy 7:1—peoples greater and mightier than Israel by human standards. Yet God's presence transforms military odds: divine accompaniment guarantees victory. This promise was fulfilled in Joshua's conquests and has sustained God's people through subsequent generations facing their own battles and transitions.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What specific fears or challenges in your life does God's promise of constant presence address?
2. How does understanding that courage is rooted in God's presence rather than our own strength change how we face difficulties?

Interlinear Text

חֲזַק ו	וְאִמָּץ ו	אֶל	תִּירָא ו	אֶל	תַּעֲרַצ ו
Be strong	and of a good courage	fear	not nor be afraid		
H2388	H553	H408	H3372	H408	H6206
מִפְּנֵיהֶם	כִּי יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵי יְכֻ	הוּא	הֵהִלְךְ	עִמָּךְ
of them	for the LORD	thy God	he it is that doth go		
H6440	H3068	H430	H1931	H1980	H5973
לֹא	יִרְפָּךְ	וְלֹא	יַעֲזֹבְךָ:		
with thee he will not fail	thee nor forsake				
H3808	H7503	H3808	H5800		

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 1:9 (Good): Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Ephesians 6:10 (References Lord): Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Psalms 27:14 (Good): Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

1 Chronicles 28:20 (Good): And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.

Isaiah 41:10 (References God): Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Luke 12:32 (Good): Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

2 Timothy 2:1 (Parallel theme): Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Psalms 27:1 (References Lord): The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Deuteronomy 7:18 (References God): Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt;

Joshua 10:25 (Good): And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

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