

THEOLOGY OF HOPE AMIDST THE WORLD'S FEARS

SONNY ELI ZALUCHU*

Indonesia Baptist Theological Seminary

ABSTRACT. Fear is a social phenomenon that develops in people facing a crisis, such as a pandemic. For instance, the entire world is currently exposed to Covid-19 pandemic, causing great fear. In the Bible, Jesus' disciples were terrified of sinking in their boat during a storm. Although these two scenarios are different, the response is the same. Fear produces stress and anxiety disorders when not appropriately managed. This paper examines the causes of fear and how they can be addressed. Specifically, the study involves determining the cause of fear and proposing a strategy based on Hope, as described by Erich in the book *Revolution of Hope* which positively correlates with building fortitude and endurance. Surrendering or persisting is a dialectical choice, though theology fear does not give chances. Instead, Humans only survive by depending on God. This research was involved literature reviews by utilizing reference sources, including books, journal articles, and other scientific content.

KEYWORDS: fear, Hope, theology, crisis, pandemic

Introduction

Since the end of 2019, Covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected the world. The rapid transmission and high death rates create global anxiety, public panic, and fear (Shereen et al. 2020). High risk of exposure and death leads to extreme fear worldwide, especially after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 a global pandemic (BBC 2020; Jamie Ducharme 2020). According to Panjaitan and Lumingkewas (Panjaitan and Lumingkewas 2019), the community's social entities, including religious life, have been affected. Radical social changes occur due to government policies on quarantine, country lockdown, and prohibition of highly populated meetings (Suppawittaya et al. 2020). Human activities are limited, and people feel imprisoned in their own houses (Tognotti 2013). Furthermore, Life has drastically changed with uniting in solidarity of suffering, trying to end the pandemic (Boomgaarden 2020).

Global outbreaks and deadly diseases are not new in the world. Huremović (2019) described a chronological attack of the deadly plagues from ancient to modern times. The first recorded instance was the Greece Athens

* SONNY ELI ZALUCHU (DTh 2012, Indonesia Baptist Theological Seminary) is Lecturer of Biblical Studies and Religion at Indonesia Baptist Theological Seminary. Email: sonnyzaluchu@stbi.ac.id.

plague which spread from Ethiopia to Egypt and lasted from 430-426 BC (Littman 2009). Secondly, the Antonine plague, a smallpox-like disease, killed nearly a third of the Roman Empire population (Sabbatani and Fiorino 2009). Another ancient plague was the Justinian of the sixth century AD, which was spread from Central Asia, Asia Minor, Africa, Italy, and the mainland in Western Europe. The transmission became fast due to the active movement of traders on intercontinental routes. In the modern era, the world's population was struck by the Bubonic plague/Black Death from China in 1334 (DeWitte 2014). This epidemic was vicious and swept through Europe in 1347 and spread along the silk roads, killing over 150 million people. In the 20th century, the Spanish flu emerged with its various variants before the influenza virus (Taubenberger and Morens 2006). In succession, SARS and the H1N1 virus of China emerged (Zhong and Zeng 2006). Between 2014 and 2016, the African continent was struck by Ebola and Zika (Osterholm 2016). After AIDS and MERS became world problems, in late 2019, the Corona/Covid-19 virus started in Wuhan, China (Reperant and Osterhaus 2017). These chronological records show plague attacks are a leading cause of death globally, apart from being common in human history. At different times, periods, and generations, the world faces both physical wars and deadly diseases.

From a Christian perspective, fear is nothing new because it was recorded in Bible themes. For instance, in the Sea of Galilee, Jesus' disciples were afraid of drowning during a storm. The Gospel of Matthew records that storms, typhoons, and big waves appeared suddenly, tossing the boat. As the disciples struggled to stabilize their boat, Jesus was sleeping in the cabin. Fear is evident in disciple's expression as they tried to wake Jesus. Matthew 8: 25 says, 'Lord, help, we are destroyed'. Luke gives a similar testimony while Mark wrote it as a complaint, 'Teacher, don't you care if we perish?' (Mark 4:39). After the waves hit their boat suddenly, the calm seawater became terrifying. Mark 4:37 Explains these events using the Greek word *γίνομαι* (*ginomai*), which means suddenly existed, happened, or took place (Vine 1997: 66). The storm phenomenon is a natural occurrence that is easily understood by fishermen in Galilee. For an unknown reason, the Bible does not reveal the natural state of the area. The sea has a wide surface and wind changes direction to the hillside and back, hitting the water surface. Moreover, the hot air content in the highlands travels very fast, sweeping across the area and suddenly falls irresistibly to the surface of the lake (Vincent 1996: 213). According to Keener (2014: 139), this is the reason fishermen do not go down the lake and work in inundated areas near the coast during the hurricane season. The sudden storm caused great fear and anxiety because its position was far from the shore. This fracas did not last long since Jesus rebuked the storm and fear subsided after the condition calmed. Mark 4:39 says, 'And he arose, and

rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm’.

Fear results from human brain activity related to a crisis as a preliminary situation (Shin and Liberzon 2010). The crisis increases insular cortex activity in the human brain circuit, leading to anxiety disorders and stressful behaviour. Therefore, global pandemic fear can be explained and understood from a psychological aspect. To explain how people have survived this crisis, the paper maintains that Hope should not cease no matter the experience. This is because Hope makes people choose life over death and struggle rather than despair. Every individual, ethnicity, and country is experiencing and fighting the pandemic on the same front. Suppose everyone struggles from the same fulcrum, the crisis will end. The foundation of the world winning this struggle is Hope.

The explanation in this paper consists of the following systematics. First, this article discusses the anatomy of fear and its correlation to a crisis. By studying fear, humans know what and who to face and how to deal with it. On the battlefield, the best strategy is to study the enemy, the same applies to fear. Furthermore, it is far more dangerous as an enemy because it makes humans lose Hope before infection from the virus. Secondly, people should build spiritual responsiveness to enhance the Faith in their response to a crisis. This is necessary because humans learn to interpret every disaster spiritually. Spirituality helps people dialogue with God within the framework of Faith. The answers can be comforting, strengthening and leading to repentance. Specifically, humans should see crises from a spiritual perspective rather than on empirical matters. Lastly, the article discusses the revolution of Hope and its position in the global crisis. This research relies on conceptual data from books, journal articles, other scientifically valid references through the literature review method (Mertler and Mertler 2018; Winchester and Salji 2016).

Anatomy of Fear

Fear is a human nature and an emotional response to threat. As Adolphs (2013) stated, in critical and life-threatening situations, fear is the first natural response. The contributing factors are the presence of self-efficacy, fear tolerance and predictions, and anxiety expectations. Moreover, fear behaviour is dominated by self-efficacy and tolerance, and is predicted by the presence of Hope and anxiety (Schoenberger et al. 1991). This atmosphere is evident in the expressions of Jesus’ disciples during the storm. The sudden waves and water entering their tossed boat are factors that triggered Hope or anxiety. Similarly, the Covid-19 virus has sparked the same expectations globally.

Psychological and behavioral conditions can change in response to fear. Kagan & Schulkin (1995) emphasized that good, calm and controlled

behaviour can change to uncontrollable, abstract, and unpredictable. Afraid people tend to be wild and reactive, showing an emotional disorder. Some of these behaviours include looting, hurting others, engaging in physical and verbal abuse, being racist, running parallel to psychological changes such as self-lockout, phobias, discomfort, and paranoia. Moreover, swearing empty and hostile phrases is another negative trait. People in fear appear to have lost their minds due to stress (Lang's explanation in Carson 2000: 160). Fear has three aspects that are not accompanied by threats. The first aspect is cognitive, present when someone feels afraid. Particularly, when someone subjectively acknowledges being afraid, they are experiencing cognitive fear. The second is the physiological aspect seen in behaviour or body. People who experience this show several signs such as increased heart rate, cold sweats, irregular breathing and their physical response shows panic. Lastly, is the act of escaping where people face fear by avoiding it and evading reality. As Kagan, Schulkin and Lang stated, the characteristics of fear can be easily identified in those who experience it. These characteristics include emotional changes, psychology, and specific physical symptoms.

Bonhoeffer (2018) describes the spiritual perspective of fear. Bonhoeffer uses Matthew 8: 23-27 to identify several physical phenomena accompanying fear, including staring eyes, the body shivering like an animal and the beseeching attitude of self-defence. Additionally, fear omits humanity's essence in a person, thereby destroying his existence as a creature created by God. In the extreme, fear changes a person's existence and shows their identity as belonging to the devil, an enslaved, corrupted, and sick (Bonhoeffer 2018). About the storm experienced by disciples, De Gruchy (2013) interpreted the situation as similar to the Nazi cruelty to Jews in the second world war. A crisis caused by war creates fear that damages human morals and psychology. It becomes problematic when the fear is born of anxiety (Whitehead 2012). The emotional and uncontrolled reactive behaviour results from anxiety, while fear is a product of the nervousness.

The relationship between fear and anxiety is casual. Anxiety is a subjective experience where a person's attention does not have a source (Moss 1986). Contrastingly, fear can afflict anyone but depends on how its level is managed towards external sources. The nervous system in the human brain can mediate fear and anxiety to produce bias in human decision making (Hartley and Phelps 2012; Tovote et al., 2015). Therefore, behavioral, psychological, and oriental changes in fearful people due to anxiety hinders common sense and self-awareness. For instance, Jesus' disciples were natives of the Bethsaida village/fishing village who worked as fishermen. Therefore, the Galilee Sea was a familiar fishing territory, and fishers can swim to safety in emergencies. Contrastingly, Jesus grew up in Nazareth mountains and worked as a carpenter. The disciples were supposed to be concerned about the safety of Jesus

because he could not swim. In reality, the disciples were more afraid of death than Jesus as he was sleeping during the storm.

Three situations are the most important causes of anxiety in a crisis, including (1) the fear of death. The disciples and the world's population in a pandemic experience both cognitive fear and physiological aspects but cannot escape from this situation. Death is considered a threat to the existence of life, but everyone wants to live. Therefore, humans are afraid of death because the meaning of life is evident when living. (2) There is an apparent fear of pain and suffering. Humans avoid pain and suffering but are always parallel to life itself. Crises cause prolonged physical and mental pain and suffering. (3) The fear of the unknown causes people to only surrender and give up. The external crisis is an independent variable that cannot be controlled. Consequently, if it happens and involves humanity, they become victims of helplessness.

Spirituality of Fear

Spirituality is the form of a believer while under the leadership of the Spirit of God and is essential during a crisis (Sheldrake 2013). This spiritual personality is inclusive in one's daily life because through experiences, people understand God. According to Sheldrake, spirituality reflects the divine dimension within a person. Moreover, it is a person's spiritual life expressed by a deep and strong belief in God. The central aspect of such a life is God's spirit connected to the human spirit (Haiken 2002; Sheldrake 2013). Humans are spiritual beings occupying a body or can be referred to as spirit humans (Lannoo 2018). Therefore, spirituality is the actualization of a person's belief in God transcendentally in the world and its dynamics (Holder 2014). Conclusively, Christian spirituality reflects a person's relationship with God actualizing in the community and reality, life.

Building and maintaining spirituality in fear is an approach to suppress anxiety, and many theologians understand this concept. For instance, Augustine concludes that in the threat of death, humans can deal with it by being calm. The real calm can only be obtained from developing a life utterly dependent on God. According to Harrison (2006: 74–78), this dependence will maintain humans' physical and spiritual life. In seeking peace, humans must be at peace with God by becoming His friends. Furthermore, a Christian can overcome the fear of death because only God can overcome death (Egmond 2014). The best example is Abraham's courage to kill his son in obedience to God. This concept included Isaac's to witness his father draw a knife to kill him.

The story of Abraham's sacrificing Isaac in Genesis 22: 1-19 is an act from paradoxical Faith (Green 1986; Noble 2017). Abraham was to make peace with God by sacrificing his only son. When these acts become holy of

Abraham's obedience, there is the cruel essence of premeditated murder. However, the results are absurd because the same Faith made Abraham get back Isaac and please God more. It was very unusual to offer humans and not animals as sacrifices. Even in the Old Testament, the idea of sacrificing animals as substitutes for humans was not expected. In a culture where animal sacrifice was practiced, people provided sumptuous food for the gods. The theory that animals were offered to replace humans is not prevalent in the Middle East (Walton and Keener 2016: 55). Therefore, when Abraham was asked to offer (Isaac), this was unusual in the local culture and understood that God was testing his spirituality.

This Paradox describes a believer in choosing to obey God while sacrificing something precious (Pulliam 2016). Abraham is an excellent example of overcoming fears, crisis, and worries through Faith and spirituality. This matches Augustine's or Kierkegaard's previous conclusions that the winning factor in facing fear is maintaining God's trust. When the disciples got Jesus involved, the storm stopped, and Abraham's fear and anxiety disappeared when he obeyed God. Therefore, People should involve God in facing the pandemic. It is a leap of Faith in fear that can only be developed through spirituality.

Fear is a product of human sinfulness and correlates with God's broken harmony in the Garden of Eden (Castelo 2008; Zaluchu 2017: 98). The humans fall under the root of problems causing people to live in fear of God, vulnerable and alienated in every generation. Humans are in a situation that leads to death. Kahn (2009) stated that such fear is not Godly, and Satan manages to alienate people from God. According to (Castelo and Kahn's), humans must develop a God-fearing attitude to stay close to Him and build a healthy spirituality. This concept matches with the Bible as the essence of giving God's law to the Israelites was to obey His reign. The fear of God is symbolized by maintaining holiness and obeying His laws, while violation causes punishment (Alexander 2005: 182–184). The storm case is clear in articulating the same principle. Mark 4: 40-41 says, 'And he said unto them, why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, what manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?' According to Vincent (1996: 213), 'fearing exceedingly' means greater terror. The disciples feared the storm initially, then after Jesus calmed the storm, there was 'greater fear'. Conclusively, fear of His power exceeded their expectations. By combining the OT and NT concepts mentioned above, God's fear results from obedience and respect for Him, accompanied by amazement and reluctance. The spirituality leading to this concept provides a strong foundation for Christians in external variables.

Spirituality can be built amid fear as a bulwark against anxiety. Suffering leads to knowing and depending on God because there is no other choice.

Transcendence is the best option for defending oneself during crises and threats. Moreover, fear can cause people to see God's existence and love.

Egypt's Plague and Fear

The best study of God's existence in the event of fear is Israel's exodus from Egypt as at that time, Israel was in constant suffering. After Joseph died, a Pharaoh arose, not knowing the origin of the children of Israel. This growing number of ethnic immigrants raises concerns about domestic security (Walton et al. 2000: 77). Jacob's descendants filled Egypt and feared they would occupy Egypt's resources. Population growth aroused Pharaoh's fear of a rebellion forcing the Israelites to become slaves (Zaluchu 2020: 126). At that time, Egypt was expanding to strengthen its position in Africa and the Middle East regions. The new cities would show cultural achievements and royal existence. Exodus 1: 9-10 shows Pharaoh's fear 'And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it comes to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies and fight against us, and therefore get them up out of the land'. As a result, the Israelites were enslaved for hundreds of years. According to Hill and Walton (Hill and Walton 2019: 66), the Israelites settled in Egypt for 430 years, and Jacob's son, natives of Egypt, turned into slaves captured by great power. All the Israelite testimonies of privilege and happy times were contrasted with the situation.

The Egyptian foremen oppressed the Israelis, especially when their desire to leave Egypt increased. However, God pays attention to His people's suffering hence he sent Moses to face Pharaoh. Negotiations were difficult and slow because Pharaoh showed displeasure allowing the Israelites to leave. Exodus 5:9-11 says, 'Let more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein, and let them not regard vain words. And the taskmasters of the people went out, and spoke to the people, saying, thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go ye, get your straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished'.

Pharaoh hardened his heart and was determined to defend the Israelites making negotiations with Moses difficult. Releasing the Israelites meant the end of free labor to realize his ambition in regional expansion. Moreover, if he fulfilled Moses' request, there would be a war for new slaves to be acquired from the conquered territory or bought from the market. Pharaoh knew it was profitable to keep the Israelites in Egypt. According to Exodus 1:11, the Israelites built the cities of Python and Rameses (Exodus 1:11). Some biblical scholars agree that the city began and finished under the rules of different Egyptian leaders. Ramses I (1320-1318) and Seti I (1318-1304) are rulers of Egypt who started city building through free Israelite labour. However,

during the exodus, the ruling Pharaoh in Egypt was Ramses II (1309-1237). All of these rulers lasted from the 19th Dynasty of New Egypt. Another theory is that an 18th dynasty ruler contributed to the history of the exodus. According to experts, the mark is Moses' 40-year exile in Midian which point to Pharaoh Thutmose III (1504-1450), whose rule exceeds 40 years. The subsequent ruler of Amenophis II (1450-1425) was the exorcist pharaoh (Hill and Walton 2019: 105–107). There are two differences in the analysis due to different time benchmarks, but that does not change the Israelites' persecution in Egypt.

Pharaoh's uncompromising attitude against God resulted in vengeance and the punishment of 10 plagues (Block 1976; Sin 2013). The plagues befell the entire land of Egypt, humans, livestock, and crops without exception (Exodus 7: 19-12: 29). According to Schnittjer (2015: 231), retaliation against the oppressors is the conflict resolution between God, through Moses and the humans (Pharaoh). God showed His power beyond Pharaoh, the gods and the best sorcerers of Egypt (Blumenthal 2012). At that time, the Pharaoh was a mighty king, believed to be Ra's son, one of the highest sky gods (Quirke 2009). For the ancient Egyptians, Pharaoh was god's son hence respected and worshiped. Therefore, God of Israel, introduced by Moses, was a challenge to Pharaoh as the most powerful ruler.

Among the ten plagues in Egypt, the 5th and 6th were pandemics. In the fifth plague, pestilence in animals killed all Egyptian livestock. Exodus 9: 3 says, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle in the field, upon the horses, asses, camels, oxen, and the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain. Comparably, the sixth plague was a malignant disease attacking human and animal skin. Exodus 9:10 stated that they 'took ashes of the furnace and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven, and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and beast'. The outbreak was an escalating epidemic, and the series of viruses underwent evolution. People's knowledge of viruses and plagues in ancient times is different from today. For instance, the livestock suddenly died while humans experienced a vicious attack that ate the skin and the flesh, eventually resulting in death.

The number of 'miracles' accompanying the ten plagues in Egypt is a struggle for scholars and theologians. The first group is the theologians holding the traditional hermeneutic principle that when Moses' stick hit the Nile river, water changed to blood. This story leaves a big question mark as Pharaoh's magicians could also perform some plagues. Additionally, they countered the first plagues Moses made, showing that they were not punishments but lessons. However, Pharaoh's hardness pushed God beyond Egyptians expectations, and the subsequent plagues were too harsh for Egyptian sorcerers to replicate or repeat. From the third to the ten plagues, intensity appeared gradually, and some affected the Pharaoh and his sorcerers. However, the last

plague could not be predicted and faced as usual. All the firstborn cattle and humans died simultaneously, making Egyptian gods powerless to protect them. This defeat caused fear and horror in all of Egypt.

The active involvement of the God of Israel in all the plagues in Egypt can lead to two different conclusions. To the Israelites, it was an act of redemption and salvation, which becomes the OT imagery of Jesus' mission in the NT (Longman III 2009: 145). The Israelites were required to be God-fearing because they were chosen, and Egypt's punishment did not affect them. They were spared and protected, sending a message on the importance of fearing the God of Israel. Conclusively, fear leads to a respectful attitude towards living, keeping God's laws, and respecting Him. Contrastingly, to Egyptians, it was a punishment for Pharaoh's arrogance. Egyptians were too brave to face God and challenge him, forgetting that invisible persons' supernatural powers were real anthropomorphically. The living God of Israelites was seen and represented by Egyptian actions and emotions (Fergusson et al. 1988: 43).

Fear because God punishes humans is an essential theme to contemplate in the series of human spirituality. Nevertheless, humans rely on their strength, ignoring that every action is accountable before God. Everything has consequences, from doing good to evil, but in their egos, humans often forget that their existence has limited capacity. Immoral attitudes, exploitativeness and arrogance, have made people forget themselves therefore suffering, pain, and death are needed to remind them. God has the power to remind and educate people through any means. For instance, Pharaoh did not repent but persisted in keeping the Israelites. After death struck all of Egypt, Pharaoh's asked Moses to leave immediately. God does not dwell in every crisis that humanity faces but have a way to act and help His people. The plagues in Egypt were a warning and learning point to build fear against only God.

Theology of Hope

Exceeding spirituality, theology can build Hope because it shapes the human cognitive and affective aspects influencing his actions during a crisis. Through theology, humans build bridges of ignorance on frightening situations with transcendent awareness, both practically and spiritually. When religious return to God in fear, that is when Hope stands. Furthermore, a religious dialogue takes place and raises human consciousness not to despair but have the internal strength to repent and ask God for strength. That is why the theology of Hope is such an essential issue in crises.

Theology makes people realize that Hope is a natural need over desire. Ekeke & Eyo (2016) stated that desire could be thwarted, unlike Hope, because the person who owns it will not give up in the unexpected and

unbearable. Humans need hope to survive and develop in life as it is a natural best choice in despair (Durkin 2018; Lenson 2018). The determining factors are the will and consciousness within the human. However, it is hard to fight for Hope in today's world condition.

The world religion has shifted with advances in technology humans are increasingly practical and moving away from theistic things (Hunt 2010). When viewed from a social perspective, Hope becomes a utopian concept as change is not sudden even in its presence. This is because the world is developing towards behaviours that confine Faith and spiritual matters in a smaller private area. As a result, religion is responded to in an apathetic irreligiosity manner. Louw (2015) states that this irreligiosity is owned by economically stable people as the urban middle class. This force is pragmatic but does not care about the transcendent world. As an intrinsic element of life that touches the human spirit, Hope should be present to counter the secularity effects (Fromm 2019: 19–25; Sambrooke 2017). The two pillars to defend against it are Faith and fortitude. Faith is a belief in the unseen, an understanding of a possibility and the readiness to welcome something new. For Fromm, 'Faith is not a prediction of the future but an unborn vision, while Hope is the vision of the present in a pregnancy state. Contrastingly, fortitude is the ability to withstand trials, and in its presence, Faith gives rise to hope of working together to turn trials into blessings.

Conclusively, in the development of modern human thought and all situations, Hope remains humanity's grip. Moreover, if humans have Hope, they will emulate the behaviour of Jesus' disciples when facing the storm. Jesus rebuked them very strongly by asking, 'Why are you afraid, you who do not believe it?' Matthew 8: 26 states that Jesus got up and rebuked the wind, and the lake was very calm. Therefore, fear is the cause, and the effect of the loss of Hope and fading of Faith is the root of it all. Mandela (2019) once said, 'I am fundamentally an optimist, and that includes keeping one's high and one's feet moving forward'. There are many moments when people's faith is tested, but they should not despair as that lies defeat and death. Like Mandela, a theology of Hope exists to confront the modern world's skepticism of religion.

Theologically, God is not present to bring fear, and humans are asked consciously to get rid of it. 2 Timothy 1:7 says, 'God doesn't give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit that awakens strength, love and order'. Keener (2014: 617) explains 'spirit' in the statement (spirit of) is accurately understood as an aspect of behaviour (attitude of). Therefore, God is never permissive of fearful behaviour or actions in His children during problems or crises. According to Vincent (1996: 847), God wants Hope rather than cowardice. Paul uses the word 'strength', which is translated from the Greek word *δύναμις* (*dunamis*), meaning a supernatural, miraculous power or force (Strong 1986: 30). In

Paul's perspective, people who experience fear lose divine power and do not realize God provides it for believers.

The theology of Hope works simply by managing people's emotions amid hardships through its relationship with optimism (Miceli and Castelfranchi 2010). A crisis provides negative information to humans, causing an emotional disturbance. Contrastingly, Hope's theology presents positive information shaping the cognitive process of spirituality, resulting in optimism (Kelberer et al. 2018). The above opinions have narrowed theology to anthropological and psychological matters. It should be realized that theology leads people into orthodoxy and not to abstract thinking and idealistic truth. Nevertheless, God's words should be contemplated and implemented in all situations. Crisis places humans as actors in history and is the best situation to make people religiously aware of using the theistic approach much more than leaving. 'I'm convinced that so often we go through these times when we kick, scream and fight God, and all he's really trying to do is hold us and guide us through the storm. We want to ask questions and demand answers, to hold him accountable and to have him remedy the situation immediately. But he knows that's not possible — for our own good'. The key phrase is 'for the good' of human himself (Groeschel 2018: 93).

Conclusion

The theology of Hope is not outdated since fear has always existed throughout human history. Hope is the best companion in every crisis, though it is interpreted differently. Surrendering or struggling and enduring suffering remains everyone's dialectical choice. Hope and fear unite the world and humanity in social, political, economic and cultural solidarity. The world is united in a new Theodosian, that this global catastrophe is aimed at providing justice, punishment or leading to conversion. This new belief in humanity and Hope are transcending national, political, ideological and religious boundaries. The ultimate spiritual reflection is the choice not to give up. The pandemic has led humanity to the point of transcendence due to the powerlessness of reason and technology. Through the Theology of Hope, human depends only on God and supremacy is returned to transcendent matters and not to ontology. The pandemic has surpassed human logical thinking and shapes a new cosmology that is shifting science, technology and humanity's best achievements. The ontology of the human self can subjectively be shaken through fear. However, Hope strengthens that in spiritual awareness, humans are mortals who depend on their God. During the pandemic, the world is comprehensively suffering but also hoping to win. Understanding how God educates people about Hope through suffering is essential to Christian theology. Essentially, theological thinking can bridge between human empirical experience and logical thinking in understanding God.

Acknowledgment

The authors express gratitude to Fotarisman Zaluchu, PhD, that read and provided corrections to sharpen this paper's analysis.

Bibliography

- Adolphs R (2013) The biology of fear. *Current Biology*. DOI: 10.1016/j.cub.2012.11.055.
- Alexander TD (2005) *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, 4th edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic.
- BBC (2020) Coronavirus confirmed as pandemic by World Health Organization. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-51839944>.
- Block J (1976) The Ten Plagues of Egypt. *Religious Education* 71(5): 519–526. DOI: 10.1080/0034408760710508.
- Blumenthal F (2012) The Ten Plagues: Debunking Egyptian Polytheism. *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 40(4): 255.
- Bonhoeffer D (2018) Overcoming Fear. In *The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, pp. 59–66. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctt22nm6hz.13.
- Boomgaarden G (2020) 12 Perspectives on the Pandemic. *A De Gruyter Social Sciences Pamphlet*. Available at: https://www.degruyter.com/fileasset/craft/media/doc/DG_12perspectives_socialsciences.pdf.
- Carol Harrison (2006) *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology: An Argument for Continuity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Carson R (2000) *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*, 11th edition. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Castelo D (2008) The fear of the Lord as theological method. *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 2(1): 147–160. Available at: www.jstor.org/stable/26421451.
- Craig Groeschel (2018) *Hope in the Dark*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- de Gruchy JW (2013) Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–45). In *The Student's Companion to the Theologians*, pp. 378–389. DOI: 10.1002/9781118427170.ch51.
- DeWitte SN (2014) Mortality Risk and Survival in the Aftermath of the Medieval Black Death. *PLoS ONE* 9(5): e96513. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0096513.
- Durkin K (2018) Erich Fromm. In *Sociological Amnesia*, pp. 57–72. DOI: 10.4324/9781315609737-4.
- Egmond B van (2014) How to cope with the fear of death? The early Augustine's relation to Stoic and Epicurean therapy. In *Annual Conference of the North American Patristics Society*. Chicago: n.p. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/12366891/How_to_Cope_with_the_Fear_of_Death.

- th._The_Early_Augustines_Relation_to_Stoic_and_Epicurean_Therapies.
- Ekeke EC and Eyo UE (2016) The Necessity of Hope: A Philosophical and Theological Appraisal. *European Scientific Journal* 12(5): 371. DOI: 10.19044/esj.2016.v12n5p371.
- Fergusson SB, Wright DF and Packer J (1988) *New Dictionary of the Theology*. Downer s Grove, Illionis: IVP Academic.
- Fromm E (2019) *Revolusi Pengharapan [The Revolution of Hope]*, 2nd edition. Bogor: Pelangi Cendekia.
- Green RM (1986) Deciphering fear and trembling's secret message. *Religious Studies* 22(1): 95–111. DOI: 10.1017/S0034412500018060.
- Haiken A (2002) *Spiritualitas Kristiani*. Jakarta: Yayasan Cipta Loka Caraka.
- Hartley CA and Phelps EA (2012) Anxiety and decision-making. *Biological Psychiatry* 72(2): 113–118. DOI: 10.1016/j.biopsych.2011.12.027.
- Hill AE and Walton JH (2019) *Survey Perjanjian Lama*, 3rd edition. Malang: Gandum Mas.
- Holder A, ed. (2014) *Christian Spirituality*. London: Routledge. DOI: 10.4324/9780203874721.
- Hunt S (2010) Religion in the Contemporary World: A Sociological Introduction. *Journal of Religious History* 34(4): 483–484. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9809.2010.00930.x.
- Huremović D (2019) Brief History of Pandemics (Pandemics Throughout History). In *Psychiatry of Pandemics*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 7–35. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-15346-5_2.
- Jamie Ducharme (2020) World Health Organization declares COVID-19 a 'pandemic'. Here's what that means. Available at: <https://time.com/579-1661/who-coronavirus-pandemic-declaration/>.
- Kagan J and Schulkin J (1995) On the concepts of fear. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry* 3(4): 231–234. DOI: 10.3109/10673229 509017190.
- Kahn PW (2009) *Out of Eden: Adam and Eve and the Problem of Evil*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. DOI: 10.5860/choice.44-4983.
- Keener CS (2014) *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 2nd edition. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Kelberer LJA, Kraines MA, and Wells TT (2018) Optimism, hope, and attention for emotional stimuli. *Personality and Individual Differences* 124(1): 84–90. DOI: 10.1016/j.paid.2017.12.003.
- Lannoo MJ (2018) The Spirit. In *The Iowa Lakeside Laboratory*, pp. 1–3. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctt20q1tpp.3.
- Lenson ES (2018) *Overcoming Adversity: Conquering Life's Challenges*. Samford Valley: Australian Academic Press.

- Littman RJ (2009) The Plague of Athens: Epidemiology and Paleopathology. *Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine: A Journal of Translational and Personalized Medicine* 76(5): 456–467. DOI: 10.1002/msj.20137.
- Longman III T (2009) *How to Read Exodus*. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Louw DJ (2015) *Wholeness in Hope Care*. Hamburg: LIT Verlag.
- Mandela N (2019) Here are 10 of Nelson Mandela's most inspirational quotes. Available at: <https://europeansting.com/2019/07/19/here-are-10-of-nelson-mandelas-most-inspirational-quotes/> (accessed 7 November 2020).
- Mertler CA and Mertler CA (2018) What is action research? In *Action Research Communities*, pp. 5–30. DOI: 10.4324/9781315164564-2.
- Miceli M and Castelfranchi C (2010) Hope: The power of wish and possibility. *Theory & Psychology* 20(2): 251–276. DOI: 10.1177/0959354309354393.
- Moss RC (1986) Overcoming fear. A review of research on patient, family instruction. *AORN Journal* 43(5). DOI: 10.1016/S0001-2092(07)65837-2.
- Noble BP (2017) *An Analysis of Søren Kierkegaard's Fear and Trembling*, 1st edition. London: Macat Library. DOI: 10.4324/9781912281923.
- Osterholm MT (2016) Ebola and Zika: Cautionary tales. *Science*. DOI: 10.1126/science.aai9078.
- Panjaitan F and Lumingkewas MS (2019) Ibadah Jemaat Kristen Kontemporer Abad 21 Dan Tinjauan Kritis-Liturgis [The 21st Century Contemporary Christian Worship and Critical-Liturgical Review]. *FIDEI: Jurnal Teologi Sistemika dan Praktika* 2(1): 159–182. DOI: 10.34081/fidei.v2i1.49.
- Pulliam D (2016) *Søren Kierkegaard's view of faith found in fear and trembling and practice in christianity*. MA Thesis, Indiana University. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/1805/11812>.
- Quirke S (2009) 'Ra is my Lord': Searching for the Rise of the Sun God at the Dawn of Egyptian History. *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 95(1): 299–300. DOI: 10.1177/030751330909500130.
- Reperant LA and Osterhaus ADME (2017) AIDS, Avian flu, SARS, MERS, Ebola, Zika... what next? *Vaccine*. DOI: 10.1016/j.vaccine.2017.04.082.
- Sabbatani S and Fiorino S (2009) [The Antonine Plague and the decline of the Roman Empire]. *Le infezioni in medicina: rivista periodica di eziologia, epidemiologia, diagnostica, clinica e terapia delle patologie infettive* 17(4): 261–75. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20046111>.
- Sambrooke J (2017) Religion and Secularism. In *A Companion to Critical and Cultural Theory*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 287–300. DOI: 10.1002/9781118472262.ch17.
- Schnittjer GE (2015) *The Torah Story*, 1st edition. Malang: Gandum Mas.

- Schoenberger NE, Kirsch I, and Rosengard C (1991) Cognitive theories of human fear: An empirically derived integration. *Anxiety Research* 4(1): 1–13. DOI: 10.1080/08917779108248760.
- Sheldrake P (2013) *Spirituality: A Brief History*, 2nd edition. West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing.
- Shereen MA, Khan S, Kazmi A, et al. (2020) COVID-19 infection: Origin, transmission, and characteristics of human coronaviruses. *Journal of Advanced Research* 24(*): 91–98. DOI: 10.1016/j.jare.2020.03.005.
- Shin LM and Liberzon I (2010) The neurocircuitry of fear, stress, and anxiety disorders. *Neuropsychopharmacology*. DOI: 10.1038/npp.2009.83.
- Sin SK (2013) Kekerasan hati Firaun dalam kitab Keluaran: Tindakan pribadi atau tindakan Allah [Pharaoh's heart hardness in the book of Exodus: Personal acts or acts of God]. *Sttaletheia* 15(4): 21.
- Strong J (1986) A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek/New Testament with their Renderings in the King James Version. In *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. Iowa Falls, IA: World Bible Publishers, p. 49.
- Suppawattaya P, Yiemphat P, and Yasri P (2020) Effects of Social Distancing, Self-Quarantine, and Self-Isolation during the COVID-19 Pandemic on People's Well-Being, and How to Cope with It. *International Journal of Science and Healthcare Research* 5(*): 12–20.
- Taubenberger JK and Morens DM (2006) 1918 Influenza: the Mother of All Pandemics. *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 12(1): 15–22. DOI: 10.3201/eid1209.050979.
- Tognotti E (2013) Lessons from the history of quarantine, from plague to influenza A. *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 19(2): 254–259. DOI: 10.3201/eid1902.120312.
- Tovote P, Fadok JP and Lüthi A (2015) Neuronal circuits for fear and anxiety. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 16(6): 317–331. DOI: 10.1038/nrn3945.
- Vincent MR (1996) *Words Studies in the New Testament*, volume 1 & 2. Albany, OR: SAGE Software.
- Vine WE (1997) *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc.
- Walton JH and Keener CS (2016) *Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible: Bringing to Life the Ancient World of Scripture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Walton JH, Matthews VH and Chavalas MC (2000) *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Whitehead JC (2012) *Constructing a neuroscientific pastoral theology of fear and hope: Process Studies*. PhD Thesis, University of Denver. DOI: 10.5840/process201241 129.
- Winchester CL and Salji M (2016) Writing a literature review. *Journal of Clinical Urology* 9(5): 308–312. DOI: 10.1177/2051415816650133.

- Zaluchu SE (2017) *Biblical Theology: Pembahasan Metodologi Dan Pendekatan Biblika Dalam Membangun Teologi PL Dan PB Yang Alkitabiah [Biblical Theology: Discussion of Biblical Methodology and Approach in Building Biblical OT and NT Theology]*, 2nd edition. Semarang: Golden Gate Publishing.
- Zaluchu SE (2020) *Pentateuch: Narasi Narasi Utama Kitab Musa [Pentateuch: The main narrative of the books of Mosses]*, 1st edition. Semarang: Golden Gate Publishing.
- Zhong N and Zeng G (2006) What we have learnt from SARS epidemics in China. *BMJ* 333(7564): 389–391. DOI: 10.1136/bmj.333.7564.389.