

Ezekiel 10:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight.

Analysis

The man clothed in linen, identified as a priestly or angelic figure, receives a divine command to take burning coals from between the cherubim and scatter them over Jerusalem. The Hebrew word for 'coals of fire' (gachalei-esh, שָׁלָשֶׁת) signifies divine judgment and purification. This imagery echoes Isaiah's vision where a seraph touched his lips with a coal from the altar (Isaiah 6:6-7), but here the coals bring destruction rather than cleansing.

The command to scatter coals over the city represents God's righteous judgment upon Jerusalem's persistent idolatry and covenant unfaithfulness. The wheels (galgal, גָּלָל) represent God's providential governance—His sovereign control extends even to acts of judgment. The cherubim, guardians of God's holiness, participate in executing divine justice.

From a Reformed perspective, this passage underscores God's absolute sovereignty in judgment. He actively ordains and executes judgment against sin, even among His covenant people. The priestly figure's obedience models submission to God's will even in difficult tasks.

Historical Context

This vision occurred around 592-591 BC during Ezekiel's exile in Babylon, shortly before Jerusalem's destruction in 586 BC. The temple had become a center of syncretistic worship mixing Yahweh worship with Canaanite fertility cults. Ezekiel's earlier vision (chapters 8-9) revealed the abominations practiced in the temple courts.

The 'man clothed in linen' recalls the high priestly garments (Exodus 28:39-42), suggesting a mediatorial figure. For exiles who feared God had abandoned them, this vision confirmed that Yahweh actively controlled events, including Jerusalem's coming destruction.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does this passage challenge modern assumptions that a loving God would never actively judge sin?
2. In what ways might God's glory be departing from contemporary churches that compromise biblical truth?
3. How should the reality of divine judgment shape our evangelism and prayer for the lost?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	לְבָשׂ	בַּפְּנֵי	וְאֶל	בָּאָשָׁן	וְאֶל	וַיֹּאמֶר
And he spake	H413	unto the man		clothed	with linen	And he spake
H559		H376		H3847	H906	H559
וַיָּבֹא	לְגָלָגָל	אֶל	תְּחִתַּת	אֶל	לְכָרְבָּם	
And he went in	H413	between	the wheels	H413	H8478	even under the cherub
H935		H996	H1534			H3742
וַיָּמָלֵא	בָּאָשָׁן	וְאֶשְׁבָּתָה	בָּאָשָׁן	וְאֶשְׁבָּתָה	לְכָרְבָּם	
and fill	thine hand	with coals	of fire	between	even under the cherub	
H4390	H2651	H1513	H784	H996		H3742
וְזָרַק	עַל	בָּעָרָה	וְיָבָא	לְעֵינִי		
and scatter	H5921	them over the city	And he went in	in my sight		
H2236		H5892	H935	H5869		

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 8:5 (Parallel theme): And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

Ezekiel 1:13 (Parallel theme): As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

Isaiah 30:30 (Parallel theme): And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lightning down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

Psalms 140:10 (Parallel theme): Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

Ezekiel 10:16 (Parallel theme): And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them.

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