

John 10:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Analysis

My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. This verse anchors the doctrine of eternal security in divine sovereignty. The emphatic **my Father** (ὁ πατήρ μου/ho patēr mou) claims unique relationship, while **which gave them** (ὃς δέδωκέν/hos dedōken) uses the perfect tense—a completed action with permanent results. Believers are the Father's gift to the Son (John 6:37, 17:6), transferred by divine decree before conversion.

Is greater than all (μείζων πάντων ἐστίν/meizōn pantōn estin) asserts absolute supremacy—greater than every power, enemy, or force. The comparative meizōn (greater) becomes superlative in context: nothing exceeds the Father's power. This grounds security not in human faithfulness but divine omnipotence.

No man is able to pluck (οὐδεὶς δύναται ἀρπάζειν/oudeis dynatai harpazein)—the verb harpazein means to seize violently, snatch away by force. The double negative (οὐδεὶς/not one) combined with impossibility (δύναται/is able) creates emphatic negation: absolutely no one possesses the power to remove believers from God's grasp. This includes Satan, persecutors, circumstances, and—critically—the believer himself.

Out of my Father's hand (ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ πατρός μου/ek tēs cheiros tou patros mou) uses cheir (hand) to represent God's protecting power and possessive control. Combined with verse 28's "neither shall any pluck them out of my hand,"

we have double security: held by both Son and Father. The Trinitarian grip on believers is unbreakable.

Historical Context

This declaration occurs during the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) in winter (John 10:22), commemorating the Maccabean cleansing of the temple after Antiochus Epiphanes' desecration (167-164 BC). The feast celebrated God's faithfulness to preserve His people despite violent persecution—an apt setting for Jesus' promise of eternal security.

Jewish leaders demanded Jesus declare plainly if He was the Messiah (v. 24). His answer—"I told you, and ye believed not"—identifies unbelief as the dividing line. True sheep hear His voice (v. 27), believe, and receive eternal life with absolute security. Jesus confronts both those questioning His identity and those doubting believers' security.

In first-century Judaism, debates raged about apostasy and perseverance. Could covenant members lose their standing? The Qumran community (Dead Sea Scrolls) practiced strict discipline and expulsion. Rabbinic literature discussed whether certain sins could forfeit one's portion in the world to come. Against this background, Jesus' categorical promise was revolutionary: security rests on divine power, not human performance.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does grounding your security in the Father's power rather than your faithfulness transform your daily experience of assurance?

2. What does the imagery of God's "hand" holding believers reveal about His active, protective involvement in salvation?
3. If "no man" can pluck believers from God's hand, does this include the believer himself, and what are the implications for free will and perseverance?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	πατὴρ	μου	ὃς	δέδωκέν	μοι	μεῖζόν	πάντων
G3588	Father	My	which	gave	them me	greater than	all
	G3962	G3450	G3739	G1325	G3427	G3187	G3956
ἐστίν	καὶ	οὐδεὶς	δύναται	ἄρπάξειν	ἐκ	τῆς	χειρὸς
is	and	no	man is able	to pluck	them out of	G3588	hand
G2076	G2532	G3762	G1410	G726	G1537		G5495
τοῦ	πατὴρ	μου					
G3588	Father	My					
	G3962	G3450					

Additional Cross-References

John 6:37 (Parallel theme): All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 17:2 (Parallel theme): As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

John 14:28 (Parallel theme): Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

John 17:9 (Parallel theme): I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

John 17:6 (Parallel theme): I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

John 17:11 (Parallel theme): And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Malachi 1:14 (Parallel theme): But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.

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