

Luke 4:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

Analysis

For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee.

Satan quotes Psalm 91:11, demonstrating his knowledge of Scripture and willingness to misuse it for evil purposes. The phrase gepraptai gar (γέγραπται γάρ, for it is written) mirrors Jesus' own defense method, showing Satan's sophistication in theological argument. The verb entelleitai (ἐντελλεῖται, shall give charge) means to command or commission, while diaphylaxai (διαφυλάξαι, to keep/guard) indicates protective custody.

Satan's quotation is accurate but his application is deceptive. He omits '**in all thy ways**' from Psalm 91:11—the promise of angelic protection applies to those walking in God's appointed paths, not those presumptuously testing Him. This is eisegesis (reading into Scripture) rather than exegesis (drawing meaning from Scripture). The temptation suggests Jesus should force God's hand, demanding a miraculous rescue to prove His messianic identity publicly. This represents the perennial temptation to manipulate God through selective Scripture use, demanding He perform according to our agenda rather than submitting to His revealed will.

Historical Context

Psalm 91 was recognized as a messianic psalm promising divine protection. Satan weaponizes Scripture, demonstrating that biblical knowledge without Spirit-illumination produces error. The early church fathers warned against proof-texting

—extracting verses from context to support predetermined conclusions. This temptation occurred at the temple pinnacle, likely the southeast corner overlooking the Kidron Valley (approximately 450 feet high). A spectacular angelic rescue before temple-goers would provide undeniable public vindication of Jesus' messianic claims. Yet Jesus understood that faith demonstrates itself through obedience, not demands for miraculous signs (compare the Pharisees' demand for signs in Matthew 12:38-39).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Satan's accurate quotation but distorted application of Scripture warn us against proof-texting and eisegesis?
2. What safeguards help prevent misusing Scripture to justify our own desires rather than submitting to God's will?
3. In what ways do Christians sometimes demand God prove Himself rather than trusting His character and promises?

Interlinear Text

γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι Τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ ἐντελεῖται περὶ¹
it is written **For** G3754 G3588 **angels** G846 **He shall give** **over**
G1125 G1063 G32 G1781 G4012

σοῦ τοῦ διαφυλάξαι σε
thee G3588 **to keep** **thee**
G4675 G1314 G4571

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 1:14 (Parallel theme): Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

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