

Psalms 109:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

Analysis

Set thou a wicked man over him (הִפְקֵד עָלָיו רָשָׁע, hafked alav rasha)—the verb פָּקַד (paqad) means "appoint, set in authority." David prays for poetic justice: let the wicked experience wickedness. **And let Satan stand at his right hand** (וְשָׂטָן עֹמֵד עַל-יְמִינוֹ, vesatan ya'amod al-yemino)—this is the only use of שָׂטָן (satan) in the Psalms, meaning "adversary" or "accuser." The right hand is the position of power and advocacy (Ps 16:8; 110:5); David prays the accuser stands there instead of a defender.

Scholars debate whether שָׂטָן is the proper name (Satan) or merely "an adversary." Zechariah 3:1 shows Satan standing at the right hand to accuse Joshua the high priest—identical imagery. Either way, David prays his enemy faces the accusation he inflicted on the innocent. Peter's application to Judas (Acts 1:20, citing v. 8) confirms messianic overtones. Judas had Satan enter him (John 13:27); he became Satan's instrument and thus warranted Satan's own judgment.

Historical Context

In ancient Israelite jurisprudence, the accuser stood at the defendant's right hand in court. David prays his enemy faces trial without defense—experiencing the very judicial isolation he imposed on David through false testimony.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does the principle of measure-for-measure justice (evil returned to its source) reflect God's righteousness?
2. What does it mean that those who serve Satan's purposes may ultimately face Satan's own condemnation?
3. How do we pray for justice without usurping God's role as judge, following David's model of appeal to divine tribunal?

Interlinear Text

ד	עַל יוֹ	רָשָׁע	!	שָׂטָן	ד	עַל יַעֲמֹד	
Set	H5921	thou a wicked man		over him and let Satan	stand	H5921	
H6485		H7563		H7854	H5975		
יְמִיְנוֹ:							
at his right hand							
H3225							

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 3:1 (Parallel theme): And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.

Matthew 5:25 (Parallel theme): Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

Matthew 27:4 (Parallel theme): Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

John 13:2 (Evil): And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

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