

Zechariah 1:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers.

Analysis

God's message begins bluntly: 'The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers.' The emphatic 'sore displeased' (Hebrew: qatsaph qatsaph, intense anger) recalls the exile's cause—covenant unfaithfulness. This isn't beginning with encouragement but with sobering historical reality. God's anger at sin is real and consequential. The reference to 'fathers' creates continuity—the exile generation's sin led to Babylon, warning the restoration generation against repeating failures. Divine displeasure with sin isn't cultural but eternal; God's character demands holiness.

Historical Context

The 'fathers' refers to pre-exilic Judah whose idolatry, social injustice, and covenant breaking culminated in 586 BC destruction and seventy-year exile. Prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel warned them, but they persisted in rebellion. The returned remnant needed this sobering reminder to avoid repeating their ancestors' mistakes. Post-exilic discouragement tempted them to half-hearted obedience; this warning demanded full commitment.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does remembering God's judgment on previous generations protect us from presuming on His patience?
2. What does God's beginning with warning rather than encouragement teach us about the priority of dealing with sin?

Interlinear Text

בָּאָזֶן חָזַק הָיָה יְהוָה עַל אֲבוֹתֶיךָ מִן הָאָזֶן
displeased The LORD H5921 with your fathers hath been sore H7110

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 44:6 (Parallel theme): Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day.

Ezekiel 22:31 (References Lord): Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.

Lamentations 5:7 (Parallel theme): Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities.

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