

Zechariah 3:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?

Analysis

In Zechariah's vision, the LORD rebukes Satan: 'And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' Joshua the high priest stands before the Angel of the LORD (likely pre-incarnate Christ) while Satan accuses. God's double rebuke of Satan (yig'ar YHWH beka, repeated) asserts divine authority over the accuser. The basis: 'the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem' (ha-boher bi-Yerushalaim)—God's sovereign election trumps Satan's accusations. Joshua is 'a brand plucked from the fire' (ud mutzal me-esh)—barely rescued from destruction (Amos 4:11), symbolizing Israel's exile and narrow preservation. Despite defilement (v. 3: filthy garments), God graciously cleanses (v. 4-5). This previews Christ's advocacy: He rebukes our accuser and clothes us in His righteousness (Romans 8:33-34, Revelation 12:10).

Historical Context

This vision occurred in 520 BC during temple rebuilding. Joshua (Jeshua) the high priest led the post-exilic community with Zerubbabel. The filthy garments symbolize Israel's sin and defilement through exile. Satan's accusation had basis—they were guilty! Yet God's election and mercy override guilt through cleansing and re-robing. The New Testament develops this: Satan accuses believers (Revelation 12:10), but Christ our advocate answers (1 John 2:1), having removed our filthy rags and clothed us in His righteousness (Isaiah 61:10, 2 Corinthians

5:21). Jude 9 echoes this scene in Michael's dispute with Satan over Moses's body. God's sovereign choice and gracious justification silence all accusations.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. When Satan accuses me of unworthiness, do I trust God's electing grace and Christ's advocacy more than my failures?
2. How does being 'a brand plucked from the fire' shape my gratitude and worship for barely-deserved salvation?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	יְהוָה	אֵל	הַשָּׂטָן	וַיִּגְעַר	יְהוָה	בְּ
said	And the LORD	H413	thee O Satan	rebuke	And the LORD	H0
H559	H3068		H7854	H1605	H3068	
הַשָּׂטָן	וַיִּגְעַר	יְהוָה	בְּ	הַבַּחַר	בִּירוּשָׁלַם	
thee O Satan	rebuke	And the LORD	H0	that hath chosen	Jerusalem	
H7854	H1605	H3068		H977	H3389	
זֶה הוּא	אֵל	מֵצֵל	מֵאֵשׁ:			
H3808	H2088	thee is not this a brand	plucked	out of the fire		
		H181	H5337	H784		

Additional Cross-References

Amos 4:11 (References Lord): I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

Jude 1:23 (Parallel theme): And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Jude 1:9 (References Lord): Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

Romans 8:33 (Parallel theme): Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Zechariah 1:17 (References Lord): Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

1 John 3:8 (Parallel theme): He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

Zechariah 2:12 (References Lord): And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

Romans 16:20 (References Lord): And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

John 13:18 (Parallel theme): I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

Luke 22:32 (Parallel theme): But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.