

Psalm 108:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

Analysis

This verse contrasts sharply with the previous one, moving from human inadequacy to divine sufficiency: 'Through God we shall do valiantly.' The preposition 'through' (Hebrew 'be') indicates agency, instrumentality - God is the means and source of strength. 'We shall do valiantly' implies courageous action, brave exploits, showing strength. This is not passive waiting but active engagement empowered by God. The second clause intensifies the confidence: 'for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.' 'Tread down' conveys complete victory, subduing opposition under foot. The emphatic 'he it is' (Hebrew 'hu') stresses that God alone accomplishes this victory. The verse maintains creative tension: humans are called to act valiantly ('we shall do'), yet victory comes from God alone ('he it is'). This paradox of human agency and divine sovereignty permeates Scripture - we work, yet God works in us (Philippians 2:12-13).

Historical Context

This verse concludes both Psalm 60 and 108, serving as a confession of faith despite difficult circumstances. In David's military campaigns, this would reflect the reality that Israel's survival depended not on superior numbers or weaponry but on YHWH fighting for them. The conquest of Canaan under Joshua established this pattern - walls of Jericho fell not by military strategy but by divine intervention (Joshua 6). When David faced Goliath, he declared that the battle belonged to the LORD (1 Samuel 17:47). Throughout Israel's history, victories came when they trusted God (Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20), and defeats came through self-

reliance (Ai in Joshua 7). The language of 'treading down enemies' echoes ancient Near Eastern victory language, often depicted in art showing kings with their feet on defeated foes. Yet unlike pagan accounts attributing victory to human might, this psalm gives all credit to God. This theological principle sustained Israel through exile and diaspora when they had no military power.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How do we maintain the biblical tension between human responsibility to 'do valiantly' and recognition that God gives the victory?
2. What does it mean to do something 'through God' rather than for God or by ourselves?
3. Why is it important that the verse doesn't say 'through God we might do valiantly' but 'we shall do valiantly'?
4. How does this confidence in God's victory shape our approach to spiritual warfare and life's challenges?
5. In what ways can we cultivate this confidence in God's sufficiency without presumption or passivity?

Interlinear Text

בְּאָלֹהִים נִעְשָׂה בְּאָלֹהִים
Through God we shall do valiantly

H430

H6213

לְכַלְלָה
H2428

H1931

לְכַלְלָה
for he it is that shall tread down

H947

אֶלְעָלָה
our enemies

H6862

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 60:12 (References God): Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

Isaiah 63:3 (Parallel theme): I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

Psalms 18:42 (Parallel theme): Then did I beat them small as the dust before the wind: I did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

2 Corinthians 2:14 (References God): Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

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