

Psalm 115:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

Analysis

Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD (ירא ייְהוָה בְּטֻחוּ בְּיְהוָה)—The psalmist moves from calling on the house of Aaron to address all God-fearers. The Hebrew yir'ei YHWH (those who fear the LORD) became a technical term for Gentile converts and sympathizers in Second Temple Judaism (Acts 10:2, 13:16). The imperative bitchu (trust!) intensifies the call: those who reverence God must actively depend on Him.

He is their help and their shield (עִזּוּם וּמִגְּדָלָם הוּא)—The pronoun placement is emphatic: "He Himself is their help and shield." This echoes Abraham's promise, "I am your shield" (Genesis 15:1). The combination of ezer (help, active aid) and magen (shield, defensive protection) encompasses both God's offensive intervention and defensive covering—a complete security unavailable from lifeless idols (verses 4-8).

Historical Context

Psalm 115 likely dates to the post-exilic period when Israel faced mockery: "Where is their God?" (v. 2). The threefold call to trust (Israel, Aaron, God-fearers) reflects the worshiping community structure after the return from Babylon. This verse specifically addresses the God-fearers, likely including Gentile converts who had aligned themselves with Israel's God.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does 'fearing the LORD' lead naturally to trusting Him, rather than creating anxiety?
2. In what areas of life are you tempted to trust in human 'shields' rather than God as both helper and defender?

Interlinear Text

וּמְגַנֵּן מִ	עָזֶב מִ	בַּיִתְהַלֵּל וְ				
Ye that fear	in the LORD	trust	in the LORD	he is their help	and their shield	
H3373	H3068	H982	H3068	H5828	H4043	

רְאֵא:

H1931

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 14:26 (References Lord): In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

Acts 10:35 (Parallel theme): But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Proverbs 30:5 (Faith): Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

Revelation 19:5 (Parallel theme): And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

Psalms 33:18 (References Lord): Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

Psalms 22:23 (References Lord): Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.

Psalms 147:11 (References Lord): The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

Psalms 103:11 (Parallel theme): For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

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