

Psalm 118:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them.

Analysis

All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them. The psalmist describes military siege using kol goyim s'vavuni (all nations surrounded me). S'vavuni (surrounded/compassed) pictures encirclement, military besiegement—enemies on every side with no visible escape. Kol goyim (all nations) uses rhetorical hyperbole common in Psalms, emphasizing overwhelming odds: not one enemy but many, not local opponents but international coalition.

The confident response: **but in the name of the LORD will I destroy them** (b'shem YHWH ki amilam). B'shem YHWH (in the name of the LORD) invokes divine authority, covenant promises, God's revealed character. The battle is fought not through superior military force but through calling on God's name. Amilam (I will cut them off/destroy them) uses language of decisive victory. This echoes David confronting Goliath: "Thou comest to me with a sword...but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts" (1 Samuel 17:45). Victory comes not through human strength but covenant invocation of God's powerful name.

Historical Context

Israel faced constant military threats from surrounding nations: Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Arameans, Assyrians, Babylonians. Yet Israel's survival never depended on military superiority but divine intervention. When trusting God, small forces defeated vast armies (Joshua 10:42, Judges 7:2-8, 2 Chronicles 20:1-30). The phrase "in the name of the LORD" appears at crucial

moments: David versus Goliath, Hezekiah facing Assyria's siege (2 Kings 19:31-37), Jehoshaphat's prayer before battle (2 Chronicles 20:9). This pattern continues in spiritual warfare: believers overcome Satan "by the blood of the Lamb" and faithful testimony (Revelation 12:11), and cast out demons "in Jesus's name" (Mark 16:17, Acts 16:18).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What 'nations' (overwhelming opposition forces) currently surround you, and how does invoking God's name provide victory?
2. How does fighting 'in the name of the LORD' differ from presumptuous claim of divine endorsement for personal agendas?
3. In what ways does New Testament spiritual warfare parallel Old Testament physical battles fought 'in the LORD's name'?

Interlinear Text

כָּל־גּוֹיִם סְבַבְתִּי בְּשֵׁם הָאֱלֹהִים

H3605

All nations

H1471

compassed me about

H5437

but in the name

H8034

of the LORD

H3068

H3588

אָמַלֵּם:

will I destroy

H4135

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 88:17 (Parallel theme): They came round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together.

