

Psalms 119:122

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.

Analysis

Be surety for thy servant for good (עָרַב עִבְדְּךָ לְטוֹב, *arov avdekha l'tov*)—The verb *arav* means to stand as guarantor or pledge security, used of Judah's surety for Benjamin (Gen 43:9). The psalmist asks God Himself to become his bondsman against oppressors—a bold request fulfilled in Christ, who became surety of the better covenant (Heb 7:22).

Let not the proud oppress me (זִדִּים, *zedim*)—The proud/arrogant ones who presumptuously violate God's law. This echoes v. 51, 69, 78, 85—a recurring threat throughout the psalm, representing those who reject divine authority.

Historical Context

The concept of surety was well-established in ancient Near Eastern legal practice. In Israel's covenant framework, asking God to be surety inverts the typical pattern—instead of humans guaranteeing obligations to God, God guarantees protection for His faithful servant.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's role as surety of the new covenant (Hebrews 7:22) provide security against your spiritual enemies?
2. What 'proud' voices in culture today seek to oppress biblical faithfulness?
3. Do you boldly ask God to personally guarantee your spiritual welfare, or do you rely on your own strength?

Interlinear Text

פֶּרֶב	עֲבָדְךָ	לְטוֹב	אֶל	יַעֲשֶׂהָ נִי	זָדִים:
Be surety	for thy servant	for good	H408	oppress	let not the proud
H6148	H5650	H2896		H6231	H2086

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 7:22 (Parallel theme): By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.

Isaiah 38:14 (Parallel theme): Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me.

Psalms 119:21 (Parallel theme): Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

Job 17:3 (Parallel theme): Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee; who is he that will strike hands with me?