

Psalms 124:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

Analysis

The hypothetical destruction intensifies: 'Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.' The phrase 'proud waters' personifies the flood, giving it moral character - arrogant, self-exalting, contemptuous. This combines physical threat (flood) with spiritual/moral dimension (pride). Waters aren't merely natural disaster but represent proud enemies who seek to overwhelm God's people. The repetition 'gone over our soul' from verse 4 creates emphasis through parallelism. The escalation from 'waters' (v. 4) to 'proud waters' (v. 5) suggests increasing intensity or perhaps distinguishes ordinary threats from especially arrogant opposition. The verse completes the hypothetical destruction section, having used two metaphors (swallowing, drowning) to describe what would have happened without divine intervention.

Historical Context

The description of enemies as 'proud waters' fits recurring biblical pattern where Israel's oppressors are characterized by arrogance (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon). These nations didn't merely threaten physically but religiously - claiming superiority over Israel's God. The waters' pride represents ideological/spiritual assault, not just military threat. This makes divine intervention both practical deliverance and theological vindication.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does it mean for waters to be 'proud,' and how does this differ from ordinary flood imagery?
2. How do physical threats often carry spiritual/ideological dimensions?
3. In what ways do believers face 'proud' opposition that seeks to overwhelm through arrogance?
4. Why does Scripture repeatedly connect pride with opposition to God's people?
5. How does God's deliverance from 'proud waters' humble human arrogance?

Interlinear Text

אֶזְכֹּר	עָבַר	עַל	נַפְשִׁי	נוֹ	הַ מַּיִם	הַיְדוּוֹתִים:
Then	had gone over	H5921	our soul	waters	the proud	
H233	H5674		H5315	H4325	H2121	

Additional Cross-References

Job 38:11 (Parallel theme): And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?