

Psalm 135:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;

Analysis

The historical recital advances from exodus to conquest: 'Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings.' The transition from Egypt to Canaan spans the wilderness wanderings implicitly. 'Great nations' (goyim rabbim) and 'mighty kings' (melachim atsumim) emphasize the formidable opposition Israel faced. The Hebrew 'atsumim' means numerous, powerful, mighty - these were not insignificant tribal chieftains but established rulers with armies. Yet God 'smote' and 'slew' them, using the same verb (nakah) applied to Egypt. The parallel construction reinforces God's consistent pattern: He defeats all who oppose His people and purposes. This encouraged later generations facing their own powerful enemies. The New Testament applies this principle spiritually - Christ has 'spoiled principalities and powers' (Colossians 2:15), defeating spiritual forces that oppose God's kingdom.

Historical Context

Israel's conquest of Canaan faced opposition from established city-states, each with its own king and military. Ancient Near Eastern kings often claimed divine authority and protection from patron deities. Israel's victories demonstrated not merely military superiority but the supremacy of Yahweh over the gods of Canaan.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does remembering God's past victories strengthen faith for present challenges?
2. What "great nations" or obstacles has God helped you overcome?

Interlinear Text

עֲצָמִים: מֶלֶךְ יְמִינֵךְ וְבָבֶן גָּדוֹן מֶלֶךְ שָׁמֶן הַכְּהֶה
Who smote nations great and slew kings mighty
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