

Psalms 144:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:

Analysis

Blessed be the Lord my strength (ברוך יתְהַפֵּה צוֹרִי)—Barukh (blessed, praised) opens this royal psalm with doxology. **My strength** (tsuri, literally 'my rock') connects to David's cave songs (Psalm 18:2, 31:3). **Which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight** (melammed yaday laqrav, etsb'otay lamilchamah)—God as divine combat instructor, training David's warrior skills.

This verse establishes that military prowess isn't natural talent but divine gifting. David, the shepherd-king who killed Goliath and defeated Philistines, attributes every victory to the Lord who trained him. Unlike pagan kings who boasted in personal might, Israel's king acknowledges total dependence—foreshadowing Christ, the warrior-king who defeats enemies through sacrificial love, not violent conquest (Revelation 19:11-16).

Historical Context

David wrote this psalm during his military campaigns, likely borrowing from Psalm 18 (compare 144:1-2 with 18:2, 34, 46-47). David's reign (c. 1010-970 BC) secured Israel's borders through constant warfare. Yet David understood that 'the battle is the Lord's' (1 Samuel 17:47), not won by superior weapons or strategy but by covenant faithfulness.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does attributing success and skill to God as 'teacher' prevent both pride in victory and despair in weakness?
2. In what areas of life (work, relationships, spiritual battles) do you need God to 'train your hands' rather than relying on self-effort?
3. How does David's warrior imagery apply to spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:10-18, where Christ is our strength and teacher?

Interlinear Text

לְקַרְבָּן יְהִי הָרָן כִּי צֹעַק בְּמַלְכֵי דָּנִיָּה
Blessed be the LORD my strength which teacheth my hands to war
H1288 H3068 H6697 H3925 H3027 H7128

לְמַלְכָתָה אֶצְבֹּעָתִי
and my fingers to fight
H676 H4421

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 18:34 (Parallel theme): He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

Psalms 18:2 (References Lord): The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

2 Samuel 22:35 (Parallel theme): He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.

2 Corinthians 10:4 (Parallel theme): (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Isaiah 45:24 (References Lord): Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed.

Psalms 60:12 (Parallel theme): Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

Psalms 18:31 (References Lord): For who is God save the LORD? or who is a rock save our God?

Psalms 95:1 (References Lord): O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Psalms 71:3 (Parallel theme): Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou art my rock and my fortress.

Isaiah 26:4 (References Lord): Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: