

Psalm 44:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

Analysis

The emphatic denial--'they got not the land in possession by their own sword'--rejects human boasting. Victory came through God's 'right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance.' This threefold description emphasizes divine power (right hand, arm) and divine favor (light of countenance). Israel's success was grace, not merit.

Historical Context

This theological interpretation of conquest countered ancient Near Eastern royal inscriptions that credited military victories to the king's prowess. Israel's kings were to acknowledge Yahweh as the true warrior.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Why is it important to recognize that spiritual victories come 'not by our own sword'?
2. How does the 'light of God's countenance' represent His favor and presence?

Interlinear Text

לֹא וְזָרֻעַב אָצַל בְּמִרְבָּעַ מִרְשָׁוֹן אֶצְבָּעַת וְאֶצְבָּעַת
H3588 H3808 by their own sword For they got not the land and thine arm H3808
H2719 H3423 H776 H2220

וְאֶצְבָּעַת וְאֶצְבָּעַת וְאֶצְבָּעַת
save H0 H3588 them but thy right hand and thine arm and the light
H3467 H3225 H2220 H216

רָצִיתָם כִּי פָטַת יְהֹוָה
of thy countenance H3588 because thou hadst a favour
H6440 H7521

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 24:12 (Word): And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (Parallel theme): But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Psalms 20:6 (Salvation): Now know I that the LORD saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.

Psalms 77:15 (Parallel theme): Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

Zechariah 4:6 (Word): Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Deuteronomy 10:15 (Light): Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.

Psalms 42:11 (Parallel theme): Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Psalms 42:5 (Parallel theme): Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

Exodus 15:16 (Parallel theme): Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased.

1 Samuel 12:22 (Parallel theme): For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.