

Psalm 89:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

Analysis

The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. This verse promises divine protection against external enemies. **The enemy shall not exact** uses *lō'-yaššî 'ôyēb bô* (לא־עשֵׂה אֹיְב בּוֹ), where *nāšā'* (אֲשַׁׂר) means to deceive, beguile, or exact tribute/taxation. God promises that enemies will not outwit, oppress, or make David's line pay tribute. The term *'ôyēb* (אוֹיְבּ, "enemy") refers to hostile nations, the perpetual foes of God's kingdom.

Nor the son of wickedness afflict him employs parallel structure. "Son of wickedness" (*ben-'awlāh*, בֵּן־עַוְלָה) is a Hebrew idiom meaning wicked person, one characterized by injustice and evil (similar to "son of Belial"). The verb "afflict" (*yə'annennû*, יְעַנְנֵן from *'ānāh*) means to oppress, humiliate, or bring low—the same word describing Israel's affliction in Egypt (Exodus 1:11-12).

While David faced many enemies (Saul, Philistines, Absalom), and later Davidic kings experienced defeats, this promise finds complete fulfillment only in Christ. Every human enemy—sin, death, Satan—was conquered through His cross and resurrection. As David's greater Son, Jesus cannot be deceived by the enemy or afflicted by wickedness, having "disarmed principalities and powers, making a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them" (Colossians 2:15).

Historical Context

David's reign saw constant warfare but consistent victory. The Philistines, who had dominated Israel under Saul, were subdued (2 Samuel 5:17-25, 8:1). Neighboring nations that might have exacted tribute from Israel instead paid tribute to David (2 Samuel 8:2, 6, 14). Yet Solomon's son Rehoboam lost the northern tribes, and later kings paid tribute to Assyria and Babylon. The promise's ultimate fulfillment awaited Christ, whom death could not hold (Acts 2:24).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does this promise of protection from enemies relate to Jesus's statement that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail' against His church (Matthew 16:18)?
2. What does it mean that enemies will not 'exact' or deceive the Davidic king—how does Satan seek to deceive Christ's followers today?
3. In light of Jesus's complete victory over all spiritual enemies, how should believers respond to opposition and persecution?

Interlinear Text

לֹא עַל אֹתֶל הַשְׁאָלָה בְּ אֹיְבָה בְּ אֶלְעָלָה לֹא עַל אֹתֶל הַשְׁאָלָה
H3808 shall not exact The enemy H0 upon him nor the son of wickedness H3808
H5378 H341 H1121 H5766

עֲלֹתָה:

afflict

H6031

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 7:10 (Evil): Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

1 Chronicles 17:9 (Evil): Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning,

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