

Psalms 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* (לֹא־יִשִּׂי אֹיֵב בּוֹ), where *nāšā'* (נָשָׂא) 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* (אֹיֵב, "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-ʿawlāh*, בֶּן־עָוֹלָה) is a Hebrew idiom meaning wicked person, one characterized by injustice and evil (similar to "son of Belial"). The verb "afflict" (*yəʿannennû*, יַעֲנִיב from *ʿānāh*) 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	יִשָּׁא	אֹיֵב	בֶּן	וְעַל	לְאִלֹּנִים
H3808	shall not exact	The enemy	H0	upon him nor the son	of wickedness
	H5378	H341		H1121	H5766
אֲפַיֵּם					
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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