

כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבִיךָ יְהוּה,  
 כִּי הִנֵּה אֵיבִיךָ יֹאבֵדוּ,  
 יִתְפָּרְדוּ כָּל־פְּעֻלֵי אָוֶן.  
 וְתָרַם כְּרָאִים קִרְנֵי,  
 בְּלֹתֵי בְשֵׁמֶן רֵעֵנָה.  
 וְתַבֵּט עֵינָי בְּשׁוּרֵי,  
 בְּקַמִּים עָלַי מִרְעִים תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנִי,

צָדִיק בְּתִמְרֵי יִפְרָח,

כְּאֶרֶז בְּלִבְנוֹן יִשְׁגָּה,

שְׂתוּלִים בְּבַיִת יְהוּה,

בְּחֲצֵרוֹת אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִפְרִיחוּ.

עוֹד יִנּוּבוּן בְּשִׁיבָה,

דְּשָׁנִים וְרֵעֲנָנִים יִהְיוּ,

לְהַגִּיד כִּי יֵשֶׁר יְהוּה,

צוּרֵי, וְלֹא עוֹלָתָה בּוֹ.

תהלים צב

ALL WHO COMMIT EVIL WILL BE SCATTERED יִתְפָּרְדוּ. In this pacific vision of the end-time, those who commit evil are not destroyed, but simply made ineffective.

WILD BULL כְּרָאִים. Throughout the Bible, the raising up of the horn of this animal is a metaphoric symbol of strength and honor. Scholars, though, have had difficulty identifying the animal intended in the Hebrew. Because the psalm refers to a single horn, early translators identified it with the mythical unicorn. Some modern commentators maintain that the animal referred to is the aurochs, a wild bovine considered to be the ancestor of all cattle. The aurochs had elongated horns and long legs. It was both more agile and more dangerous than modern

bovines. The last aurochs was seen in Europe in the 17th century.

ANointed IT WITH FRESH OIL בְּלֹתֵי בְשֵׁמֶן רֵעֵנָה. The Hebrew may be translated “You anointed *me* with fresh oil,” but Radak (David Kimḥi, 1160–1235, Provence) suggests that the object of the verb is specifically the speaker’s head mentioned in the first part of the verse; the anointing is ceremonial, giving the speaker a divinely ordained function and blessing.

STEADY בְּשׁוּרֵי. From the root meaning “row” or “straight.” Thus, some understand this word as a noun and translate it as the phalanx of an army, row upon row of soldiers. Others see it, as we do here, as a modifier of the verb, meaning that the gaze is focused straight ahead.

DATE PALM . . . CEDAR כְּאֶרֶז . . . בְּתִמְרֵי. The righteous are compared to both date palms and cedars. Palm trees grow in the Jericho Valley, one of the lowest places on earth; cedars grow on the mountaintops of Lebanon, the highest peaks in the Middle East. Palm trees grow straight up, losing their leaves each year; cedars grow wide and are evergreens. Palms yield dates, one of the most nutritious fruits, but their fibrous wood is almost useless. Cedars bear no fruit, though their wood is precious; Solomon built the Temple out of the cedars of Lebanon. Both will be planted in God’s house, for all difference is united in the one God. Righteousness manifests itself in many forms.