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

WILD BULL. Throughout
the Bible, the raising up
of the horn of this animal
is a metaphor 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. The Hebrew may
be translated "You anointed me with fresh oil," but Radak (David
Kimhi, 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. 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. 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.