

Psalms 89:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him.

Analysis

And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. God personally guarantees aggressive action against David's enemies. **I will beat down his foes** uses *wə-kat-tōtî miš-ṣārāyw* (מִצְרָאֵי קָתֹת), where *kātat* (קָתֹת) means to beat, crush, pulverize—violent imagery of complete defeat. The verb appears in Micah 4:13 describing Israel treading down nations like grain on the threshing floor. **His foes** (ṣārāyw, צָרָאֵי from *ṣar*) means adversaries, those who cause distress and anguish.

Before his face (mil-lē-pānāyw, מִלְּפָנָי) indicates visible, immediate deliverance—enemies crushed in David's presence, not hidden victories. **And plague them that hate him** employs *wə-mə-ṣān-’āyw ’eg-gōp* (אֲגֹעַתְּשָׁאֵן עֲגֹעַתְּ). The verb *nāgāp* (נָגַע) means to strike down, smite, plague—the same word describing God's judgment on Egypt (Exodus 12:23) and Philistines (1 Samuel 5:6). Those who "hate" (*sānē*, שָׁנֵא) David hate God's anointed, making them objects of divine wrath.

This is more than defensive protection (v. 22)—it's offensive warfare. God doesn't merely shield David but actively destroys his enemies. Typologically, this points to Christ's eschatological victory when He returns to judge His enemies (Revelation 19:11-21), fulfilling the promise that God will "crush Satan under your feet shortly" (Romans 16:20).

Historical Context

David's military campaigns saw spectacular victories: defeating the Philistine champion Goliath (1 Samuel 17), routing the Philistine army repeatedly (2 Samuel 5:17-25, 8:1), conquering the Jebusite stronghold of Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6-9), and subduing surrounding nations (2 Samuel 8:1-14). These weren't merely David's tactical genius but God actively beating down his foes. Yet the full victory awaits Christ's return, when every enemy will be put under His feet (1 Corinthians 15:25-26).

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise to personally 'beat down' David's foes demonstrate divine commitment to His covenant promises?
2. What does it mean that God plagues 'them that hate' His anointed king—how does opposition to Christ's kingdom bring divine judgment?
3. How should the promise of Christ's ultimate victory over all enemies shape Christian confidence and perseverance today?

Interlinear Text

וְבָלַת	מִפְנֵן	אֵצֶן	וּמְשִׁנָּא	אֶת
And I will beat down	before his face	his foes	them that hate	and plague

H3807

H6440

H6862

H8130

H5062

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 7:9 (Parallel theme): And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.

John 15:23 (Parallel theme): He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

2 Samuel 7:1 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies;

2 Samuel 3:1 (Parallel theme): Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

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