

Psalms 9:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish
at thy presence.

Analysis

The basis for praise is God's decisive action against enemies. 'Turned back' depicts military defeat and retreat. 'Fall and perish at thy presence' emphasizes that God's mere appearing is enough to defeat enemies - no elaborate military campaign needed. The Hebrew 'panim' (presence/face) suggests God's active attention and intervention. This teaches that battles belong to the Lord - His presence determines victory. Ultimately fulfilled in Christ's death and resurrection which defeated all spiritual enemies.

Historical Context

This likely commemorates a specific military victory where God routed Israel's enemies. The language echoes the Exodus (Pharaoh's army), conquest battles (Jericho), and David's victories. The pattern of God fighting for His people runs throughout redemptive history, climaxing in Christ's victory over sin, death, and Satan.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What enemies have been defeated in your life by God's presence and power?
2. How does confidence in God's presence affect how you face spiritual battles?

Interlinear Text

בָּשׁוּב	אֹיְבֵי י	אָח וּר	יִכָּשְׁל ו	יֵאָבֵד ו
are turned	When mine enemies	back	they shall fall	and perish
H7725	H341	H268	H3782	H6
מִפְנֵיךָ:				
at thy presence				
H6440				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 80:16 (Parallel theme): It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.