

Isaiah 32:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and
righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

Analysis

Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness (וְשָׁכַן בַּמִּדְבָּר הַמִּשְׁפָּט, veshakhan bamidbar mishpat)—מִשְׁפָּט (mishpat, judgment, justice) will שָׁכַן (shakhan, dwell, abide) even in מִדְבָּר (midbar, wilderness). **And righteousness remain in the fruitful field** (וְיָשָׁב בְּכַרְמֵל הַצְדָּקָה, utsedaqah bakkarmel teshev)—צְדָקָה (tsedaqah, righteousness) will יָשָׁב (yashav, settle, remain) in the כַּרְמֵל (karmel, fruitful field).

Spirit-transformation produces justice and righteousness—not as forced external compliance but as internal character. The verbs שָׁכַן (shakhan, dwell) and יָשָׁב (yashav, settle) indicate permanence, not fleeting visitation. Justice dwells even in wilderness (marginal spaces); righteousness settles in fruitful fields (productive spaces). The Kingdom brings moral transformation to every sphere. Romans 14:17 defines Kingdom: 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Galatians 5:22-23 lists Spirit-fruit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering—ethical transformation flowing from Spirit-presence.

Historical Context

Old covenant Israel struggled with justice and righteousness—prophets constantly condemned corruption (Isaiah 1:21-23, Amos 5:7-12, Micah 6:8). Law commanded righteousness but couldn't produce it in hearts. New covenant promise: 'I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts' (Jeremiah 31:33). Early church demonstrated this transformation—sharing possessions, caring for widows, transcending ethnic barriers (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35, Galatians 3:28).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Spirit-indwelling produce justice and righteousness from the inside out rather than external rule-keeping?
2. What 'wilderness' areas (difficult circumstances, challenging relationships) need God's mishpat (justice) to dwell there?
3. How can you cultivate Spirit-produced righteousness rather than self-manufactured moralism?

Interlinear Text

יֵשְׁב׃	בְּמִדְבָּר	מִשְׁפָּט	וְצִדְקָה	בְּכֶרֶם ל
shall dwell	in the wilderness	Then judgment	and righteousness	in the fruitful field
H7931	H4057	H4941	H6666	H3759
יִשָּׁב:				
remain				
H3427				