

Proverbs 14:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

Analysis

Oppressing the poor insults their Creator, while honoring Him requires mercy to the needy. This grounds social justice in theology—the imago Dei demands dignity for all humans regardless of socioeconomic status. Generosity toward the poor demonstrates reverence for God who made them.

Historical Context

Israel's laws protected the poor, widow, orphan, and stranger, reflecting God's concern for vulnerable populations. Prophets condemned oppression as covenant violation, not mere social injustice.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do you honor God through practical mercy toward those in need?
2. Where might you be oppressing others through neglect or exploitation?

Interlinear Text

עַשְׁלֵךְ	לְ	חֶרְףָּה	עַשְׁתָּה	מְכֹבֵדָה
He that oppresseth	the poor	reproacheth	his Maker	but he that honoureth
H6231	H1800	H2778	H6213	H3513
חָנֵן	אֶלְיוֹן:			
him hath mercy	on the poor			
H2603	H34			

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 22:2 (Parallel theme): The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.

Proverbs 17:5 (Parallel theme): Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.

Proverbs 19:17 (Parallel theme): He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Proverbs 22:16 (Parallel theme): He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want.

1 John 4:21 (Parallel theme): And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Ecclesiastes 5:8 (Parallel theme): If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.

Psalms 12:5 (Parallel theme): For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.

Proverbs 14:21 (Grace): He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.

John 12:8 (Parallel theme): For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

