

Psalms 146:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:

Analysis

Which executeth judgment for the oppressed (עֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט לְעֹשֻׁקִים)—The Hebrew mishpat denotes both justice and judgment; God actively vindicates (ashuqim) those crushed by exploitation. This isn't passive sympathy but divine intervention in earthly affairs.

Which giveth food to the hungry (נִתֵּן לֶחֶם לָרָעִבִים)—God's lechem (bread) provision echoes the manna narrative (Exodus 16) and anticipates Jesus as the Bread of Life (John 6:35). **The LORD looseth the prisoners** (יְהוָה מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים)—The verb matir means to release or unbind. Jesus applied this liberation motif to His messianic mission (Luke 4:18), encompassing physical, spiritual, and demonic bondage. This triadic description—justice, provision, liberation—defines God's covenant character and the ethics He demands of His people (Isaiah 58:6-7).

Historical Context

Psalms 146-150 form the final 'Hallelujah Psalms' concluding the Psalter. Likely post-exilic (after 538 BC), this psalm reflects Israel's experience of oppression, hunger, and captivity—yet maintains confidence in YHWH's faithful intervention. It contrasts human princes (v. 3-4) with the eternal God who defends the vulnerable.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's character as defender of the oppressed challenge your response to injustice in your community?
2. In what ways might you be held 'prisoner'—and how does Christ's liberating work apply to your specific bondage?

Interlinear Text

עֲשֵׂה	מִשְׁפָּט	לְעֹשֻׁקִים	נָתַן	לָהֶם
Which executeth	judgment	for the oppressed	which giveth	food
H6213	H4941	H6231	H5414	H3899
לָרָעֵב	יְהוָה	יִרְוֶה	אֲסֻרִים:	
to the hungry	The LORD	looseth	the prisoners	
H7457	H3068	H5425	H631	

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 103:6 (Judgment): The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

Psalms 68:6 (Parallel theme): God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

Isaiah 61:1 (References Lord): The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Psalms 10:18 (Judgment): To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.

Luke 4:18 (References Lord): The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the

brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

Psalms 142:7 (Parallel theme): Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

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