

Psalm 72:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

Analysis

The king 'shall judge the poor of the people' and 'save the children of the needy,' demonstrating God's heart for the vulnerable. 'Break in pieces the oppressor' shows that protecting the weak requires confronting the powerful who exploit them. True justice isn't neutral but actively defends those unable to defend themselves. Christ embodies this perfectly, lifting the lowly and humbling the proud (Luke 1:52-53), ultimately destroying all oppression at His return.

Historical Context

Ancient kings often exploited rather than protected the poor. God's ideal king reversed this pattern, making care for the vulnerable the measure of righteous rule (Jeremiah 22:15-16).

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's defense of the poor and needy shape your priorities and resource allocation?

2. What oppressive systems or individuals need to be 'broken in pieces' to protect the vulnerable?
3. How can the church function as advocate and defender for those society marginalizes?

Interlinear Text

וְשַׁפֵּט	עַמִּים	בָּנִים	בָּנִים	וְשִׁמְעָן	בָּנִים	אָבִים
He shall judge	the poor	of the people	he shall save	the children	of the needy	
H8199	H6041	H5971	H3467	H1121	H34	
			עֲשֵׂה אֶת			
and shall break in pieces			the oppressor			
			H6231			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 11:4 (Judgment): But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Revelation 18:20 (Parallel theme): Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

Revelation 19:2 (Judgment): For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

Revelation 18:24 (Parallel theme): And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Isaiah 9:4 (Parallel theme): For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

Psalms 109:31 (Salvation): For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save him from those that condemn his soul.

Psalms 2:9 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Psalms 94:5 (Parallel theme): They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

Job 34:24 (Parallel theme): He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

Job 19:2 (Parallel theme): How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?