

Psalm 94:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But judgment shall return unto righteousness: and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

Analysis

But judgment shall return unto righteousness (פָּרָעָד אָזָק יִשְׁׁוּב מִשְׁפָּט) — Mishpat (justice/judgment) will return (shuv) to tsedeq (righteousness). Currently justice seems divorced from righteousness—the wicked prosper, the righteous suffer. But a great reversal is coming. **All the upright in heart shall follow it** promises that moral alignment with God's character will prove vindicated.

This prophesies both historical restorations (like post-exilic return) and ultimate eschatological justice. The New Testament locates this in Christ's return when judgment and righteousness kiss (Psalm 85:10). Meanwhile believers live as faithful witnesses to coming vindication.

Historical Context

In ancient Israel's legal system, judges sat at city gates administering justice. When corruption prevailed, judgment departed from righteousness. The psalmist envisions a day when the legal/moral order reflects God's character—ultimately fulfilled in Christ's millennial reign.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Where do you see justice divorced from righteousness in contemporary culture—and how does this promise sustain hope?
2. Are you among the 'upright in heart' willing to follow justice even when it's costly now?
3. How does believing in future vindication change how you respond to present injustice?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	עַד	אֵלֶיךָ	יִשְׁׁבֶּן	מִשְׁפָּט	כִּי	כָּל
H3588	H5704	unto righteousness	shall return	But judgment	shall follow	H3605
		H6664	H7725	H4941	H310	
		לְבָנָי	לִבְנֵי			
and all the upright	in heart					
H3477	H3820					

Additional Cross-References

Micah 7:9 (Righteousness): I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.

Psalms 97:2 (Righteousness): Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

Psalms 37:34 (Parallel theme): Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

Psalms 58:11 (Righteousness): So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

Psalms 9:16 (Judgment): The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

Job 35:14 (Judgment): Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgment is before him; therefore trust thou in him.

1 John 2:19 (Parallel theme): They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Malachi 3:18 (Righteousness): Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org