

GATHER THE PEOPLE

Community and Faith-Based Organizing and Development Resources

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THE POOR IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

Exod. 22:25—If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them.

Exod. 23:6—You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in their lawsuits.

Exod. 23:10-11—For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

Exod. 30:15—The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half shekel, when you bring this offering to the LORD to make atonement for your lives.

Lev. 14:21—But if he is poor and cannot afford so much, he shall take one male lamb for a guilt offering to be elevated, to make atonement on his behalf, and one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering and a log of oil;

Lev. 19:10—You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the LORD your God.

Lev. 19:15—You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor.

Lev. 23:22—When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and for the alien: I am the LORD your God.

Deut. 15:11—Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, “Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.”

Deut. 24:12—If the person [to whom you make a loan] is poor, you shall not sleep in the garment given you as the pledge.

Deut. 24:14—You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns.

Deut. 24:15—You shall pay them their wages daily before sunset, because they are poor and their livelihood depends on them; otherwise they might cry to the LORD against you, and you would incur guilt.

Ps. 10:2—In arrogance the wicked persecute the poor—let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.

Ps. 72:4—May he [the king] defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

Prov. 14:31—Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him.

Prov. 17:5—Those who mock the poor insult their Maker; those who are glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

Eccl. 5:8—If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and right, do not be amazed at the matter; for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them.

Isa. 10:1-2—Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees, who write oppressive statutes, to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be your spoil, and that you may make the orphans your prey!

Isa. 32:7—The villainies of villains are evil; they devise wicked devices to ruin the poor with lying words, even when the plea of the needy is right.

Isa. 58:6-7—Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Ezek. 16:49—This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy.

Ezek. 22:29—The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery; they have oppressed the poor and needy, and have extorted from the alien without redress.

Amos 4:1—Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on Mount Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to their husbands, “Bring something to drink!”

Zech. 7:10—do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.