

“Be Kind to the Oppressed”

After issuing an interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream provides the following advice: *“Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue.”*

- **Individuals in the Bible who were kind** (not an exhaustive list):
 - **God** – The creator of mercy, forgiveness, and unconditional love, culminating by sending his son to die for humanity's sins. *“...but when they were oppressed they cried out to you. From heaven you heard them and in your great compassion you gave them deliverers who rescued them...”* (NIV, 2011, Neh. 9:27).
 - **Jesus** – Our perfect role model of kindness. *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls”* (NIV, 2011, Matt. 11:29).
 - **Joseph** – (NIV, 2011, Gen. Chapters 37-50).
 - **Bithiah** - Pharaoh's daughter who rescued baby Moses (NIV, 2011, Ex. 2:1-10).
 - **Ruth and Boaz**- (NIV, 2011, Ruth Chapters 1-4).
 - **Abigail** – (NIV, 2011, 1 Sam. Chapter 25).
 - **Job** *“I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needed; I took up the case of the stranger. I broke the fangs of the wicked and snatched the victims from their teeth”* (NIV, 2011, Job 29:15-17).
 - **Daniel** – Throughout the book of Daniel, he was known for his kindness, humility, righteousness, and loyalty to God.
 - **The Good Samaritan** – (NIV, 2011, Luke 10:25-37).
 - **The 12 disciples** – Throughout the New Testament
- **Groups of individuals identified as oppressed in the Bible**
 - **Those experiencing poverty** – *“Because the poor are plundered and the needy grown, I will arise,” says the Lord.*

“Be Kind to the Oppressed”

“I will protect them from those who malign them” (NIV, 2011, Ps. 12:5).

- **Foreigners** – *“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God” (NIV, 2011, Lev. 19:33-34).*
- **Widows and the fatherless** – *“Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry” (NIV, 2011, Ex. 22:22-23).*
- **Strangers** – *“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it” (NIV, 2011, Heb. 13:2-3).*
- **The poor, prisoners, and those who are blind** – *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoner and sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free” (NIV, 2011, Luke 4:18).*
- **Prophets subjected to ostracism, intimidation, and danger** – *The Old Testament prophet Nehemiah is one example.*

Manna for Thought:

1. Are individuals subjected to stigma, discrimination, suffering, and/or violence oppressed?
2. Are individuals who identify as transgender and subjected to stigma, discrimination, suffering, and/or violence oppressed?
3. What specific acts of kindness can you provide to an adult who identifies as transgender?

By Remi Smith, founder and CEO of Compassionate Caring Ministries, whose mission is "To bring compassion, love, and support to parents whose adult child identifies as transgender."