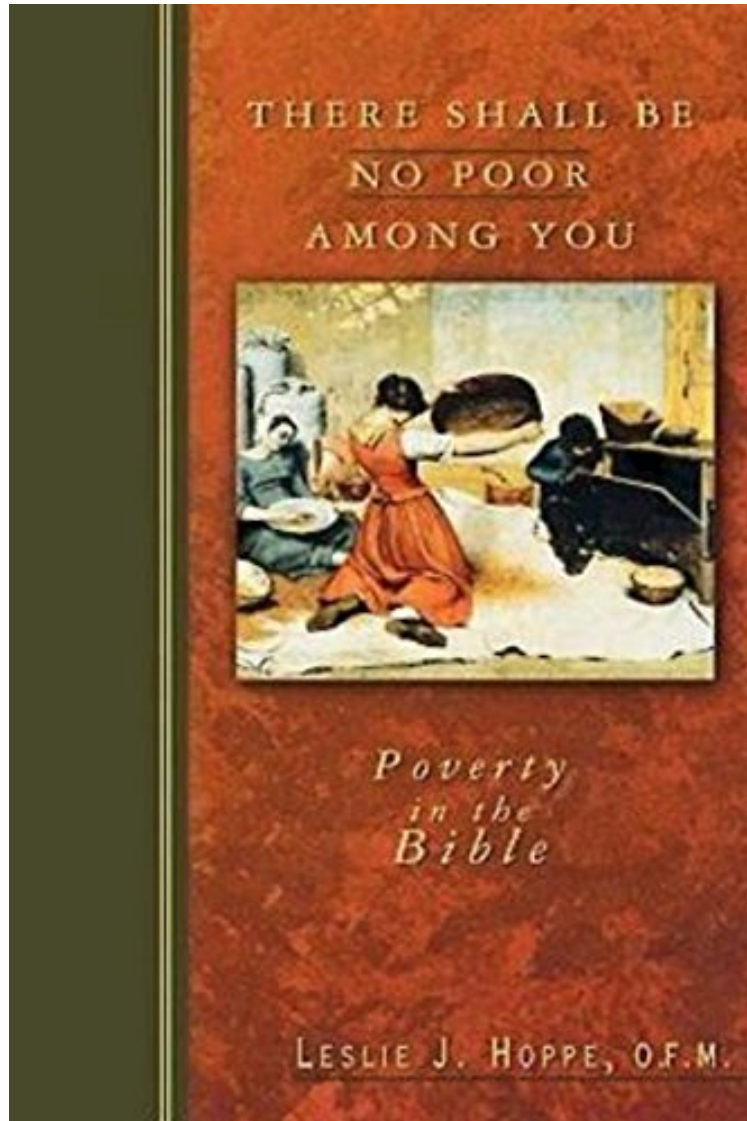


(Free) There Shall Be No Poor Among You: Poverty in the Bible

## There Shall Be No Poor Among You: Poverty in the Bible

*O.F.M., Leslie J. Hoppe*

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*There Shall Be No Poor Among You* is a careful and comprehensive but not overly technical study of the biblical portrait of the poor and poverty. Hoppe introduces the study with the socioeconomic structures of ancient Israel and Roman Palestine, then proceeds systematically to examine the biblical evidence, including that of the Old Testament, New Testament, Apocrypha, and rabbinic literature. The Bible describes the poor and poverty in a variety of ways. Sometimes poverty is a curse; other times it is a blessing. Sometimes the text is concerned about material poverty exclusively; other times poverty becomes a metaphor for another reality. Hoppe describes the various ways the Bible deals with the poor, but his fundamental conclusion is that the Bible never idealizes the reality of material poverty and the oppression of the poor by the rich. Even when the Bible speaks of poverty of the spirit as a positive religious metaphor, God requires humans to seek social justice. Hoppe suggests that just as poverty is not idealized in the Bible, so the poor should be a priority of every community of faith. Ancient Israel, early Judaism, Jesus, and the first Christians did not forget the poor, and if believers today wish to be faithful to their biblical heritage, neither can they. This book provides a practical background for scholars and is a primer for a significant theological motif. It will be useful in the classroom (in college and seminary courses in biblical ethics and social justice), as well as in serious Bible study. Study questions will help readers and students further probe history, theology, and application.

**About the Author** Leslie J. Hoppe, Provincial Minister, Assumption BVM Province, Franklin, WI (11/06) O.F.M. (Franciscan) is Professor of Old Testament Studies at Catholic Theological Union at Chicago and Visiting Professor at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem. He is the author of several books and is a popular lecturer on Old Testament theology and biblical archaeology.