

Jeremiah 6:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

Analysis

God indicts both religious and civil leaders: 'from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness.' The phrase connects prophets and priests with 'falsehood' (Hebrew 'sheqer'—deception, lie). This demonstrates how corruption infiltrates religious leadership when materialism takes root. The pairing of 'covetousness' with 'falsehood' shows how greed inevitably leads to dishonesty. Reformed theology emphasizes that false teaching often has roots in financial motivation (1 Timothy 6:5, 10). When spiritual leaders prioritize gain over truth, they forfeit their calling and mislead God's people.

Historical Context

Pre-exilic prophets consistently condemned religious leaders who prophesied for money (Micah 3:11). Jeremiah faced opposition from false prophets who contradicted his message because it threatened their income and status.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the connection between covetousness and falsehood help explain many forms of false teaching today?
2. What safeguards should churches implement to protect spiritual leaders from the corrupting influence of materialism?
3. How can believers discern when religious leaders are motivated by gain rather than genuine service?

Interlinear Text

כִּי מִקְרָבֶם וְעַד גָּדוֹלָם כָּל־

H3588 For from the least H6996 H5704 of them even unto the greatest H3605

בָּזֶק עַד וּמִמְּבַבְּיאָה וְעַד

of them every one is given to covetousness and from the prophet H5704
H1214 H1215 H5030

כִּי כָּל־ שָׁה שְׁקָרָה

even unto the priest H3605 every one dealeth falsely H8267
H3548 H6213

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 23:11 (Prophecy): For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 8:10 (Prophecy): Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

Micah 3:11 (Prophecy): The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.

Jeremiah 22:17 (Parallel theme): But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.

Isaiah 57:17 (Parallel theme): For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.

Jeremiah 14:18 (Prophecy): If I go forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine! yea, both the prophet and the priest go about into a land that they know not.

Jeremiah 5:31 (Prophecy): The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

Micah 3:5 (Prophecy): Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.