

Jeremiah 7:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.

Analysis

The indictment: 'But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.' This shows willful rejection—not ignorance but deliberate choice. The phrase 'imagination of their evil heart' reveals the source: corrupt internal desires. The contrast 'went backward, and not forward' indicates regression rather than progress. This verse illustrates total depravity: when left to natural inclinations, humans move away from God, not toward Him. The phrase 'their evil heart' emphasizes internal corruption as the source of external disobedience.

Historical Context

Despite having the law, prophets, and covenant promises, Israel consistently returned to idolatry throughout their history. This pattern of regression demonstrated heart corruption requiring supernatural regeneration.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does this verse illustrate the doctrine of total depravity?
2. What is the relationship between internal heart condition and external behavior?
3. Why do humans naturally move away from God rather than toward Him apart from grace?

Interlinear Text

וְלֹא	שָׁמְעוּ	וְלֹא	הֵטוּ וְ	אֶת	אָזְנוֹם	וְלֹא
H3808	But they hearkened	H3808	not nor inclined	H853	their ear	H1980
	H8085		H5186		H241	
בְּמַעַצ	וְ	בְּשִׁכְרָה	וְ	לֵב	וְ	וַיְהִי
in the counsels		and in the imagination		heart	of their evil	H1961
H4156		H8307		H3820	H7451	
וַיָּחָז	וְ	לֹא	לִפְנֵי:			
and went backward		H3808	and not forward			
H268			H6440			

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 7:26 (Parallel theme): Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers.

Jeremiah 8:5 (Parallel theme): Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.

Deuteronomy 29:19 (Parallel theme): And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:

Jeremiah 32:33 (Parallel theme): And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction.

Ezekiel 20:13 (Parallel theme): But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.

Jeremiah 15:6 (Parallel theme): Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting.

Jeremiah 23:17 (Evil): They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.

Jeremiah 3:17 (Evil): At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

Jeremiah 2:27 (Parallel theme): Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth: for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.

Nehemiah 9:29 (Parallel theme): And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.