

Jeremiah 8:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

This verse announces judgment on corrupt leaders: 'Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them.' Losing wives and lands to conquerors represented complete social devastation and covenant curse (Deuteronomy 28:30-33). 'For every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness' uses batsa (בַּצָּה, unjust gain, covetousness) indicating systemic greed across all social levels. 'From the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely' employs shaqer (שָׁׁׁפֵר, falsehood, deception). When prophets and priests—those responsible for truth—practice deception, society's moral foundation collapses. The phrase 'least unto greatest' and 'prophet unto priest' creates merism, indicating universal corruption without exception.

Historical Context

Economic exploitation accompanied religious apostasy in Jeremiah's Judah. Large landowners accumulated property (Isaiah 5:8), courts favored the wealthy (Jeremiah 22:13-17), and religious leaders enriched themselves while neglecting justice. The Babylonian conquest transferred their accumulated wealth to foreigners, fulfilling this prophecy literally. Archaeological evidence of destroyed estates throughout Judah confirms the completeness of this judgment.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does systemic covetousness corrupt even religious institutions meant to preserve moral integrity?
2. What connection exists between economic injustice and spiritual unfaithfulness in communities?

Interlinear Text

לְכָךְ	אַתָּה	אֶת	נְשִׁיחָה מִ	לְאֶחָר יִם	שְׂדֹתִיהם
H3651	Therefore will I give	H853	their wives	unto others	and their fields
	H5414		H802	H312	H7704
לֵי וּרְשָׁה יִם	כִּי	מִקְטָן	עַד		
to them that shall inherit	H3588	them for every one from the least	H5704		
	H3423		H6996		
מִבְּבִיא	בְּצָע	בְּצָע	עַד		
even unto the greatest	H3605	is given	to covetousness	from the prophet	H5704
H1419	H1214	H1215	H5030		
כָּל הַ	כָּל הַ	כָּל הַ	שְׁקָרָה		
even unto the priest	H3605	every one dealeth	falsely		
H3548		H6213	H8267		

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 33:31 (Parallel theme): And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not

do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

Isaiah 28:7 (Prophecy): But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

Amos 5:11 (Parallel theme): Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat: ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them.

Titus 1:11 (Parallel theme): Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

Zephaniah 1:13 (Parallel theme): Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.

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