

Jeremiah 9:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.

Analysis

This verse continues describing deceit: 'And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth.' The Hebrew *hathal* (הָתַל, mock, deceive) and *emeth lo yedabberu* (אֱמֶת לֹא יְדַבְּרוּ, truth they will not speak) emphasize comprehensive dishonesty. 'They have taught their tongue to speak lies' uses the Hebrew *limmedu* (לִמְדוּ, trained, disciplined)—lying requires practice until it becomes habitual, second nature. 'And weary themselves to commit iniquity' employs *la'u* (לָאוּ, to be weary, exhausted). They expend energy on evil that should fuel righteousness, wearing themselves out in pursuit of wickedness. Sin is presented as hard work, yet they persist.

Historical Context

The concept of 'trained' tongues suggests systematic corruption, not occasional lapses. Children learn to lie from adults who model deception. By Jeremiah's time, multiple generations had normalized dishonesty. The exhausting nature of maintaining lies and pursuing iniquity contrasts with the 'rest' God offers those who return to Him (Jeremiah 6:16). Weary sinners nevertheless refused the yoke of obedience.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does viewing lying as a learned, practiced skill challenge assumptions about 'little white lies'?
2. What does the picture of wearying oneself in sin reveal about the irrationality and cost of persistent rebellion?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵל יֵשׁ	בְּרֵיעַ הוּא	יִהְיֶה לּוֹ	וְאֵת תִּ	לֹא	וְדָבַר
every one	his neighbour	And they will deceive	the truth	H3808	and will not speak
H376	H7453	H2048	H571		H1696
לְמַד וְ	לְשׁוֹנָם	וְדָבַר	שֶׁ קָרַ		
they have taught	their tongue	and will not speak	lies		
H3925	H3956	H1696	H8267		
הֵעִיזוּ	וְנִלְאָו:				
themselves to commit iniquity	and weary				
H5753	H3811				

Additional Cross-References

Job 15:5 (Sin): For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty.

Micah 6:12 (Parallel theme): For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.

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