

Jeremiah 9:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

Analysis

This verse describes dwelling amid deceit: 'Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit.' The Hebrew *shivtekha betokh mirmah* (שִׁבְתְּךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִרְמָה) indicates living surrounded by treachery—deceit is the environment, the atmosphere. 'Through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.' The connection between deceit and refusing to know God is profound: dishonesty prevents genuine relationship with the God of truth. *mirmah* (מִרְמָה, deceit, guile) functions as a barrier to knowing YHWH. Those who practice deception cannot maintain covenant relationship with One who is Truth itself (John 14:6). False dealing with neighbors inevitably produces false dealing with God.

Historical Context

This verse marks a turning point in the oracle, moving from describing horizontal deceit (between people) to its vertical consequence (broken relationship with God). Jeremiah addresses either the people collectively or perhaps God Himself lamenting His dwelling among a deceitful nation. The theological connection—that dishonesty in human relationships prevents knowing God—anticipates John's teaching that loving God and loving neighbor are inseparable (1 John 4:20).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does living in an environment saturated with deceit affect our ability to know and relate to God?
2. What is the connection between honesty in human relationships and authentic relationship with God?

Interlinear Text

שְׁבִיתָךְ	בֵּית וְךָ	בְּמַחְמֶה הַ	בְּמַחְמֶה הַ	יִמָּאֵנוּ וְ	דַּעַת
Thine habitation	is in the midst	of deceit	of deceit	they refuse	to know
H3427	H8432	H4820	H4820	H3985	H3045
אוֹתִי	נֹאמַם	יְהוָה:			
H853	me saith	the LORD			
	H5002	H3068			

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 13:10 (Parallel theme): This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which walk in the imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing.

Proverbs 1:24 (Parallel theme): Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

Proverbs 1:29 (References Lord): For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

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.

Jeremiah 5:27 (Parallel theme): As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

Jeremiah 11:19 (Parallel theme): But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered.

Jeremiah 20:10 (Parallel theme): For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.

Romans 1:28 (Parallel theme): And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Hosea 4:6 (Parallel theme): My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

Jeremiah 18:18 (Parallel theme): Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.