

Micah 7:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

Analysis

Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. Social trust collapses completely. **אַל־תִּאֱמִינוּ בְּרֵעַ** (al-ta'aminu ve-re'a, "trust not in a friend"). **רֵעַ** (re'a) is a friend, companion, or neighbor. Don't trust even close associates. **אַל־תִּבְטְחוּ בְּאֻלֹּף** (al-tivtechu ve-aluf, "put not confidence in a guide"). **אֻלֹּף** (aluf) is a close friend, confidant, or intimate companion. Even trusted advisors prove unreliable.

מִשְׁכֶּבֶת חֵיקֶקְחָהּ שֶׁמֹר פִּתְחֵי־פִיהָ (mi-shokhevet cheiqekha shemor pitchei-fikha, "from her who lies in your bosom, guard the doors of your mouth"). Even one's wife—the most intimate relationship—can't be fully trusted. Guard your words even with your spouse. This represents total breakdown of trust at every relational level: friends betray, guides mislead, even spouses prove untrustworthy. When corruption is universal, discretion becomes essential for survival.

This tragic counsel describes societies where betrayal pervades all relationships. Normal human trust becomes dangerous. Jesus quoted verse 6 when sending disciples into hostile contexts (Matthew 10:35-36), showing this prophecy's broader application. When society reaches such corruption, even family relationships fracture under pressure. Only faith in God provides security when all human relationships prove unreliable (Psalm 146:3; Jeremiah 17:5-8).

Historical Context

Micah describes late 8th century BC Judah where corruption was so pervasive that even intimate relationships became dangerous. Informants proliferated; betrayal was common; trust evaporated. This mirrors other crisis periods: Jeremiah's era when "they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth" (Jeremiah 9:4-5), Jesus's warning that family members would betray believers to death (Matthew 10:21), and persecutions where informants infiltrated churches (Acts 20:29-30). When societies become comprehensively corrupt or hostile to faith, believers must exercise wisdom about what they share and with whom. This isn't paranoia but prudence in evil times.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do believers balance Christ's call to love and trust with Micah's warning to guard speech even with intimates?
2. What societal conditions produce such comprehensive breakdown of relational trust?
3. When all human relationships prove unreliable, how does faith in God provide security and stability?

Interlinear Text

אֶל	תִּאֲמַר יְנוּ	בֵּרַעַ	אֶל	תִּבְטַח וְ	בְּאֵל וִי
H408	Trust	ye not in a friend	H408	put ye not confidence	in a guide
	H539	H7453		H982	H441
	מִשָּׁכַּ בֵּית	חֵיקְךָ	שָׁמַר	פִּתְחֵי	פִּיךָ:
	from her that lieth	in thy bosom	keep	the doors	of thy mouth
	H7901	H2436	H8104	H6607	H6310

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 9:4 (Faith): Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.

Matthew 10:16 (Parallel theme): Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.