

Proverbs 12:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

Analysis

He that speaks truth shows forth righteousness, but a false witness deceit. The parallel structure equates truth-telling with righteousness, false witness with deceit. Speaking truth is moral obligation, not merely practical expedient. False witness (ed shaqer - lying testimony) violates the ninth commandment and perverts justice. Truth-telling manifests righteousness; lying manifests wickedness.

Historical Context

Reflects legal context where witness testimony determined guilt or innocence. False witness could result in innocent persons' execution, making truthful testimony essential to justice.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How consistently does your speech demonstrate righteousness through truthfulness?
2. What tempts you toward false witness in various contexts?

Interlinear Text

שְׁקָרָם	יְמִינָה	אֶת	מִזְבֵּחַ	יְמִינָה	אֶת	מִזְבֵּחַ	שְׁקָרָם	יְמִינָה	אֶת	מִזְבֵּחַ	שְׁקָרָם	יְמִינָה	אֶת	מִזְבֵּחַ	
He that speaketh	truth		sheweth forth		righteousness		witness		but a false						
H6315	H530		H5046		H6664		H5707		H8267						

מִרְתָּחָה:

deceit

H4820

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 14:25 (Witness): A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies.

Proverbs 14:5 (Witness): A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

Proverbs 6:19 (Witness): A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Proverbs 24:28 (Witness): Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive not with thy lips.

Proverbs 19:5 (Witness): A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.

Proverbs 21:28 (Witness): A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.

Proverbs 19:28 (Witness): An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.

Matthew 15:19 (Witness): For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: