

Proverbs 14:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

Analysis

A 'faithful witness' speaks truth, while a 'false witness' breathes out lies. The Hebrew 'kazab' (lies/deception) is parallel to breathing—lying is as natural to the false witness as respiration. This connects to the ninth commandment against bearing false witness (Exodus 20:16). Reformed theology emphasizes that truth-telling reflects God's character, while lying reflects Satan, the father of lies (John 8:44). In covenant community, reliability in testimony is essential for justice and trust. Our words must have integrity because we serve the God of truth.

Historical Context

Israel's legal system required two or three witnesses to establish truth (Deuteronomy 19:15). False testimony could result in the false witness receiving the punishment intended for the accused (Deuteronomy 19:19).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Are you known as a person whose word can be trusted completely?

2. In what subtle ways might you bend the truth or engage in 'acceptable' deception?
3. How does Christ as the 'faithful and true witness' (Revelation 3:14) set the standard for our speech?

Interlinear Text

שָׁׁמֶן:	עַד	יְמִינָה	אֶת	מִזְמָנִים	בְּלֵב	יְכִירָה	יְמִינָה	יְמִינָה	יְמִינָה	יְמִינָה	אֶת	עַד
witness	A faithful	H3808	lies	will utter	will not lie	witness	but a false					
H5707	H529		H3576	H6315	H3577	H5707	H8267					

Additional Cross-References

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

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

Exodus 23:1 (Witness): Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.

Proverbs 12:17 (Witness): He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

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

Proverbs 13:5 (Parallel theme): A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.

Proverbs 19:9 (Witness): A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.