

Proverbs 19:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.

Analysis

The 'ungodly witness' (literally 'witness of Belial,' denoting worthlessness and wickedness) perverts justice by false testimony. Such a person 'scorneth judgment'—holding God's justice in contempt. The second clause reveals his motivation: the wicked 'devoureth iniquity' like food, finding pleasure in evil itself. False witness isn't merely a pragmatic lie but reflects a heart that delights in wickedness and injustice. This violates the ninth commandment and strikes at the foundation of social order. In God's courtroom, every false witness will face ultimate judgment. By contrast, Christ is the faithful and true witness, and His people must reflect His truthfulness.

Historical Context

Israelite law prescribed severe penalties for false witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:16-21), recognizing how perjury destroys justice and the community's moral foundation.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Do you ever shade truth or remain silent when speaking up would serve justice?
2. How does understanding God as ultimate Judge affect your commitment to truthfulness?

Interlinear Text

וְעַ	לִיעַל	בְּ	לִיעַל	בְּ	זֶה	מְשַׁפֵּט	וְ	מִשְׁפָּט	וְ	בְּ	בְּלֹעַ
witness	An ungodly	scorneth	judgment	and the mouth	of the wicked	devoureth					
H5707	H1100	H3887	H4941	H6310	H7563	H1104					
אַיִל											
iniquity											
H205											

Additional Cross-References

Job 15:16 (Sin): How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

Job 34:7 (Parallel theme): What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?