

Psalms 144:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

Analysis

Whose mouth speaketh vanity (אֲשֶׁר פִּיכְמָן דָּבָר־שָׁוֹא) —Shav (vanity, falsehood, emptiness) describes enemy propaganda, lies, and deceptive treaties. **And their right hand is a right hand of falsehood** (viyminam yemin shaqer) —the right hand symbolizes covenant oaths and agreements (Genesis 24:9). A 'right hand of falsehood' means treacherous broken promises.

David identifies enemies not merely by military threat but by moral-spiritual character: they lie, deceive, and break oaths. This pattern appears in Absalom's conspiracy (2 Samuel 15:1-6), built on flattery and false promises. The antithesis is Christ, whose mouth speaks truth (John 14:6) and whose right hand never fails covenant promises. Believers must resist speaking 'vanity' and ensure their oaths are trustworthy (Matthew 5:33-37, James 5:12).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern diplomacy involved elaborate oath ceremonies with right-hand rituals. Treaty violations were considered cosmic crimes invoking divine curses. David experienced treachery from Saul (breaking his oath, 1 Samuel 19-20), Absalom (pretended loyalty), and foreign nations (violated treaties). Truthfulness was fundamental to covenant community.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do 'mouths speaking vanity' and 'right hands of falsehood' manifest in modern culture (propaganda, fake news, broken promises)?
2. What does it mean for Christians to be people whose 'yes is yes and no is no' in a world of spin and deception?
3. How does Christ's perfect truthfulness and covenant faithfulness contrast with enemy lies and broken oaths?

Interlinear Text

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|---------|-------------|----------|----------|----------------------|----------------------|
| רִאשָׁן | פִּיהָם | דָּבָר | שְׁאֵלָה | מִתְּמִימָה | מִתְּמִימָה |
| H834 | Whose mouth | speaketh | vanity | and their right hand | and their right hand |
| H6310 | | H1696 | H7723 | H3225 | H3225 |

שְׁאֵלָה:
of falsehood
H8267

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 12:2 (Parallel theme): They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.

Isaiah 44:20 (Parallel theme): He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

Psalms 41:6 (Parallel theme): And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it.

Psalms 62:4 (Parallel theme): They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. Selah.

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