

Jeremiah 23:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.

Analysis

I have heard what the prophets said...I have dreamed, I have dreamed (חָלָמָתִי חָלָמָתִי, chalamti chalamti)—the repetition mimics false prophets' dramatic claims. They prophesy lies (שְׁقֵרָה, sheqer) while invoking God's name (בְּשָׁמֵי, bishmi), violating the third commandment. Dreams were legitimate divine communication channels (Genesis 37, Daniel 2), making them prime counterfeit targets.

False prophets exploited dreams' subjective, unverifiable nature—'God showed me in a dream'—claiming authority without accountability. But God hears their lies. The phrase 'I have heard' (שָׁמַעְתִּי) ironically reverses their claim to hearing God. Modern equivalents claim 'God told me' to manipulate others or excuse agendas.

Historical Context

Dreams played significant roles in ancient Near Eastern religion and politics. Professional dream interpreters served royal courts. True dreams from God were distinguished by fulfillment and alignment with revealed truth. False prophets manufactured dreams to gain influence and political cover.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do you test whether subjective impressions genuinely come from God?
2. When are you tempted to invoke God's authority for personal preferences?
3. What safeguards exist against spiritual manipulation through private revelation claims?

Interlinear Text

לִאְמָר רַא שְׁמָעֵתִי	לִאְמָר אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה שְׁמָעֵתִי	בְּנֵבָא יְמִינָה	בְּנֵבָא יְמִינָה
I have heard	said	what the prophets	that prophesy
H8085	H834	H559	H5030

בְּשֵׁם	לִאְמָר רַשְׁתָּה קְרַב	סְלִמְתִּי	סְלִמְתִּי
in my name	lies	I have dreamed	I have dreamed
H8034	H8267	H559	H2492

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 23:32 (Prophecy): Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:28 (Prophecy): The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 29:8 (Prophecy): For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

Joel 2:28 (Prophecy): And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Jeremiah 8:6 (Parallel theme): I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

1 Corinthians 4:5 (Parallel theme): Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

Numbers 12:6 (Prophecy): And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

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