

Jeremiah 23:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

What is the chaff to the wheat? (מַה־לְתָבֵן אֶת־הַבָּר, mah-latteven et-habbar)—dreams without divine origin are chaff, worthless wind-blown refuse. God's word is wheat—nourishing, life-sustaining, weighty. **Let him speak my word faithfully** (דֹּבֶר דְּבָרִי אֶתְתָּה, y'daber d'veari emet) establishes the standard.

John the Baptist used similar imagery for judgment (Matthew 3:12). Jesus taught man lives by every word from God's mouth (Matthew 4:4)—not every dream, feeling, or impression. The contrast isn't dreams versus non-dreams but divine revelation versus human imagination. Chaff appears substantial but lacks nutritional value; God's word nourishes.

Historical Context

The agricultural metaphor resonated in agrarian Judah. Threshing floors separated wheat from chaff through winnowing—wind carried away useless husks. Everyone understood chaff's worthlessness. Jeremiah uses shared experience to illustrate spiritual discernment—God's word has substance; false prophecy blows away.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish wheat (substantial truth) from chaff (impressive but empty claims)?
2. What chaff might you be consuming—religious content lacking real substance?
3. How faithfully are you speaking God's word versus sharing opinions?

Interlinear Text

וְאֵשׁ	ר	כָּל	וּמְ	יִסְפֶּר	בְּגַבְבָּ	יָא
The prophet	H834	H854	a dream	let him tell	a dream	H834
	H5030			H2472	H5608	H2472
דְּבָרָ	וּמְ	יִזְבֶּר	אֵת	דְּבָרָ	אֵת	תָּ
and he that hath my word	H854		let him speak	and he that hath my word	H1697	faithfully
	H1697		H1696		H1697	H571
מָה	לְפָנָ	אֵת	בְּ	רְ	נָאֵם	יְהִיּוֹ
H4100	What is the chaff	H854	to the wheat	saith	the LORD	H3068
H8401			H1250	H5002		

Additional Cross-References

1 Timothy 1:12 (Faith): And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

2 Corinthians 2:17 (Word): For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

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

Matthew 24:45 (Faith): Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Luke 12:42 (Faith): And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

1 Corinthians 4:2 (Faith): Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

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