

Jeremiah 26:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word:

Analysis

Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah—God commands Jeremiah to position himself in the temple courts, the central gathering place during pilgrimage festivals. The Hebrew *amad* (עָמַד, stand) suggests taking a firm, public stance, not hiding or equivocating. The audience includes **all the cities of Judah, which come to worship**—pilgrims from throughout the kingdom, ensuring maximum exposure for this urgent message.

All the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word—this prohibition against editorial reduction appears forcefully: *al-tigra' davar* (אֲלֹתִיגְרָע דְבָר, do not diminish/reduce a word). Jeremiah must proclaim the complete message without softening its confrontation or omitting difficult parts. This command underscores Scripture's completeness—God's spokesmen have no authority to edit divine revelation to make it more palatable. The command anticipates Deuteronomy 4:2's warning against adding or subtracting from God's word and Revelation 22:18-19's similar prohibition. Faithful preaching requires declaring "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27), not selective presentation that avoids offense.

Historical Context

The temple courts were the public forum for major religious announcements. During pilgrimage festivals (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles), Jews from all Judah's towns gathered, creating the perfect opportunity for a national proclamation. Jeremiah's sermon (detailed in chapter 7) attacked false confidence in the temple's presence while ignoring God's moral demands. The people chanted "The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD" (7:4) as though the building guaranteed protection regardless of their behavior. Jeremiah warned that God would destroy this temple just as He had destroyed Shiloh, the earlier sanctuary (7:12-14). This message was politically and religiously inflammatory. The priests and prophets had vested interests in maintaining temple prestige and popular confidence. Jeremiah's prophecy threatened their authority, income, and national security ideology. The command to "diminish not a word" meant Jeremiah couldn't soften the message to avoid conflict—he must deliver God's complete word despite certain persecution.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does the command to "diminish not a word" teach about the preacher's responsibility to proclaim God's complete message, even when culturally offensive?
2. How does the setting in the temple courts demonstrate that religious people often need the sharpest prophetic confrontation?
3. In what ways might contemporary preachers be tempted to "diminish" God's word to avoid controversy or maintain popularity?

Interlinear Text

יְהִי הַבָּיִת בְּבֵית יְהֹוָה אֲמָר רַבָּה
H3541 Thus saith in the LORD'S Stand in the court house in the LORD'S
H559 H3068 H5975 H2691 H1004 H3068

לְהַשְׁתְּפָנוּ תַּחֲנוּן הַבָּאִים יְהֹוָה הַמַּעֲמָד
and speak H5921 H3605 unto all the cities of Judah which come to worship
H1696 H5892 H3063 H935 H7812

צִוְּתִי יְהֹוָה בְּבֵית יְהֹוָה אֲשֶׁר רַבָּה
house in the LORD'S H853 H3605 all the words H834 that I command
H1004 H3068 H1697 H6680

דְּבָרָה תְּגַבֵּע מִלְּדָבֶר
and speak H413 H408 unto them diminish all the words
H1696 H1639 H1697

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 4:2 (Word): Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Acts 20:27 (Parallel theme): For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

Matthew 28:20 (Parallel theme): Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Jeremiah 1:17 (Parallel theme): Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

Jeremiah 19:14 (References Lord): Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in the court of the LORD'S house; and said to all the people,

Acts 5:42 (Parallel theme): And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Acts 20:20 (Parallel theme): And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,

Jeremiah 7:2 (Word): Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:28 (Word): 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 36:10 (Word): Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD'S house, in the ears of all the people.

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