

Micah 2:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Prophecy ye not, say they to them that prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them, that they shall not take shame.

Analysis

Prophecy ye not, say they to them that prophesy: they shall not prophesy to them (אַל־תִּתְּפוּ יַטִּיפּוּן לֹא־יִטְּפוּ לָאֵלֶּה, al-tattifu yatifun lo-yattifu la-eleh). תִּתְּפוּ (tattifu, from נָטַף, nataph, drip/preach) means prophesy, often with connotation of insistent, impassioned preaching. The repetition emphasizes insistence: "Don't preach! They preach! Don't let them preach to these!" The powerful demand silence from prophets who condemn their sins.

That they shall not take shame (לֹא־יִשָּׁג כְּלִמּוֹת, lo-yissag kelimmot). כְּלִמָּה (kelimmah, shame/disgrace/humiliation) is what they wish to avoid. The oppressors don't want prophetic condemnation exposing their guilt publicly. They prefer comfortable lies to uncomfortable truth. This censorship attempts to suppress divine word, silencing messengers rather than repenting of sin.

This verse exposes perennial temptation: silencing inconvenient truth. Ahab wanted only prophets who spoke favorably (1 Kings 22:8). Amaziah told Amos to stop prophesying at Bethel (Amos 7:10-13). Jeremiah faced constant opposition from false prophets and officials (Jeremiah 20:1-2, 26:7-11, 38:1-6). Jesus warned: **"Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets"** (Luke 6:26). Paul commanded Timothy: **"Preach the word... reprove, rebuke, exhort"** (2 Timothy 4:2)—regardless of opposition. Faithful preaching exposes sin; unfaithful audiences demand its silence.

Historical Context

The 8th century BC saw conflict between true prophets (Micah, Isaiah, Hosea, Amos) and false prophets who spoke smooth words to powerful patrons. Jeremiah later faced similar opposition—arrested, beaten, imprisoned for prophesying judgment (Jeremiah 20:1-2, 37:15, 38:6). False prophets promised peace when destruction loomed (Jeremiah 6:14, 8:11, 23:16-17).

This pattern continues throughout church history. John the Baptist was beheaded for condemning Herod's adultery (Mark 6:17-29). Stephen was stoned for convicting the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:51-60). Reformers faced persecution for challenging ecclesiastical corruption. Modern contexts see similar dynamics—prophetic voices challenging systemic injustice, moral compromise, or doctrinal error often face demands for silence. Yet Scripture commands faithfulness regardless of reception: **"Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear... thou shalt speak my words unto them"** (Ezekiel 2:7).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the demand to stop prophesying expose the hardness of hearts that prefer comfortable lies to convicting truth?
2. What does this verse teach about the cost of faithful ministry—that speaking God's word often provokes opposition and demands for silence?
3. In what ways might modern Christians or churches attempt to silence prophetic voices that expose sin or challenge comfortable assumptions?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	יִטְּפוּ	יִטְּפוּ	לֹא	יִטְּפוּ	לֹא לֵה	לֹא
H408	Prophecy	Prophecy	H3808	Prophecy	H428	H3808
	H5197	H5197		H5197		
וְלֵאמֹר			כְּלִמָּוֶת:			
to them that they shall not take			shame			
H5253			H3639			

Additional Cross-References

Amos 2:12 (Prophecy): But ye gave the Nazarites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophecy not.

Isaiah 30:10 (Prophecy): Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits:

Acts 5:40 (Parallel theme): And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.