

Micah 3:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.

Analysis

Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God. Public humiliation awaits false prophets. וְשׁוּ u-voshu ha-chozim, "and the seers shall be ashamed") uses בֹּשׁ (bosh), meaning deep shame or disgrace. חֹזֵה (chozeh, "seer") is one who sees visions. וְחִפְרֹוּ הַקּוֹסְמִים (ve-chafru ha-qosmim, "and the diviners confounded") uses חִפְרֹר (chafer), meaning humiliated or disgraced. קֹסֵם (qosem) is a diviner or fortune-teller.

וְעָתָה עַל-שְׁפָט קָלָם (ve-atu al-safam kulam, "yea, they shall all cover their lips") describes covering the upper lip or mustache—a gesture of mourning, shame, or ritual uncleanness (Leviticus 13:45; Ezekiel 24:17). They'll cover their mouths because they have nothing to say. The reason: **כִּי אֵין מִשְׁנָה אֱלֹהִים** (ki ein ma'aneh Elohim, "for there is no answer of God"). מִשְׁנָה (ma'aneh) means answer or response. God's silence exposes their fraudulence.

This public disgrace contrasts with their former pretense. They claimed divine authority but will be revealed as charlatans. Their covering mouths symbolizes their prophetic ministry's end—no more false oracles, no more deceptive declarations. True prophets sometimes doubted or trembled, but they had God's word to proclaim (Jeremiah 1:6-9, 20:9). False prophets have only silence, shame, and exposure. The covering of lips reverses their former proclamations—mouths once spewing falsehood now covered in humiliation.

Historical Context

Throughout Israel's history, true and false prophets contended. Moses established tests for true prophecy (Deuteronomy 13:1-5, 18:20-22): accurate prediction and theological orthodoxy. False prophets like Hananiah (Jeremiah 28) proclaimed messages people wanted to hear but which contradicted God's revealed word. God ultimately vindicated true prophets by fulfilling their words and exposing false prophets through their failures. The shame Micah predicts came when his prophecies were fulfilled—Jerusalem's destruction (3:12) vindicated Micah and exposed his opponents. Similarly, Jesus warned of false prophets' ultimate exposure (Matthew 7:21-23). Those who claimed to prophesy, cast out demons, and work miracles in Christ's name will hear, "I never knew you: depart from me."

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the certainty of eventual exposure serve as deterrent against false prophetic claims?
2. What role does God's silence play in judging those who falsely claim to speak for Him?
3. How should the church respond to contemporary prophetic ministries that prove unreliable or manipulative?

Interlinear Text

בִּבְשָׁוֹן	בְּחַזְיָם	וַיִּפְרֹאֶזְנָה	בְּקַרְבָּם יָמָן
be ashamed	Then shall the seers	confounded	and the diviners
H954	H2374	H2659	H7080
וְעַטְתָּא	עַל	שְׁפָם	מִתְגַּנְתִּה
yea they shall all cover	H5921	their lips	for there is no answer
H5844	H8222	H3605	H369
אֱלֹהִים	אֵין כִּי	כִּלְמָן	H4617
of God			
H430			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 44:25 (Parallel theme): That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish;

Zechariah 13:4 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive:

Amos 8:11 (References God): Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:

Ezekiel 24:17 (Parallel theme): Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead, bind the tire of thine head upon thee, and put on thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men.

Ezekiel 24:22 (Parallel theme): And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men.

Leviticus 13:45 (Parallel theme): And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean.

1 Samuel 28:6 (Parallel theme): And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

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