

Zechariah 10:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd.

Analysis

For the idols have spoken vanity (כִּי הִתְנַפְּסִים דְּבַר־אָוֶן)—teraphim were household gods/idols used for divination (Genesis 31:19, Ezekiel 21:21). Aven means emptiness, worthlessness, deception. **And the diviners have seen a lie** (וְהַקְסָמִים וְהַקְסָר)—kosem (diviner/soothsayer) was forbidden in Israel (Deuteronomy 18:10-12), yet persistently practiced. Their visions are sheker (falsehood), contrasted with true prophetic revelation.

And have told false dreams; they comfort in vain—threefold repetition (vanity, lie, false) hammers home idolatry's impotence. **Therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd** (עַל־כֵּן נָסְעוּ כְמוֹ־צֹאן וְלֹא־יָשָׁעוּ בִּיָּדָיוֹן רֹעֶה)—Israel's exile resulted from following false spiritual guides. Jesus applies this shepherd imagery to Himself: "**sheep not having a shepherd**" (Matthew 9:36, Mark 6:34). Only Yahweh's true revelation brings genuine guidance.

Historical Context

Despite Josiah's reforms (621 BC) removing idols, popular syncretism persisted. Even post-exilic Jews were tempted to hedge bets with pagan practices. Zechariah

warns that spiritual confusion and exile result from following false gods and their lying prophets rather than Yahweh's true word.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What modern 'idols' speak vanity—things you consult for guidance that compete with God's Word?
2. How can you discern between false comfort ('comfort in vain') and true biblical encouragement?
3. In what ways does following false teaching leave people 'as a flock without a shepherd' even today?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	הִתְכַּפֵּי יִם	וְיֹדְבֵי רֹ	אֵין	וְהַקּוֹסְמִים	זוּ	שָׁרָה
H3588	For the idols	and have told	vanity	and the diviners	have seen	a lie
	H8655	H1696	H205	H7080	H2372	H8267
כֵּן	עַל	יִנְחֵם וְ	הֵבֵל	וְיֹדְבֵי רֹ	הַשָּׁ וְא	וְחִלְמוֹת
		they comfort	in vain	and have told	false	dreams
	H5921	H5162	H1892	H1696	H7723	H2472
אֵין	כִּי	יָעֲנוּ	צֶאן	כְּמוֹ	וְנָסְעוּ	
		they were troubled	their way as a flock		therefore they went	
	H3588	H6031	H6629	H3644	H5265	
רָעָה:						
because there was no shepherd						
H7462						

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 9:36 (Parallel theme): But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Jeremiah 27:9 (Parallel theme): Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon:

Genesis 31:19 (Parallel theme): And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's.

Ezekiel 34:5 (Parallel theme): And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

Habakkuk 2:18 (Parallel theme): What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?

Hosea 3:4 (Parallel theme): For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:

Ezekiel 34:8 (Parallel theme): As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

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