

Jeremiah 29:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you?

Analysis

Why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you?—Shemaiah's phrase מִתְנָבֵה (mitnabe, 'making himself a prophet') drips with contempt, denying Jeremiah's divine calling. The irony is devastating: Shemaiah accuses Jeremiah of self-appointment while Shemaiah himself sends unauthorized letters. The interrogative 'why' (לְמַה) reveals impatience with Zephaniah's failure to act.

The designation **Jeremiah of Anathoth** may attempt to marginalize him as provincial, from a small priestly town (Joshua 21:18) rather than Jerusalem's religious establishment. Jesus faced similar dismissal: 'Can anything good come from Nazareth?' (John 1:46). Geography and credentials cannot validate or invalidate God's calling—only His authorization matters.

Historical Context

Anathoth, Jeremiah's hometown (Jeremiah 1:1), was 3 miles northeast of Jerusalem in Benjamin's territory. As a priestly city, it should have honored prophetic ministry, yet Jeremiah's own townsmen plotted against him (11:21-23). Shemaiah's reference highlights ongoing local opposition.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When have you judged a message by the messenger's background rather than by its conformity to Scripture?
2. How does Shemaiah's accusation that Jeremiah 'makes himself a prophet' expose the accuser's own self-authorization?
3. What does opposition from both Babylon (Shemaiah) and Jerusalem (his addressees) teach about the prophet's isolation when speaking truth?

Interlinear Text

ל	א	ל	פָּה	וְעַת	הִ	גַּע	רַת	בִּירָמִי	הִ
H6258	H4100	H3808	Now therefore why hast thou not reproved				Jeremiah		
					H1605			H3414	
וְעַתָּה	א	בְּמַתְנֵב	לְכָמָן						
of Anathoth		which maketh himself a prophet			H0				
H6069		H5012							

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