

Jeremiah 36:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth?

Analysis

And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth?—The question probes the scroll's origin and authenticity. **At his mouth** (וּפִי, mipiv) emphasizes direct dictation. The princes need to verify this is genuinely Jeremiah's prophecy, not Baruch's invention or interpretation.

Their investigation is procedurally sound: authenticating the source before presenting it to the king. The question also reflects ancient understanding of prophetic inspiration—the prophet speaks what God reveals, the scribe records what the prophet speaks. This chain of transmission (God → Jeremiah → Baruch → scroll) establishes authority while acknowledging human instrumentality in Scripture's production.

Historical Context

Scribal practices in ancient Israel involved careful dictation and copying. The question about composition addresses potential charges of forgery or unauthorized prophecy. False prophecy was a capital offense (Deuteronomy 18:20), so verification was crucial. The princes' care in investigating suggests they took prophetic claims seriously, unlike the cynical dismissal characteristic of later leadership.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How important is the doctrine of biblical inspiration (God's word through human authors) to your confidence in Scripture?
2. What does Baruch's role as faithful scribe teach about preserving and transmitting God's word accurately?
3. How do you verify that what you're hearing or reading is authentic biblical truth rather than human invention?

Interlinear Text

אֵל יְיָ	לָנוּ	נֹא	הַגִּד	לְאִמְרֵךָ	שָׁאֵל וְ	בָּר וְךָ	וְאֵת
H349	H0	H4994	H5046	H559	H7592	H1263	H853
			Tell	saying	And they asked	Baruch	
מִפִּי:	הֵא לָהּ	הַדְּבָרִים	כָּל	אֵת	כָּתַבְתָּ		
H6310	H428	H1697	H3605	H853	H3789		
at his mouth		all these words			us now How didst thou write		

Additional Cross-References

John 9:15 (Parallel theme): Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

