

Jeremiah 43:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon.

Analysis

But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us—Facing unwelcome prophetic word, the leaders resort to conspiracy theory, accusing Baruch of manipulating Jeremiah. **Setteth thee on** (mesit, מִסֵּת) means to incite, instigate, or seduce—the same verb used for leading into idolatry (Deuteronomy 13:6). This accusation is doubly ironic: they claim Baruch incites Jeremiah to evil counsel, when they themselves are being incited to rebellion; they accuse Baruch of pro-Babylonian sympathies while themselves fleeing to Egypt against God's command.

The motive they attribute is specific: **for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon.** This reveals their fundamental fear—Babylonian retribution for Gedaliah's assassination. Rather than trust God's promise of protection if they remained in Judah (42:11-12), they presumed Jeremiah's counsel was politically motivated, designed to deliver them to Babylon.

This pattern—rejecting God's word by attacking the messenger's motives—appears throughout Scripture. When prophets spoke uncomfortable truth, they were accused of false motives: Elijah was called 'troubler of Israel' (1 Kings 18:17), Amos was called a conspirator (Amos 7:10), Jesus was accused of demonic possession (John 8:48), Paul was charged with causing riots (Acts 24:5). Attacking messenger credibility avoids confronting the message itself.

Historical Context

Baruch son of Neriah was Jeremiah's faithful scribe and companion (Jeremiah 36:4), who wrote down Jeremiah's prophecies and read them publicly despite danger (Jeremiah 36:10-19). He had already faced persecution for his association with Jeremiah (Jeremiah 36:26) and received a personal oracle addressing his discouragement (Jeremiah 45). The accusation that Baruch controlled Jeremiah was absurd—Baruch was scribe, not prophet; disciple, not master. Yet conspiracy theories need not be plausible, only useful. By blaming Baruch, the leaders avoided direct confrontation with Yahweh's word. Historically, Baruch apparently accompanied Jeremiah to Egypt (43:6), where both suffered with the rebellious remnant. Ancient tradition (not Scripture) claims Baruch eventually traveled to Babylon, where he died among the faithful exiles.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does attacking the messenger's motives allow us to avoid confronting an unwelcome message from God?
2. What role does fear (like the remnant's fear of Babylon) play in causing us to reject God's revealed will?
3. In what ways might we attribute false motives to those delivering biblical truth we find uncomfortable?

Interlinear Text

כִּי בְּרוּךְ בֶּן נְרִיאָה מִסְתֵּתְךָ אָתָּה בְּנֵי
H3588 But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on H853 H0

לְמַעַן תִּתְּנַצֵּל בְּיַד הַפָּשָׁדִים
against us for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans

לְבָמָה יִתְּרַצֵּחַ אַתָּה וְלִבְגָּל וְתַּחֲרֵב אַתָּה
that they might put us to death and carry us away captives

בָּבֶל:
into Babylon

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 36:10 (Parallel theme): Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD'S house, in the ears of all the people.

Jeremiah 43:6 (Parallel theme): Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah.

Jeremiah 38:4 (Parallel theme): Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

Jeremiah 36:4 (Parallel theme): Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.

Jeremiah 36:26 (Parallel theme): But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

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