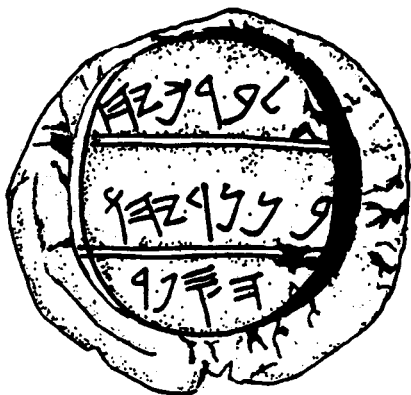

JEREMIAH'S SCRIBE - "BARUCH"

In 1975, a collection of nearly 250 clay seals were found about 44 miles southwest of Jerusalem. These small lumps of clay that are impressed with a seal, in ancient times served as an official signature for an individual. The clay seals were then attached to documents to identify the sender. Amazingly, among the seals that were found were the names of three Biblical figures mentioned in the 36th chapter of the book of Jeremiah.

The first clay seal is impressed with the following inscription:

Berekhyahu son of Neriyahu the scribe



Baruch Seal

This is the seal of **Baruch son of Neriah** who was the scribe to the prophet Jeremiah. Baruch's full name must have been Berekhyahu. The suffix (yahu) in the ancient Hebrew language is a form of Yahweh (God). The name Baruch means "**the blessed.**"

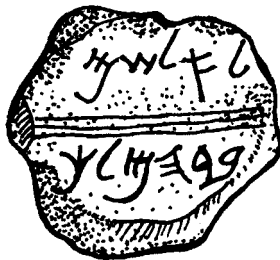
Berekhyahu means **"the blessed of Yahweh."**

Baruch is mentioned in Jeremiah 36: 1-4: "Now it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: "Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day. "It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin."

"Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote on a scroll of a book, at the instruction of Jeremiah, all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him."

A second clay seal has been found that was impressed with the name of the scribe Elishama. It reads as follows:

'Elishama' servant of the king



Elishama Seal

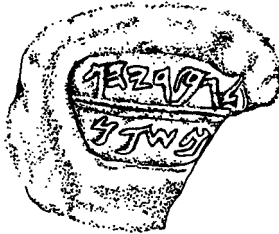
According to the Bible, Elishama was a scribe who served the king. He is recorded in Jeremiah 36: 10-12:

"Then Baruch read from 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 upper court at the entry of the New Gate of the Lord's house, in the hearing of all the people."

"When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, heard all the words of the LORD from the book, he then went down to the king's house, into the scribe's chamber; and there all the princes were sitting; *Elishama the scribe*, Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, Elnathan the son of Achbor, *Gemariah the son of Shaphan*, Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes."

The previous passage also mentions another scribe, Gemariah the son of Shaphan. His clay was found in 1978. The inscription reads: **"Gemariah, son of Shaphan"**



Gemariah Seal

The third clay seal that was found is inscribed with the name of king Jehoiakim's son, Jerahmeel. It reads as follows: **'Yerahme'el, son of the king.'** He is recorded in Jeremiah 36:26.

According to the Bible, after Baruch delivered the scroll of the words of the Lord spoken to Jeremiah the prophet, Elishama, Gemariah and the other king's servants were instructed to bring the scroll and have it read before the king. God's message is stated in Jeremiah 35:13-17:

"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Will you not receive instruction to obey My words?" says the LORD . . .

"I have also sent to you all My servants the prophets, saying, 'Each of you must turn from your evil ways, and reform your actions, . . . But you have not listened, nor obeyed Me.

"Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the doom that I have pronounced against them; because I have spoken to them but they have not heard, and I have called to them but they have not answered.'"

After hearings God's word, King Jehoiakim rejected the message, burned the scroll and sent his son Jerahmeel to arrest both Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch. This is recorded in Jeremiah 36:26 which says:

"And the king commanded Jerahmeel the king's son, Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to seize Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but the LORD hid them."



Jerahmeel Seal

Because king Jehoiakim rejected God's message, the Lord had Jeremiah send another scroll to the king saying:

"Thus says the LORD: "You have burned this scroll, saying, 'Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and cause man and beast to cease from here?'"
" 'Therefore thus says the LORD concerning

Jehoiakim king of Judah: "He shall have no one to sit on the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night. "I will punish him, his family, and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring on them, on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the men of Judah all the doom that I have pronounced against them; but they did not heed."
Jeremiah 36:29-31

God's judgement came to pass in 597 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon removed Jehoiakim's son from the throne, took him captive and replaced him with Jehoiakim's brother Zedekiah.

Later, in 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar marched against Jerusalem and destroyed the city.

Just like king Jehoiakim, God holds each and every person responsible for either accepting or rejecting his message. God's last message to all men came through Jesus Christ and He spoke these words:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

John 3:16-18

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