

GROWTH GROUPS  
**WEEK 10**  
WEEK OF AUGUST 16



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## Growth Group Summer 2020

### *Faith and Hope*

Week 10 – August 16, 2020 - Jeremiah 32:1-15

**Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at a church. In this time of Corona19 and “social distancing” please don’t meet in person, but do continue to check in with each other. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at [connect@ljpres.org](mailto:connect@ljpres.org). Thank you for loving and caring for each other.**

### Setting the Context

Our text for today focuses on Jeremiah’s purchase of his cousin’s field at Anathoth, which was located about three miles north of Jerusalem. He buys the field while the Babylonian armies are basically camped out on it, as they prepare to lay siege to Jerusalem. This is happening around 588-587 BC, right before the city is overthrown and the temple destroyed.

One of the difficulties of reading Jeremiah is that the chapters do not always present events in chronological order. The reason Jeremiah is in prison can be read about in chapters 37-38. He had been arrested and accused of desertion by some of the royal officials. We read in those chapters that he was first put into cisterns before being brought out and placed in the courtyard of King Zedekiah.

Jeremiah’s cousin, Hanamel, had seen enough. He was either ready to flee, or he had fallen into debt and the creditors were going to take the land. Either way, he brought up the Levitical law (Leviticus 25:25-31) about the “kinsman redeemer” which we know about from the book of Ruth. Jeremiah chose to step in and buy the field.

During this time a contract was typically written out on papyrus and was then folded over several times, tied, and sealed. This was the closed official copy. This is what Jeremiah would have had placed in the clay jar. An unsealed copy would have been attached to the official copy for consultation.

Jeremiah’s purchase of the field, in a public manner, is a visible reminder that one day normal life and economic activity would resume in Judah. When that happened, the documents that he had signed would be important. His family would have a place to call home and, as verse 15 affirms, “houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in the land.”

Jeremiah maintains hope even when things look bleak. The overthrow of Jerusalem is imminent, and yet Jeremiah continues to trust his future and the future of Judah to God. He steps out in faith and trusts God’s promises.



# Exploring the Text

## Read Jeremiah 32:1-15

<sup>10</sup> This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>2</sup> The army of the king of Babylon was then besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard in the royal palace of Judah.

<sup>3</sup> Now Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him there, saying, “Why do you prophesy as you do? You say, ‘This is what the Lord says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it. <sup>4</sup> Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape the Babylonians but will certainly be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and will speak with him face to face and see him with his own eyes. <sup>5</sup> He will take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he will remain until I deal with him, declares the Lord. If you fight against the Babylonians, you will not succeed.’”

<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah said, “The word of the Lord came to me: <sup>7</sup> Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it.’

<sup>8</sup> “Then, just as the Lord had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard and said, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. Since it is your right to redeem it and possess it, buy it for yourself.’

“I knew that this was the word of the Lord; <sup>9</sup> so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver. <sup>10</sup> I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. <sup>11</sup> I took the deed of purchase—the sealed copy containing the terms and conditions, as well as the unsealed copy — <sup>12</sup> and I gave this deed to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and of the witnesses who had signed the deed and of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard of the guard.

<sup>13</sup> “In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions: <sup>14</sup> ‘This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time. <sup>15</sup> For this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.’

## Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) What is the worst purchase/spending decision you ever made?
- 2) Jeremiah purchases the land and signs the deed in front of numerous Jews, who were sitting in the courtyard of the guard (see verses 9-12). Why do you think he wanted to do this in public? Why not just sign the documents in private?
- 3) Jeremiah is basically in prison. Yet, he decides to buy a field in faith and hope. Share about a time when you stepped out in faith and moved out in deliberate hope.
- 4) At the end of verse 8, Jeremiah says that he “knew that this was the word of the Lord.” How do we “know” we are hearing the voice of the Lord speaking? How do you “confirm” that what you are hearing is from God?
- 5) Pastor Paul interviewed Jose Vallejo, in his sermon today, about the work of Urban Life in City Heights. Mission has always played a significant role in the legacy of La Jolla Presbyterian Church. Share about a time when you engaged in “mission work” and the impact it had on your life.
- 6) Judah was losing hope, Jerusalem was surrounded, yet Jeremiah moves out in hope. How do you remain hopeful when things around you seem to be going in the wrong direction? Do you have people you rely on? Are there certain things that you do?
- 7) Hope calls us to step out in faith and it connects us with God’s promises. Is there an area of your life currently where you need to step out in faith, or where you need to move out in deliberate hope?