



# Spring Study Discussion Guide #9

**Sermon Title:** God Moves in Mysterious Ways

**Biblical Reference:** Jeremiah 32:1-15

**Date Preached:** Sunday, March 19th, 2023, @ 11am

**Study Group Date:** Wednesday, March 22nd, 2023

## Ice Breaker

To get to know each other as a group, let us go around the room and have everyone answer the icebreaker question.

What was your best/worst surprise?

## Bible Passage Review

In Jeremiah 32, the prophet Jeremiah had been prophesying for many years, warning the people of Judah of God's impending judgment on their disobedience and idolatry. Jeremiah had been imprisoned by King Zedekiah of Judah for his prophesying, as Zedekiah did not want to hear his message of impending doom. The Babylonian army besieged Jerusalem while Jeremiah was in prison, and the situation for the people of Judah was dire.

In this context, God commanded Jeremiah to buy a field from his cousin Hanamel in Anathoth, located outside of Jerusalem. This action seemed strange to many, as the land had already fallen into the hands of the Babylonians. God instructed Jeremiah to purchase the ground as a symbol of hope and assurance that the people of Judah would one day return from exile and possess their land again. Jeremiah purchasing the land, despite the dire circumstances, was a powerful statement of faith in God's promises and a reminder that even amid judgment, God's plans for His people remained secure.

## Sermon Summary

The main thought from Sunday's sermon was:

*What one possesses in God's coming Kingdom is determined by what one purchases in this life.*

The sermon discussed the problem of Babylon, including the bleakness of the situation, the need to lay out the problem to God, and the confinement that seemed constant. The purchase of Anathoth spoke to the importance of seeking a word from God in tragic moments. The sermon emphasized recognizing how God uses confinement to confirm His moving and give His servants a message even in difficult moments. We can boldly act on God's prompting and thus become beacons of faith and hope in God to those around us.

**Ask a volunteer to read: Jeremiah 32:1-15**

*Jer 32:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.*

*Jer 32:2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house.*

*Jer 32:3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it;*

*Jer 32:4 And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes;*

*Jer 32:5 And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper.*

*Jer 32:6 And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

*Jer 32:7 Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.*

*Jer 32:8 So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.*

*Jer 32:9 And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver.*

*Jer 32:10 And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances.*

*Jer 32:11 So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open:*

*Jer 32:12 And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.*

*Jer 32:13 And I charged Baruch before them, saying,*

*Jer 32:14 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is*

*open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days.*

*Jer 32:15 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.*

- Were there any insights the Lord showed you or anything that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you? Either from the sermon or from your study of this passage?
- How did the Holy Spirit speak to your heart from these passages/lessons?

## My Testimony

God asked Jeremiah in this passage to purchase a field that he would never enjoy in his lifetime. God taught Jeremiah, and those around him, to look to a distant fulfillment of God's promises to him and the children of Judah.

- What examples can you give in our lives relating to this idea?

## Digging Deeper

### **1. The Problem of Babylon (vs. 1-5)**

In verses 1-5, the passage highlights the hopelessness of the situation. Jeremiah is in prison with the Babylonian army at the city gates. This situation correlates to modern Christian's spiritual conflict. We doubt God's care and ability to help. We resist going to Him with our specific problems. (*Further Reading: Jeremiah 32:24, Jeremiah 33:1-3, 1 Peter 5:6-8*)

Think about your own life.

***Ask a volunteer to read the following:***

*Jer 32:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.*

*Jer 32:2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house.*

*Jer 32:3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it;*

*Jer 32:4 And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and*

*shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes;  
Jer 32:5 And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit  
him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper.*

**Discussion Questions:**

- How does the description of Jerusalem under siege in this passage create a sense of despair and hopelessness? What emotions does it evoke, and how does it contribute to the overall tone of the passage?
- Have you ever felt imprisoned or trapped in a difficult situation? How did you respond to it?

In the sermon, the focus was on Jeremiah laying out the hopelessness of the situation to God. In Jeremiah 32:24, God commanded him in his imprisonment to call on God in Jeremiah 33:1-3. We can relate this to the New Testament command of casting our cares on Christ found in 1 Peter 5:7-8.

- In what ways does Jeremiah's imprisonment reflect the struggles and challenges that we face in our own lives? How does his example of prayer and trust in God provide a model for how we can respond to difficult circumstances?
- In what ways have you seen God work in unexpected ways in your life, even when things seemed hopeless or uncertain?
- How has your faith in God's promises sustained you through challenging times?
- What does it mean to "cast all your care upon [God]" as Peter instructs in 1 Peter 5:7? How can we practically apply this principle in our daily lives?
- How can a community of believers support one another in casting our cares on God and resisting the enemy's attacks? What practical steps can we take to build up and encourage one another in these areas?

**2. The Purchase in Anathoth (vs 6-15)**

In the following verses, we read the story of Jeremiah purchasing a field in Anathoth, illustrating how God can use unexpected situations to speak to us. The sermon encouraged us to be sensitive to divine opportunities and to take bold action, even when it does not make sense. We need to be public witnesses and a beacon of hope for others. The story of Hanameel, who lost his land but still had hope through Jeremiah's faithful act of redemption, is an example of how God can provide grace even in difficult times.

**Ask a volunteer to read:**

*Jer 32:6 And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,  
Jer 32:7 Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.*

*Jer 32:8 So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.*

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*Jer 32:15 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.*

**Discussion Questions:**

**Receiving God's Message:**

- What is the significance of Jeremiah being imprisoned during the time when he received the Word of the Lord in this passage?
- How can we discern when God is speaking to us through difficult circumstances or challenges in our own lives?
- What practical steps can we take to create space and quiet in our lives to listen for God's voice and to receive His messages?

**Taking Bold Action:**

- Why do you think God instructed Jeremiah to purchase a field during a time of siege and captivity? What might this teach us about God's plans and purposes, even during difficult times?
- Can you think of a time when you acted on faith, even though it did not make sense at the time? What was the outcome?
- How can we apply the example of Jeremiah's faith and obedience to our lives today?
- How can we discern when God is calling us to take a bold action versus when we are simply acting out of our own desires or motivations?

**Being a Beacon of Faith:**

- Why do you think God chose to use the purchase of a field as a sign of hope and restoration for the people of Israel?
- What signs of hope and restoration have you seen in your life or in the lives of others? How did those experiences strengthen your faith?
- In what ways can we show defiant hope in the promises of God, even when the world around us seems bleak?
- Are there any promises of God that you struggle to believe or trust in? How can you work on building your faith in those areas?

## Taking It Home

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they can do because of discovering the truths and principles in the text:

1. What truth or principle in this text was most impactful for you?
2. How did this truth or principal challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?
3. How will you put into practice what you have learned today?