

# HANAMEEL'S FIELD

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In Jeremiah 32:6-14, the Lord told Jeremiah to buy a field from his cousin Hanameel: “And Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, *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.* 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. 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. And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open: 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. And I charged Baruch before them, saying, 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.” God had an excellent reason for having Jeremiah buy Hanameel’s field and to preserve the evidence of the purchase, and there is an important lesson to learn from it.

## **Jeremiah’s new field to be possessed by the Babylonians**

God told Jeremiah to buy the field of his cousin Hanameel to signify that the captives would return one day and the land of Israel would be possessed again by God’s people. “*For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land*” (Jer 32:15). God instructed Jeremiah to do this at the very time that Jerusalem was being besieged by Nebuchadnezzar and the army of Babylon. Many Jews were already in Babylon as captives and within a year, the siege of Jerusalem would end with the utter destruction of the city and the temple. The Lord had recently prophesied through Jeremiah, “*Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it*” (Jer 32:3).

## **Nothing too hard for God**

Jeremiah was having difficulty reconciling God’s promise of the coming devastation of Jerusalem and all of Judah with this instruction to buy his

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(continued)

cousin's field with witnesses to signify the Jews' future possession of the land. How God was going to accomplish both of these things was the question at the heart of Jeremiah's prayer in Jeremiah 32:16-25. Jeremiah pointed out these two different prophecies which seemed so incongruous: "*And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; for the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans*" (Jer 32:25). Jeremiah did not doubt God's ability to bring both of these things to pass, as he acknowledged the limitless power of God in creating all things (Jer 32:17), in showing "lovingkindness unto thousands" and recompensing iniquity (Jer 32:18-19), and in delivering the children of Israel from Egypt and giving them the land of Canaan (Jer 32:20-23). Jeremiah summed up God's power, saying, "*there is nothing too hard for thee*" (Jer 32:17).

### **The promised return of Israel's captivity**

God answered Jeremiah's question with the firm promise that the captives would be returned to the land of Israel. "And now therefore thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul." (Jer 32:36-41). The same power of God that was bringing all this evil upon the people would also bring all the good later. The Lord said, "*Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord*" (Jer 32:42-44).