

### 23.14 Jeremiah's Real Estate (Jeremiah 21; 32)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] Brackets indicate a remark to the teacher that will not be read aloud; they also show answers to questions.

#### Visuals and Tools:

- deed from a real estate transaction (optional)
- pottery jar with a piece of paper to put in it and a top to seal it; if unavailable, use a glass jar with a lid.

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print on colorful cardstock and cut apart.

- *siege/besiege*: to surround a city in order to force surrender; involves building ramps/mounts and engines in order to get into the city
- *sword*, famine, pestilence: dying by war, by starvation, by disease
- *Chaldeans*: people or soldiers from Babylon
- *deed*: a legal document to show a person owns land
- *to visit*: to be taken away in death
- *witnesses*: people who see something happen and are able to certify that what they saw is true
- *covenant*: a promise/agreement between two people

#### Scripture: (ESV)

Jeremiah 21:1 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, when King Zedekiah sent to him [messengers], saying, 2 “Inquire of the Lord for us, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is making war against us. Perhaps the Lord will deal with us according to all his wonderful deeds and will make him withdraw from us.”

3 Then Jeremiah said to them: “Thus you shall say to Zedekiah, 4 ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: . . . I will bring [the Chaldeans] together into the midst of this city. 5 I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and strong arm, in anger and in fury and in great wrath. 6 And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast. They shall die of a great pestilence. 7 Afterward, declares the Lord, I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his servants and the people in this city who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. . . . He shall strike them down with the edge of the sword. He shall not pity them or spare them or have compassion.’

8 “And to this people you shall say: ‘Thus says the Lord: Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. 9 He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall have his life as a prize of war. 10 For I have set my face against this city for harm and not for good, declares the Lord: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.’” . . .

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 Nebuchadnezzar. 2 At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard that was in the palace of the king of Judah. 3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him, saying, “Why do you prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the Lord: . . . 4 Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye. 5 And he shall take Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall remain until I visit him, declares the Lord. Though you fight against the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed?’”

6 Jeremiah said, “The word of the Lord came to me: 7 [Your cousin] will come to you and say, ‘Buy my

field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours.’ 8 Then . . . my cousin came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with the word of the Lord, and said to me, ‘Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.’ Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord.

9 “And I bought the field at Anathoth from . . . my cousin, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. 10 I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. 11 Then I took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions and the open copy. 12 And I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch . . . in the presence of . . . my cousin, in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase. . . . 13 I charged Baruch in their presence, saying, 14 ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware vessel, that they may last for a long time. 15 For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.’

16 “After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the Lord, saying: 17 ‘Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you. 18 You show steadfast love to thousands, but you repay the guilt of fathers to their children after them, O great and mighty God, whose name is the Lord of hosts, 19 great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the children of man, rewarding each one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds. 20 You have shown signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and to this day in Israel and among all mankind, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day. 21 You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with great terror. 22 And you gave them this land, which you swore to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey. 23 And they entered and took possession of it. But they did not obey your voice or walk in your law. They did nothing of all you commanded them to do. Therefore you have made all this disaster come upon them. 24 Behold, the siege mounds have come up to the city to take it, and because of sword and famine and pestilence the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it. What you spoke has come to pass, and behold, you see it. 25 Yet you, O Lord God, have said to me, Buy the field for money and get witnesses—though the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans.’”

26 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 27 “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me? 28 Therefore, thus says the Lord: Behold, I am giving this city into the hands of the Chaldeans and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall capture it. 29 The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city shall come and set this city on fire and burn it, with the houses on whose roofs offerings have been made to Baal and drink offerings have been poured out to other gods, to provoke me to anger. 30 For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have done nothing but evil in my sight from their youth. The children of Israel have done nothing but provoke me to anger by the work of their hands, declares the Lord. 31 This city has aroused my anger and wrath, from the day it was built to this day, so that I will remove it from my sight 32 because of all the evil of the children of Israel and the children of Judah that they did to provoke me to anger—their kings and their officials, their priests and their prophets, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 33 They have turned to me their back and not their face. And though I have taught them persistently, they have not listened to receive instruction. 34 They set up their abominations in the house that is called by my name, to defile it. 35 They built the high places of Baal in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

36 “Now therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, ‘It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by sword, by famine, and by pestilence’: 37 Behold, I will gather them from all the countries to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation. I will bring them back to this place, and I will make them dwell in safety. 38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God. 39 I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. 40 I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. 41 I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.

42 “For thus says the Lord: Just as I have brought all this great disaster upon this people, so I will bring upon them all the good that I promise them. 43 Fields shall be bought in this land of which you are saying, ‘It is a desolation, without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.’ 44 Fields shall be bought for money, and deeds shall be signed and sealed and witnessed, in [all the land of Israel]; for I will restore their fortunes, declares the Lord.”

### **Introduction/Review:**

Nebuchadnezzar was king of what country? [Babylon.] He had come to besiege Jerusalem. When he heard the Egyptians were coming to help Jerusalem, he had left his siege and had chased after the Egyptians. Jeremiah took the opportunity to go visit in his hometown, just a couple of miles from Jerusalem. But when he got to the city, he met the gatekeeper, who arrested Jeremiah. The leaders in Jerusalem put him in a horrible dungeon prison. Thankfully, King Zedekiah, although he kept Jeremiah locked up for prophesying against him and Jerusalem, did allow Jeremiah to stay in a more convenient place, the court of the prison at the king’s house.

Nebuchadnezzar came back to Jerusalem and resumed his siege in the tenth year of Zedekiah’s rule. Within one year Zedekiah would no longer rule. Within one year Jerusalem would be destroyed.

### **Story:**

#### ***Jeremiah’s message from God to Zedekiah again***

With the return of Nebuchadnezzar to Jerusalem, Zedekiah ✓ might have felt frightened. Sometimes an urgent situation sends people to God. King Zedekiah sent a messenger to Jeremiah, saying, “Inquire of the LORD for us, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is making war against us; perhaps the LORD will deal with us according to all his wonderful deeds, and will make him withdraw from us.”

Jeremiah’s answer to Zedekiah was just as it had always been: “Thus you shall say to Zedekiah, ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I myself will fight against you in anger and great wrath. I will strike the people and beasts of this city; they shall die of a great pestilence. Afterward, I will give King Zedekiah and his servants and the people in this city who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He shall smite them with the edge of the sword; he shall not pity them, or spare them, or have compassion.’”

#### ***“Way of life or death”***

Then God had a message for the people of Jerusalem. This is it: “Thus says the LORD: ‘I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. If you remain in this city, you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. But if you go out and surrender to the Chaldeans, you shall live. This city shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.’”

What was God telling the people to do? [Surrender if they wanted to live; stay in the city if they wanted to die by sword, famine, or pestilence.] What lies had they been believing? [That Nebuchadnezzar would not win the battle, and all the exiles would come home.]

#### ***Zedekiah’s response again***

You can probably predict Zedekiah’s response to God’s message through Jeremiah. Yes! He was angry!

King Zedekiah demanded, “Why do you prophesy and say, ‘The LORD says: (1) “I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it. (2) King Zedekiah shall not escape from the Chaldeans but shall surely be taken by the king of Babylon, who shall speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye. (3) Nebuchadnezzar shall take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he shall remain until I visit him. (4) Though you fight against the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed.’” Why do you keep on saying this, Jeremiah!?”

Obviously, Zedekiah understood Jeremiah’s message very well, for he repeated almost exactly what Jeremiah had said. Refusing to pay attention to all these words from God and punishing God’s messenger,

Zedekiah put Jeremiah back into prison.

### ***Offer to Jeremiah to buy land***

After this, God told Jeremiah, “Your cousin will come to you and say, ‘Buy my field.’”

Hmmm. “Buy my field.” Let’s think about buying anything in Judah at this time. Would you want to buy land that you knew would go to an enemy king? [No.] What was happening to the city at that moment? [King Nebuchadnezzar was besieging the city.] Who would soon “own” the city and surrounding country? [Nebuchadnezzar.] If you bought land, would it be worth anything to you if you didn’t even know whether or not you could actually own it? [No.] This was a strange thing God said would happen to Jeremiah.

Nevertheless, guess who came to visit Jeremiah in prison. [Jeremiah’s cousin.] Guess what he said to Jeremiah. [“Buy my field.”] God had said it would happen, and now it happened. Jeremiah knew God was in this, so he bought the field for just seventeen pieces of silver—✓very small amount since nothing was worth much in those days. Witnesses watched Jeremiah weigh out the money to his cousin. They watched as Jeremiah signed the deeds. They, too, signed the deeds as witnesses. Then they watched as Jeremiah said to Baruch, his helper, “The God of Israel says, ‘Take these deeds and put them in a pottery jar so that they may last a long time. For God says, Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.’”

### ***Jeremiah’s obedience and prayer***

What did God say to do? [Put the deeds somewhere safe.] Why? [Because land and houses would be bought in Judah again sometime.] That’s what Jeremiah told Baruch to do, but ✓I’m not sure Jeremiah quite understood. He prayed to God after this event, saying, “Ah, Lord GOD! It is You who have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for thee.”

Oh, I like what Jeremiah was saying: “Nothing is too hard for the Lord.” Do you know that fact? Remember it always: “Nothing is too hard for the Lord.”

Jeremiah continued to praise God:<sup>1</sup> “You show steadfast love to thousands, but repay the guilt of fathers to their children, O great and mighty God whose name is the LORD of hosts . . . whose eyes are open to all the ways of men, rewarding every man according to his ways . . . who showed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and to this day in Israel and among all mankind, and have made Yourself a name. You brought Your people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders and with great terror; You gave them this land, which You swore to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey . . . . But they did not obey Your voice or walk in Your law; they did nothing of all You commanded them to do. Therefore You have made all this evil come upon them” (Jeremiah 32:17–23).

Do you understand what Jeremiah was saying? Why was God bringing all this evil upon the people? [They did not obey the voice of God or walk in His law.] How many times we have heard this. Do you think it’s still true today—that God will bring evil upon the disobedient—or was it true only for the children of Israel? It is true today as well. Follow God’s ways; see His blessing. Forget God, and see His wrath.

### ***Why buy the field?***

Jeremiah had preached this truth for years; ✓yet he seemed puzzled about buying his cousin’s field. He said, “The city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it. What You spoke has come to pass. Yet You, O Lord GOD, have said to me, ‘Buy the field for money and get witnesses’—though the city is given into the hands of the Chaldeans.’” ✓It was as if he were saying, “God, I don’t get it.”

God gave Jeremiah an answer. “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too hard for me? Therefore, thus says the LORD, ‘The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city shall come and set this city on fire with the houses on whose roofs incense has been offered to Baal and drink offerings have been poured out to other gods, to provoke me to anger. For the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah have done nothing but provoke me to anger by the work of their hands,’ says the LORD. ‘They have turned to me their back and not their face; and though I have taught them persistently they have not listened to receive

instruction. They set up their abominations in the Temple which is called by my name, to defile it. They built the high places of Baal in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin” (Jeremiah 32:27–35).

### ***The new covenant***

We know God’s anger against Israel was hot; now we hear from His own words why He was so angry. Judgment was soon to take place.

Yet, even while He was angry with Israel, God gave a promise: “I will bring them back to this place, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them; and that they may not turn from me. For just as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so I will bring upon them all the good that I promise them” (Jeremiah 32:37–41).

Jeremiah’s buying that field was a picture of God’s promise to cause His people to come back to Judah and to buy and sell land and houses.

This marvelous everlasting covenant God made with Israel is called the “new covenant” in Jeremiah 31:31 and incorporates both believing Jews and believing Gentiles into one people (Hebrews 9:15). Those who have received Jesus Christ as Saviour are God’s children who will fear God forever. They are part of this everlasting covenant with God. He does good to them continually. God is so good!

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 32:9–44 is a tremendous passage on which to meditate. May the teacher find it so and somehow encourage older students to meditate on it.

### **Lessons from this lesson:**

- We see Jesus

Jesus is the one by whom all believers, Jew and Gentile, are saved from sin. It is because of Him that we can be in the new, everlasting covenant.

Jesus fulfills Israel. “That hope for a new Israel—a true Israel that would embody all that God called Israel to be—persisted across the centuries into the New Testament era. This hope was finally fulfilled in the incarnation of God’s true Son by nature, Jesus Christ. Matthew tells us that Jesus fulfills [Hosea 11 \(Matt. 2:13–15\)](#). He is the true Israel, the faithful Israel who succeeds where old covenant Israel failed. Like ancient Israel, He came up out of Egypt, passed through the waters, and was tested in the wilderness (2:13–15; 3:13–4:11; see [Ex. 12:40–42; 14:1–31; 16:4](#)). Unlike old covenant Israel, however, Jesus passed the test. He is therefore worthy to be called God’s Son because of who He is in His deity and because of what He accomplished in His humanity.

“The good news of the gospel tells us that we can be the true Israel of God as well. If we are in Christ, we share in the privileges and relationship He enjoys as God’s true Son. We are not sons of God by nature; rather, we are sons of God by adoption, His beloved children in Christ. As such, we inherit all of the promises given to old covenant Israel. Those promises of God that Israel would rule over her enemies and enjoy abundant covenant blessings (for example, [Isa. 14:1–2](#))—those promises are for all of God’s people, the true Israel of God consisting of Jews and Gentiles who are united to Christ by faith alone. In Him we are the true Israel of God, heirs of the glorious destiny promised to God’s old covenant people ([Zeph. 3:14–20](#))” ([Jesus The True Israel | Reformed Bible Studies & Devotionals at Ligonier.org | Reformed Bible Studies & Devotionals at Ligonier.org](#)).

- Remember God’s ways and do them always. Do not turn away from Him.
- Think about the time that passed when Jeremiah’s message seemed to be untrue. God does all His holy

will in His time.

- “There is nothing too hard for the Lord.”

### Activities:

- Play dough: the letters *D E E D*; a pottery jar and lid; a rope circle to represent *everlasting*
- Snack: fruit (no connection to this lesson)
- Have students turn away from the teacher while [s]he is talking to demonstrate Israel’s not listening to God.
- Review questions: (Game: Print the “Deed to Land in Anathoth of Benjamin” found at the end of this lesson. A student who answers a question correctly may sign his or her name, even multiple times, as a witness to the deed.)
  1. Who was back, besieging Jerusalem? [Nebuchanezzar/Babylon.]
  2. Name one part of God’s prophecy to Zedkiah through Jeremiah. [(1) the king of Babylon would take the city; (2) King Zedekiah would be taken by the king of Babylon, who would see him face to face; (3) Nebuchadnezzar would take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he would be until death; (4) the Chaldeans would succeed.]
  3. What did Zedekiah do in response to this repeated message? Include two things in your answer. [He was angry, and he put Jeremiah back in prison.]
  4. Who would come to see Jeremiah in prison? [His cousin.]
  5. What would his cousin want Jeremiah to do? [Buy a field.]
  6. Why was the purchase of land a strange thing to do? [The Chaldeans would soon own all the land.]
  7. What, then, did the picture of buying the land represent? [The fact the God would bring the people back to own the land.]
  8. In what covenant do the Jews and Gentiles both participate? [The everlasting or new covenant.]

### Memory Verse[s]: (ESV)

Psalm 1 (The KJV has visuals at [psalm 1 - Bing images](#) words only, and [Tree & Psalm 1 - Openclipart](#) with a tree in the picture. The ESV has one at [\(840\) Pinterest](#) with a lamp and a Bible in the picture.)

- 1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
- 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.
- 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.
- 4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
- 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the  
righteous;
- 6 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

### Handwork: (If left to dry and to paint, this craft will take two weeks to complete.)

Protect surfaces by putting down plastic mats.

Make Coil Pots: Show students how to make a long snake-like shape with a piece of air-drying clay and how to wind it up into a pot shape. Squish the side together so the coils stick together. Here’s a video for helpful instruction: [Bing Videos](#).

**siege/besiege**

**sword, famine, pestilence**

**deed**

**Chaldeans**

**to visit**

**witnesses**

**covenant**

## **God's Message to Zedekiah**

- (1) "I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it."
- (2) "King Zedekiah shall not escape from the Chaldeans but shall surely be taken by the king of Babylon, who shall speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye."
- (3) "Nebuchadnezzar shall take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he shall remain until I visit him."
- (4) "Although you fight against the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed."





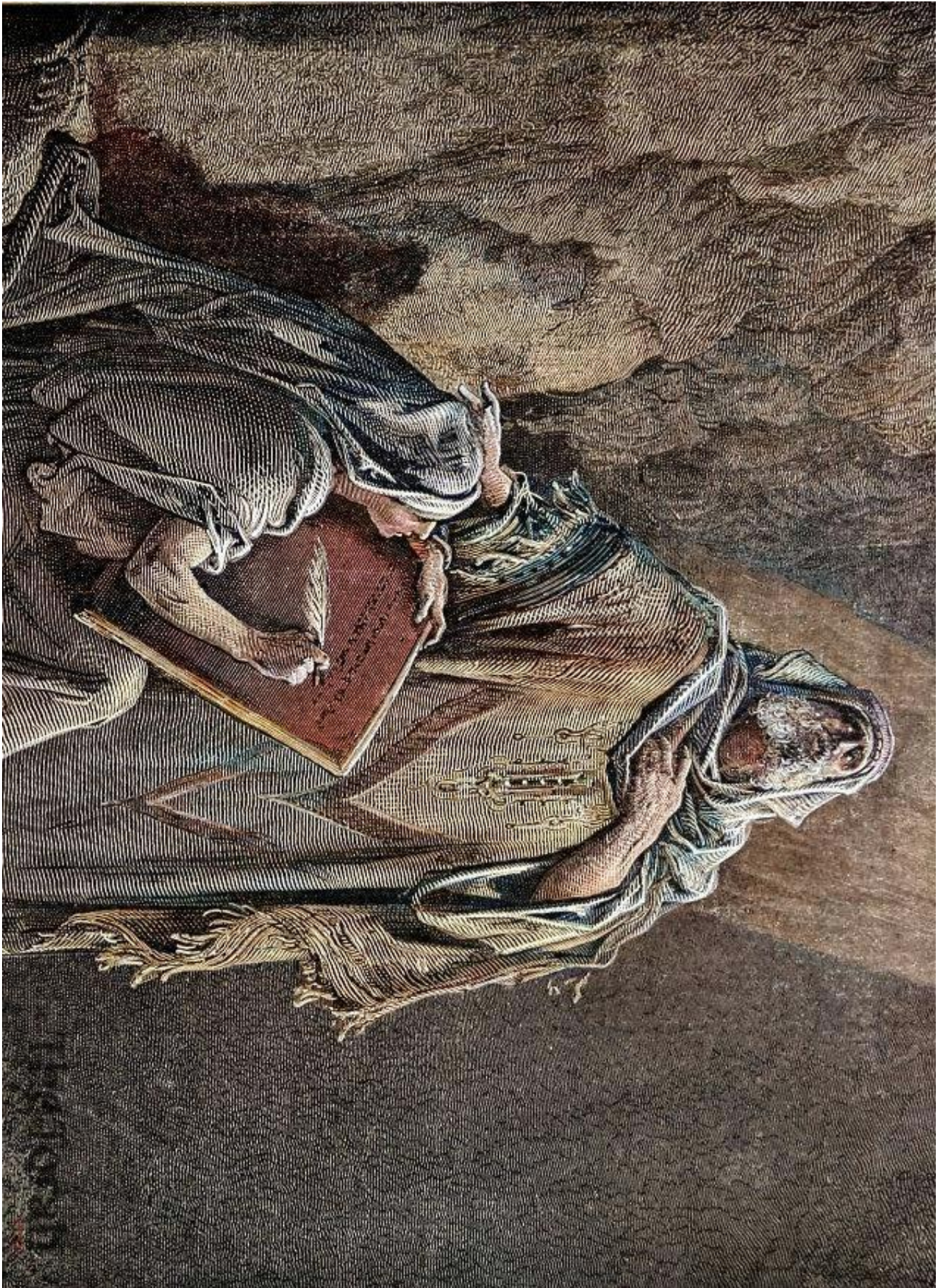
[Ezekiel's Prophecy of the Siege of Jerusalem \(johnpratt.com\)](http://johnpratt.com)



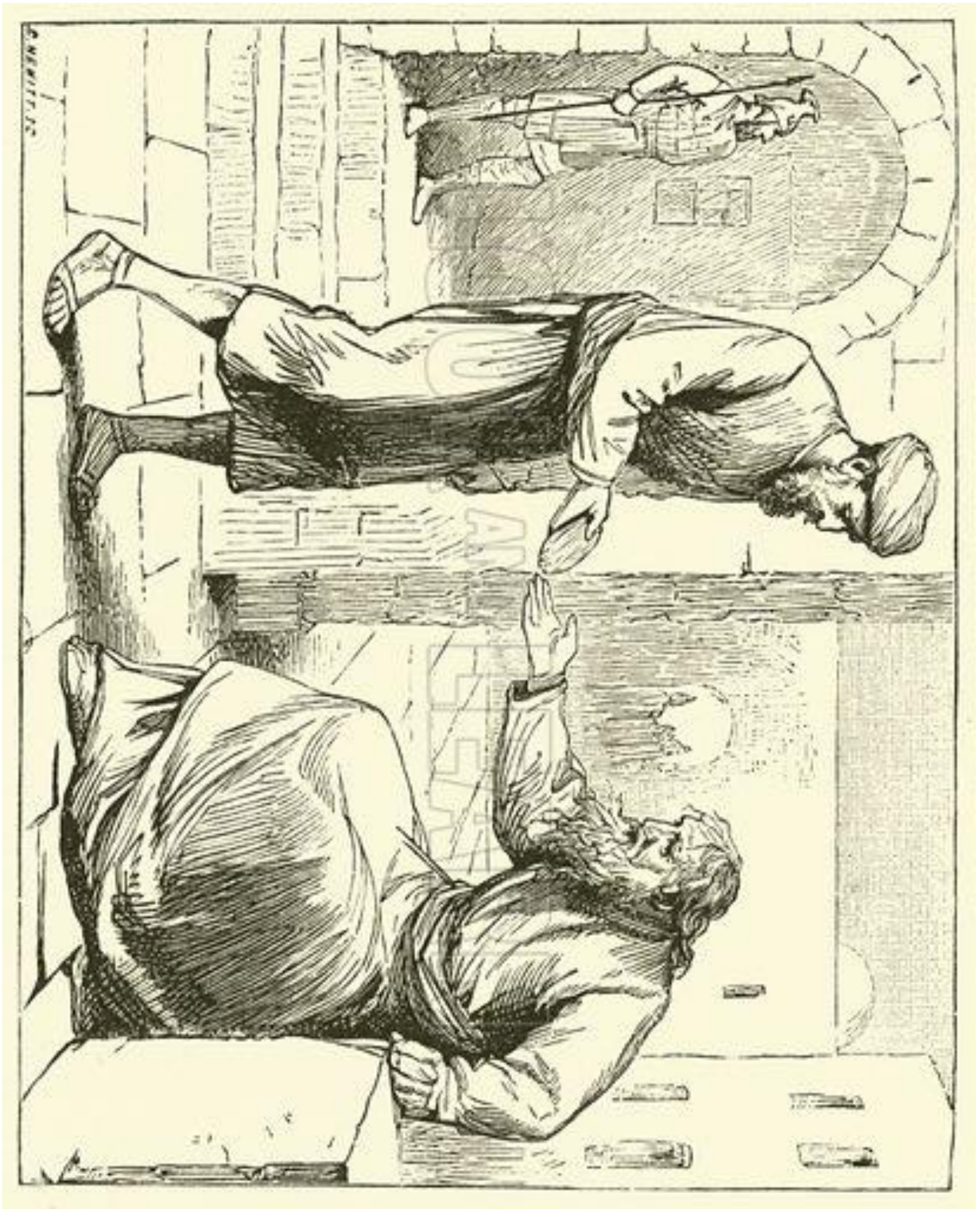
[Image: Zedekiah and Jeremiah with the army](http://st-takla.org) (st-takla.org)



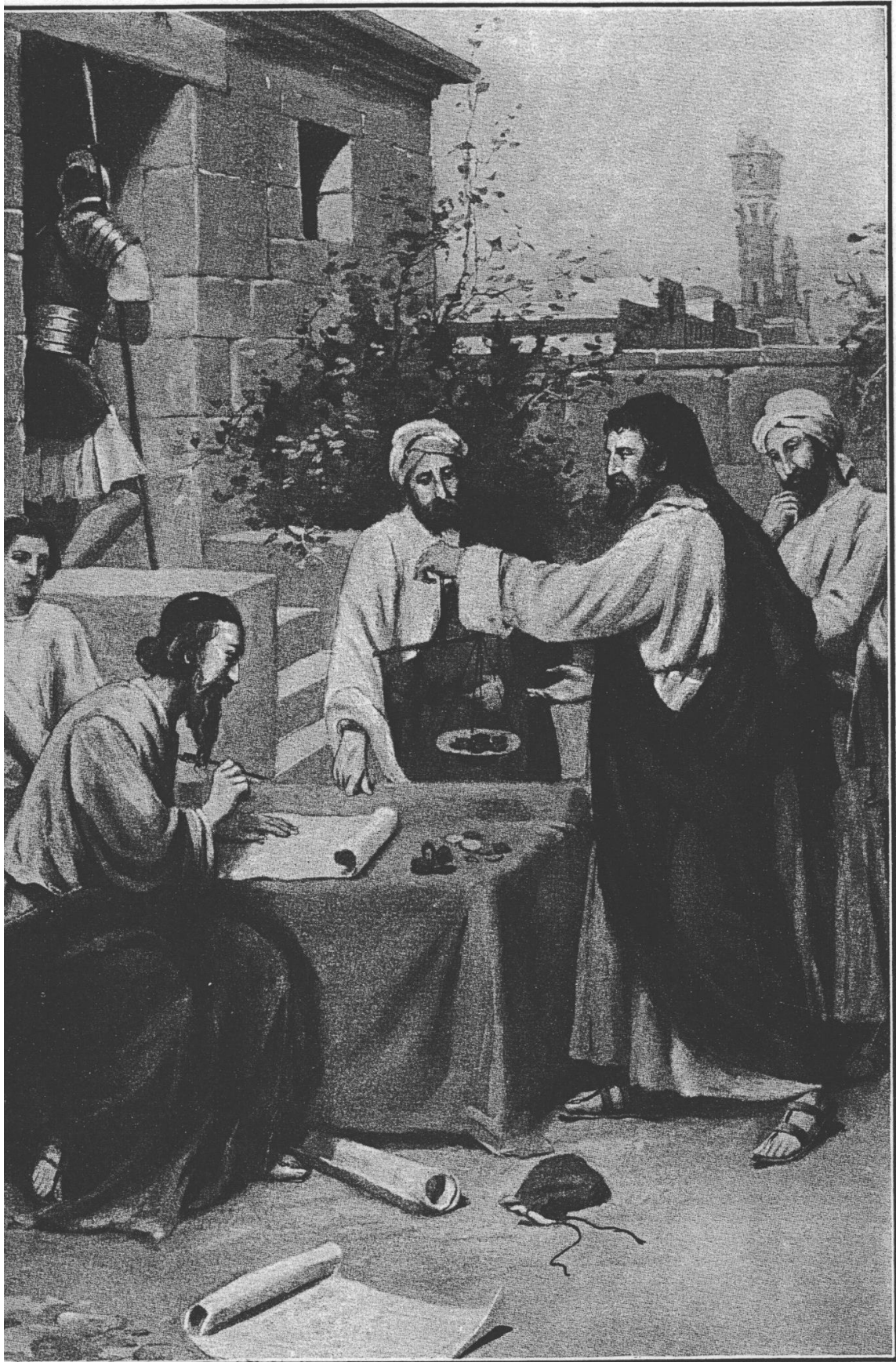
[jeremiah's cousin visits him in prison - Search Images \(bing.com\)](#)



[jeremiah's cousin visits him in prison - Search Images \(bing.com\)](#)



[Jeremiah in prison stock image | Look and Learn](#)



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[Turning Jeremiah's Land Deed Into an Oracle of Hope - TheTorah.com](http://TheTorah.com)

**Deed to Land in Anathoth of Benjamin**

**Owner: Jeremiah of Anathoth**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

**Witnesses thereto**