



Investing in God's Promises  
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The Crossing Church  
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## OPENING

This week we are continuing our series called **Running with the Horses**. Have you ever watched a herd of them running together, free and magnificent? They are alike yet so different in colors and strengths. We call them piebald, or appaloosa or pinto or The Black Stallion or Budweiser horses or palominos, but they are all created for a purpose and they run like the wind. When they are tamed by a loving Master, their unique talents can be molded into obedient servants - just as we are for God's Kingdom. God used the title of this series when speaking to the Prophet Jeremiah and He is saying this to us today. If we are worn out in the footrace we are running in this evil world, what makes us think we can be successful in a spiritual race against our enemy without a total faith in God's promises?

## SCRIPTURE<sup>1</sup>

**Jeremiah 12:5a (The Message)** So, Jeremiah, if you're worn out in this footrace with men, what makes you think you can race against horses?

**Jeremiah 32:2-4** 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. 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."

**Jeremiah 32:8-10** 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; so I *bought the field* at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver. I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed and weighed out the silver on the scales.

**Jeremiah 32:13-14** In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions, "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.*"

**Jeremiah 31:23-25** This is what the Lord Almighty, God of Israel, says, "*When I bring them back* from captivity, the people in the land of Judah and in its towns will once again use these words, 'The Lord bless you, you prosperous city, you sacred mountain.' People will *live together* in Judah and all its towns – farmers and those who move about with their flocks. I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint.

**Jeremiah 31:27-28** "The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will *plant the kingdoms of Israel and Judah* with the offspring of people and of animals. Just as I watched over them to uproot and tear down, and to overthrow, destroy and bring disaster, so I will watch over them to *build* and to *plant,*" declares the Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture referenced here is NIV

**Jeremiah 32:26-27** Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, “I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. *Is anything too hard for me?*”

**Romans 5:8** But God *demonstrates* his own love *for* us in this: While we were still sinners, *Christ died* for us.

## **OBSERVATION**

Jeremiah would lead through the darkest days of Judah’s history. He became a prophet during the reigns of the last five kings before the people were carried off into exile for seventy years. The last king, Zedekiah, ruled from 597 BC to 586 BC when Jeremiah urged him to pay tribute to King Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah stubbornly refused so Nebuchadnezzar’s army attacked Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple and took all of its treasures off to Babylon. It is in these circumstances that God spoke to Jeremiah about an investment in land his cousin was selling. It sounded like a bad time to do this, but Jeremiah was faithful and obedient. Tradition tells us that he isn’t taken off to Babylon with the other exiles, but instead fled to Egypt leaving his “foolish” investment behind and eventually died there. He had invested according to God’s information and decades later, there were houses and vineyards and fields of wheat and fruit trees, and businesses, and parks thriving because Jeremiah had invested in God’s promises for the future. Buying this land was a deliberate act of faith in God! What looked foolish to everyone else and a waste of money since the Babylonians had already taken it over, was an amazing gift of God for future Israelites. Jeremiah wouldn’t live to see it come to fruition – but God had promised it to peoples to come.

**QUESTION: Who do you know who was exiled to Babylon in 586 BC?**

**QUESTION: What happened to King Zedekiah and his sons?**

**QUESTION: Where is the scripture saying the Babylonian exile would last 70 years?**

**QUESTION: What does tradition say happened to Jeremiah?**

## **APPLICATION**

Life is hard and what we are going through might be very difficult. But if that is our focus, then we will miss all that God has planned for us. God requires perseverance and faith from us if we are to become “Jeremiahs” in today’s world. Faith isn’t just trusting God – it is living our lives every day like He can be trusted. If we view Him through our circumstances, as long as things are good then we and God are good, but as soon as circumstances are bad, we begin to think that God has abandoned us. For many of us, our past experiences have become barriers to our faith. Maybe it was a bad church experience; maybe our parents divorced and we have felt the judgment of a church over it; or maybe we grew up in a dysfunctional home. Our fears and insecurities such as shame and inadequacies cause us to miss out on God’s blessings. All of these things are based upon emotions. Jeremiah had been rejected, mocked and persecuted, but these weren’t barriers to him. Faith is based on God’s promises. It is living with confidence that God is going to do what He promises to do.

**QUESTION: What circumstances have caused you to think God has abandoned you?**

**QUESTION: Where do you need to invest in God’s promises?**

**QUESTION: When has God asked you to invest in His promises? Were you obedient?**

If we have started to cross some boundaries like giving less than we should, investing in God’s promises means giving first fruits to God’s work and then He will meet all of our needs. When we resist moving in with a girlfriend or boyfriend without marriage, we are investing in God’s promise that, when we wait, He will bless our obedience. When we return good for evil instead of evil for evil, God will be our advocate and defender.

**QUESTION: When have you returned good for evil? What was the result?**

God did not demonstrate His love for us by promising nothing bad would happen and He did not demonstrate His love and concern for us by promising that every illness would be healed. His love is demonstrated by Jesus’ death on the Cross so that we may have everlasting life and our Kingdom home will be restored and waiting for us when we return to Him.

**QUESTION: Tell us about a time when you stepped out with confidence in an act of faith that God was going to answer a prayer for you.**

**PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, Jeremiah's life convinces us that You are faithful in caring for us as we invest in Your promises. Our world today is full of scary events and fearful circumstances, but we know that trusting You will result in everlasting life. Our desire is that we take up our cross and follow You in all circumstances. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Matthew 16:24-26** If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

**QUESTIONS**

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