

Long-term Investment

A reading of hope in the face of despair, based on the story of the prophet Jeremiah's purchase of land as Jerusalem was about to fall to the Babylonians (see Jeremiah, chapter 32). For two readers. Props needed: desk for Recorder.

Jeremiah: Good afternoon. I'm here to record a property sale.

Recorder of deeds: That's very funny, sir. Now, what can I really do for you?

J: Oh, I wasn't trying to be funny. I'm purchasing a piece of property from my cousin.

R: Buying a piece of property...I see. And you paid actual money for this "property?"

J: Of course—17 pieces of silver.

R: And you're aware of the current situation of our city?

J: Do you mean the impending invasion by the armies of the Babylonian empire— an invasion by vast forces arrayed even now within sight of our city walls—an invasion that will drive our people away from this land and leave our city in waste and ruin?

R: As a matter of fact, this is the very situation I had in mind. And do you know what an invasion does to property values?

J: This is not about making money.

R: You can say that again.

J: Of course I'm fully aware of the consequences of an invasion. In fact, I've been predicting it for years.

R: You're not that guy...over by the palace...saying crazy things...doing crazy things... saying "the end is near if we don't change our ways"?

J: One and the same. God told me these things.

R: That explains a lot. Have you been taking your pills?

J: Excuse me?

R: Knowing what you know—seeing what you've seen—fully aware of what is about to befall our city—and what that will do to real estate prices—you still want to pay money for a piece of property that is about to plummet in value? (pause) You're either off your medication—or you know something I don't know.

J: Maybe.

R: Maybe which?

J: Maybe I know something.

R: Welllll.....

J: We'll be coming back here someday.

R: You didn't take your pills, did you.

J: Mark my word: We'll be back someday—and people will be carrying on a normal life—even buying and selling property.

R: I guess God told you this too.

J: Bingo.

R: Well, Mr. what did you say your name was?

J: Jeremiah.

R: Mr. Jeremiah, I don't understand what you are doing, but I find your optimism strangely compelling.

J: There's another piece of land for sale just down the street.

R: Not *that* compelling. But good luck to you. And maybe you and I will be doing business again—a couple of years from now—when things have turned around. I guess only God knows.

J: At least we agree on that.

[*they shake hands*]

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