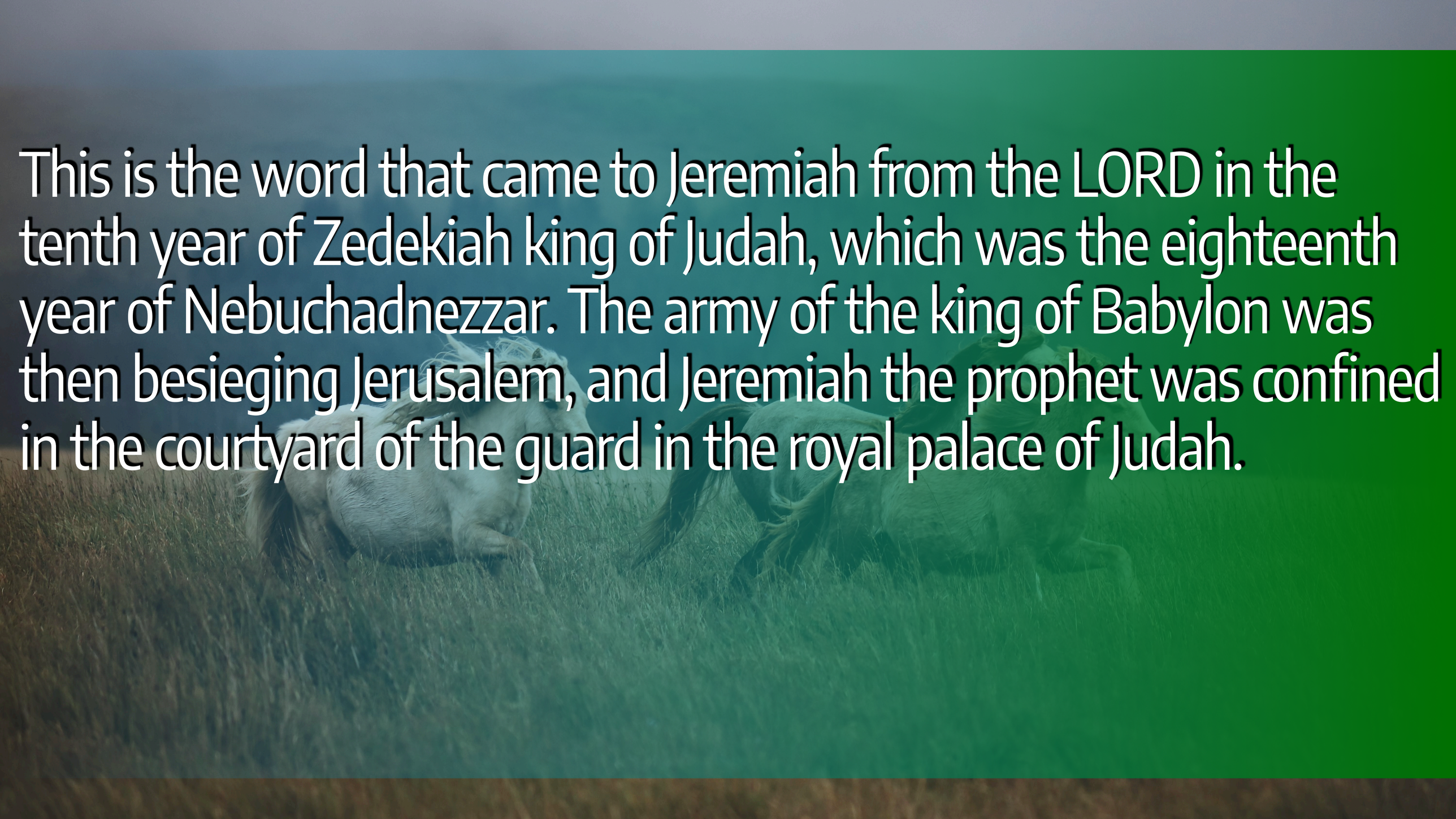
The Life of Jeremiah



The Field of Hope

Jeremiah 32:1-15



This is 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. 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. Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape the Babylonians m but will certainly be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and will speak with him face to face and see him with his own eyes. He will take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he will remain until I deal with him, declares the LORD. If you fight against the Babylonians, you will not succeed.’ ”

Jeremiah said, “The word of the LORD came to me: Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, ‘Buy my field at Anathoth, because as nearest relative it is your right and duty to buy it.’

“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.’

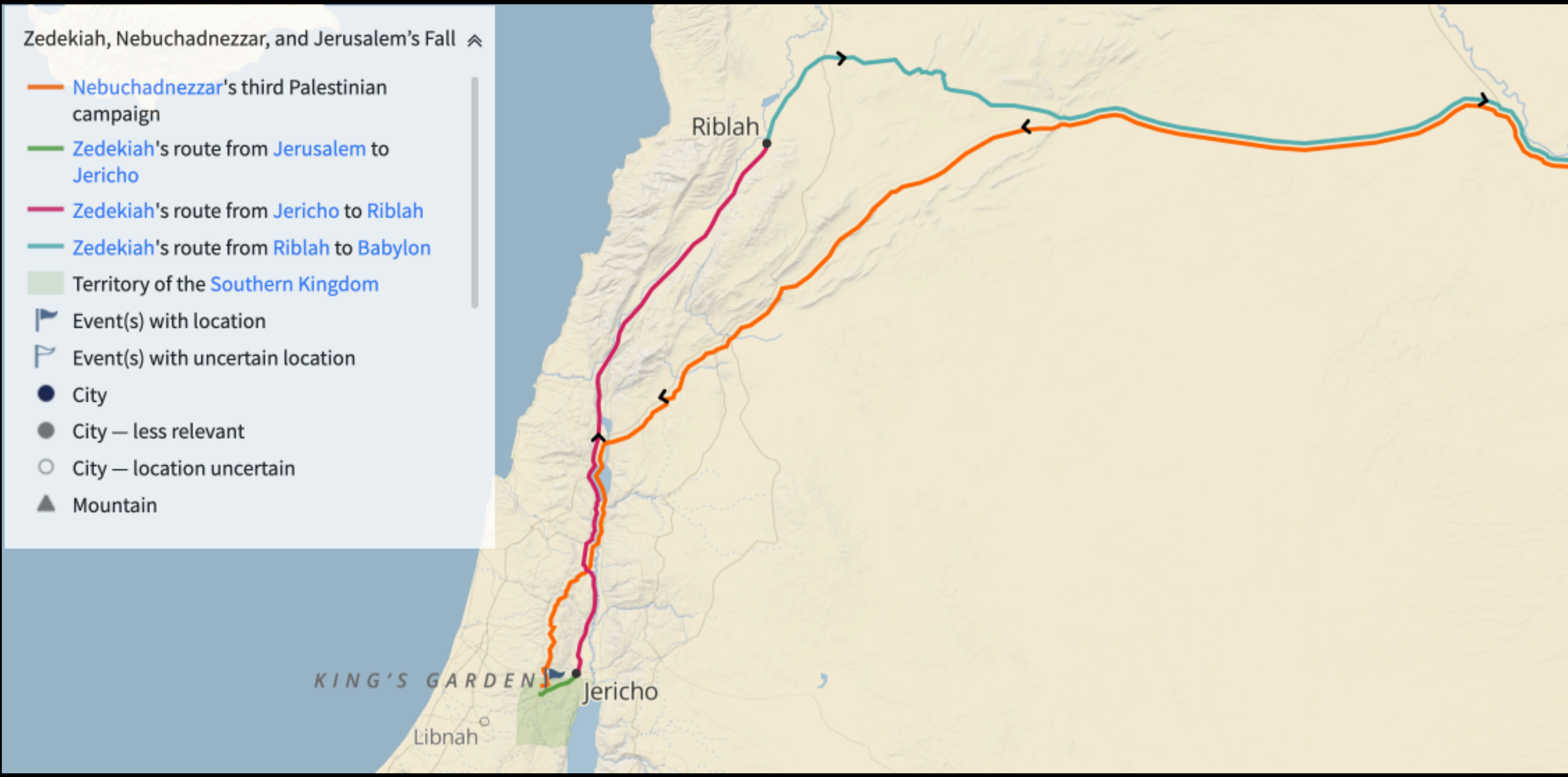
“I knew that this was the word of the LORD; so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver. I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. I took the deed of purchase—the sealed copy containing the terms and conditions, as well as the unsealed copy—and I gave this deed to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and of the witnesses who had signed the deed and of all the Jews sitting in the courtyard of the guard.

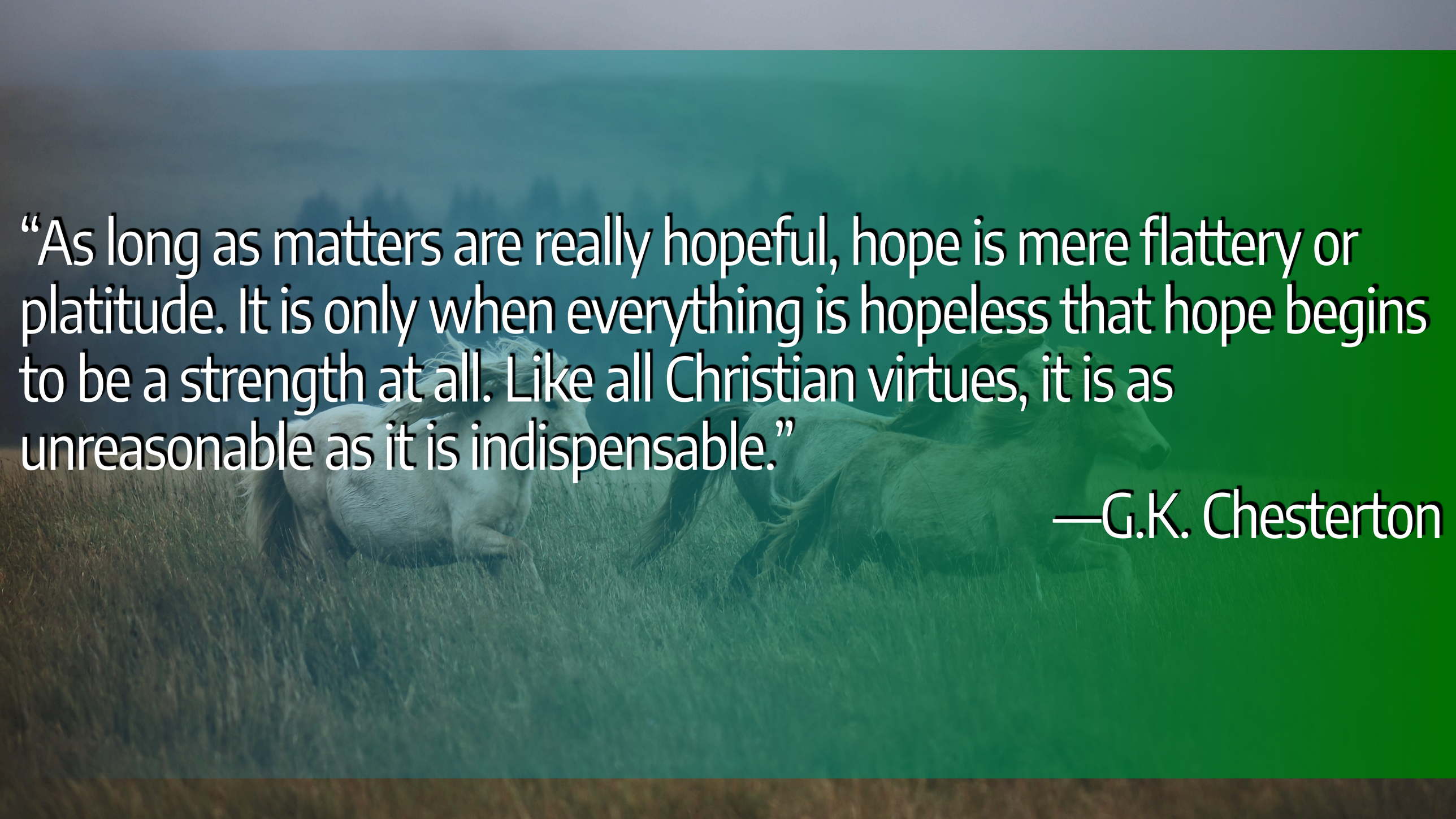
“In their presence I gave Baruch these instructions: ‘This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last a long time. For this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.’

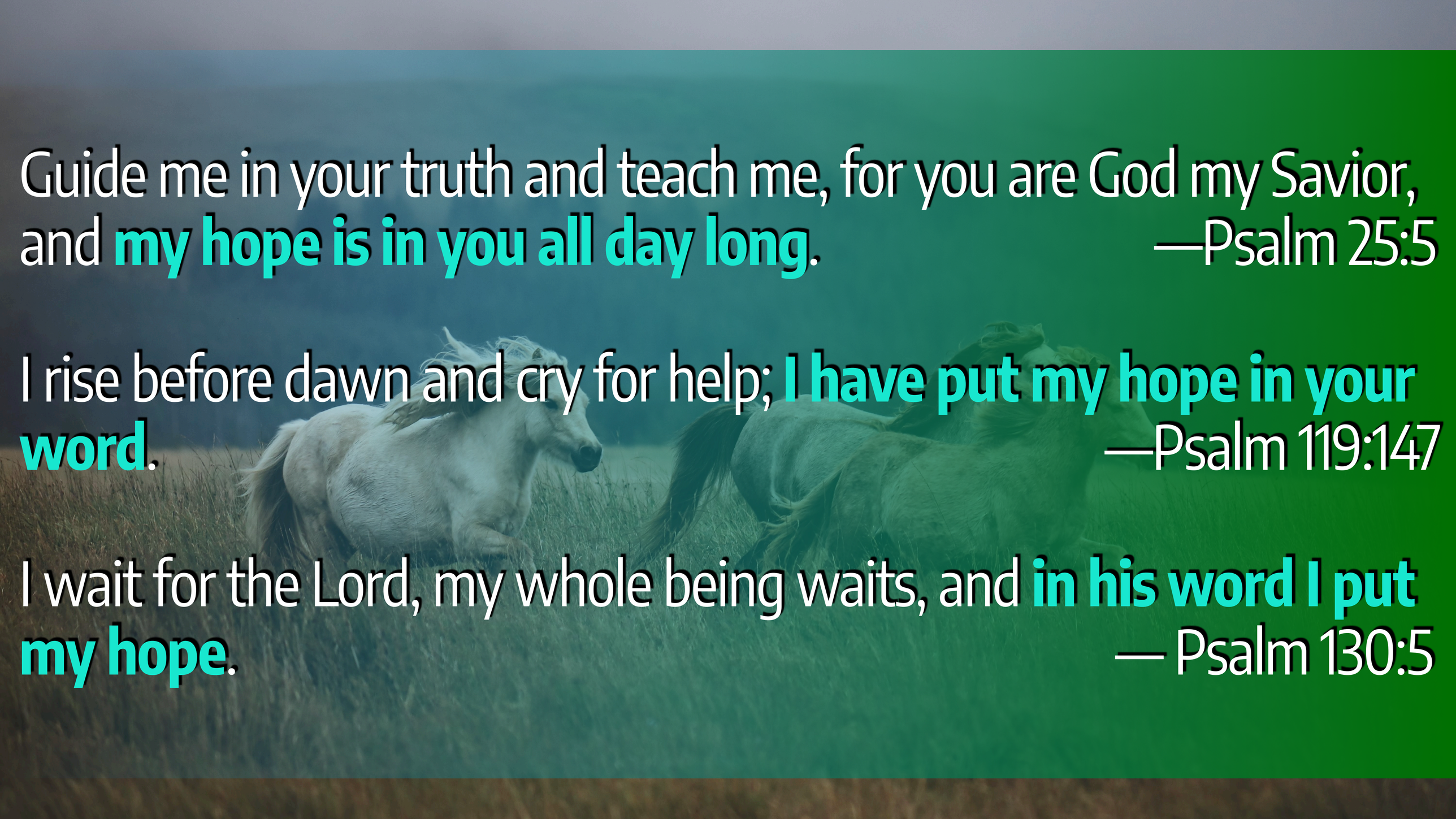
—Jeremiah 32:1-15



This is one of seven interactions between Jeremiah and Zedekiah, with some of them coming through messengers (Jer. 21:1–7; 27:12–15; 32:1–5; 34:1–7; 37:1–10; 37:17–21; 38:14–28).


Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar, and Jerusalem's Fall
Nebuchadnezzar's third Palestinian campaign
Zedekiah's route from Jerusalem to Jericho
Zedekiah's route from Jericho to Riblah
Zedekiah's route from Riblah to Babylon
Territory of the Southern Kingdom
Event(s) with location
Event(s) with uncertain location
City
City — less relevant
City — location uncertain
Mountain
Riblah
KING'S GARDEN
Jericho
Libnah


“As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery or platitude. It is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength at all. Like all Christian virtues, it is as unreasonable as it is indispensable.”
—G.K. Chesterton



Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and **my hope is in you all day long**.

—Psalm 25:5

I rise before dawn and cry for help; **I have put my hope in your word**.

—Psalm 119:147

I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and **in his word I put my hope**.

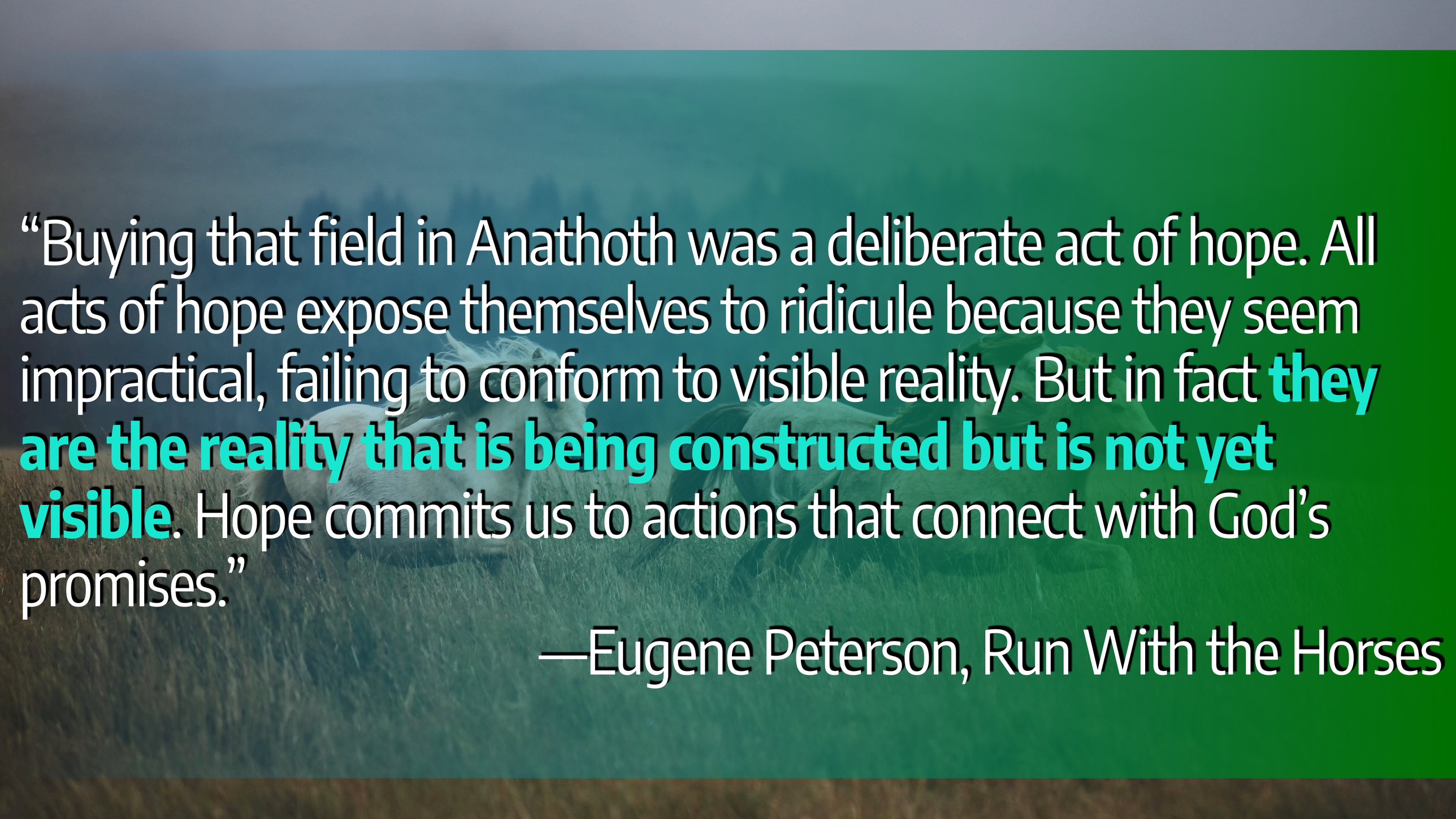
— Psalm 130:5

“The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers. Throughout the land that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land. If one of your fellow Israelites becomes poor and sells some of their property, their nearest relative is to come and redeem what they have sold.”

—Leviticus 25:23-25

Jeremiah's purchase of the field is impractical.

1. He's in prison and has little chance of being released.
2. He has no wife or sons to pass the land down to.
3. The field is currently overrun with Babylonians.
4. He knew that the exile was going to last 70 years (Jer. 25).



“Buying that field in Anathoth was a deliberate act of hope. All acts of hope expose themselves to ridicule because they seem impractical, failing to conform to visible reality. But in fact **they are the reality that is being constructed but is not yet visible**. Hope commits us to actions that connect with God’s promises.”

—Eugene Peterson, Run With the Horses

Jeremiah never enjoyed his field.

- July 586: Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians.
- Released from imprisonment by Nebuzaradan (Jer. 39:11-14).
- Remained in Jerusalem with Gedaliah, who was assassinated (Jer. 41:1-2).
- Taken to Egypt in disobedience to the Lord's command to remain in Judah (Jer. 43:4-7).
- Gave a speech to the exiles in Egypt (Jer. 44).
- Christian tradition (from Tertullian) says that while in Egypt, Jeremiah was stoned to death by the Jews.



What is Jesus up to at Brenneman?