

Jeremiah 32:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel—The covenant formula emphasizes divine authority: YHWH Tseva'ot (יהָה אֱלֹהִים צָבָאֹת, LORD of hosts), the sovereign commander of heavenly armies, and Elohei Yisrael (אלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, God of Israel), Israel's covenant God. This combination assures that despite Babylon's siege, God remains sovereign and faithful to His covenant people. **Take these evidences...and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days**—The instruction to preserve both the sealed and open copies of the deed in a keli-cheres (כָּלִי-חֶרֶשׁ, earthenware jar) reflects standard ancient practice. Clay vessels provided protection from moisture and deterioration, enabling documents to survive decades or centuries. Archaeological discoveries at Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls) and Elephantine confirm this preservation method.

The phrase **many days** (yamim rabbim, יָמִים רַבִּים) deliberately echoes Jeremiah 29:28, where Jeremiah told exiles the captivity would last **long**. The deed must survive the seventy-year exile and the destruction of Jerusalem. This preservation wasn't merely for legal purposes—it served as prophetic testimony. Future generations would see these documents and remember that God promised restoration even in judgment's darkest hour. Similarly, Scripture preserved in written form testifies across generations that God keeps His promises. The incarnate Word (John 1:14) and written Word together assure us that God's purposes endure.

Historical Context

Earthenware jars were the standard storage method for important documents in the ancient Near East. The dry climate of Palestine and surrounding regions allowed such vessels to preserve papyrus and leather documents for extended periods. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in clay jars at Qumran nearly two millennia after being stored, demonstrate the effectiveness of this preservation method. Jeremiah's instruction anticipated that Jerusalem would be destroyed and that normal record-keeping systems would not survive. By placing the deed in a sealed jar, it could outlast the Babylonian conquest, survive the seventy-year exile, and testify to returning exiles that God had always planned restoration. The 'many days' proved to be seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10), after which Cyrus the Persian conquered Babylon and issued a decree allowing Jews to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4). Whether Baruch's literal jar survived is unknown, but the account preserved in Scripture fulfilled the same purpose—testifying to God's faithfulness across generations.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the preservation of these legal documents in jars illustrate God's care for maintaining a faithful testimony across generations?
2. What does the instruction to preserve both sealed and open copies teach about the importance of verifiable, public testimony to God's promises?
3. In what ways does the preservation of Scripture across millennia serve the same purpose as these preserved deeds—testifying that God keeps His word?

Interlinear Text

אַתָּה לְקֹדֶם יְשָׁרָאֵל אֱלֹהִים צָבָא וְתִהְעַל הָאָמֶר כִּי

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					סִפְרָה	בְּנֵי הָעֵדָה

רְפִיעָם:

many

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