

God's Presence with the Persecuted
International Bible Lesson
Jeremiah 32:2-9, 14-15
Sunday, September 21, 2014
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“For then the king of Babylon’s army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah’s house” (Jeremiah 32:2—KJV).

“At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the court of the guard that was in the palace of the King of Judah” (Jeremiah 32:2—NRSV).

God can demonstrate His presence, reality, love, and truthfulness to people so no matter what happens to them in this life they remain faithful to God. For example, Jeremiah preached 40 years in Jerusalem and Judah, and the political leaders, priests, prophets, and people never repented or returned to serving the LORD alone. They loved the supposed benefits of their idol worship too much to obey God and worship God only. They continued doing evil while thinking they could go to the temple on the Sabbath, make some sacrifices, and their weekly worship would save them from God’s punishment. The false prophets contradicted Jeremiah, and some of them even

physically assaulted him, but in spite of the rejection he suffered from almost everyone, Jeremiah continued to trust God and declare the word of the LORD. Finally, as the time for the fall of Jerusalem neared, Jeremiah's enemies, who were also the enemies of the LORD they pretended to serve, arrested him, put him in prison, and threw him in a cistern to murder him. Still, Jeremiah kept believing in God and knew that his warnings were consistent with the revealed law of God in the Books of Moses and the earlier prophets, whose warnings of God's judgment came to pass. Jeremiah demonstrated that true followers of God and His prophets may not always find earthly success, but the presence of God in their lives will inspire their continued faithfulness and following of God without regard to the worldly consequences and the opinions of others.

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Thinking Further

1. What might you think about a person who claimed to be a prophet of God that the government locked in a prison?

2. How do you think most people would respond to someone if they said that God was going to have their enemies defeat their country in battle and God would not protect them from their enemies?

3. Did King Zedekiah know what Jeremiah was saying about him? What was Jeremiah saying about King Zedekiah?

4. Did King Zedekiah repent of his sins? Did the people repent of their sins after Jeremiah preached to them? Why did they do what they did?

5. What did Jeremiah say and do to give the people hope?

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