

Jeremiah Imprisoned

Jeremiah 21:1-10

Jeremiah 34:8-22

Jeremiah 37

by Don Falkos

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King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was attacking Judah, laying siege to Jerusalem. Jeremiah gave the people a message from God, "Stay in Jerusalem and you will die by sword, famine, or plague. But if you surrender to Babylon, you will live. This city will fall and will be destroyed."

Zedekiah king of Judah had previously declared all Hebrew slaves were to be set free. The people complied, swearing an oath to the Lord during a special ceremony in the Temple.

Then the Egyptian army advanced into Judah, and the Babylonian army withdrew from their siege of Jerusalem. So the people, believing they were now safe, took back their slaves. The Lord was displeased and sent a message through Jeremiah chastising the people and foretelling the return of the Babylonian army.

Jeremiah was leaving Jerusalem to go to his family home. He was arrested under the suspicion he was planning to defect to the Babylonians. He declared his innocence, "I had no intention of doing any such thing!" But that didn't stop him from being flogged and imprisoned in a dark, dank dungeon.

Several days later, King Zedekiah had Jeremiah brought to the palace and asked, "Is there any word from the Lord?"

"There is. You will be handed over to the king of Babylon. I have told you the truth from the beginning, so why am I in prison? Meanwhile, those prophets who told you Babylon would never attack you go unpunished? My lord, please don't send me back to the dungeon. I will die there."

Zedekiah ordered Jeremiah be detained in the courtyard of the palace guard and be given a loaf of bread every day as long as there was any bread left in the city.