

August 29 Answers

- 1) What happened to Jeremiah in the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem. **Nebuchadnezzar** himself sent word that Jeremiah should not be harmed, but “deal with him as he tells you” (Jer 39:12). Nebuchadnezzar had no doubt heard of Jeremiah’s ministry in Jerusalem: he had foretold Babylon’s victory over Judah and the other nations, he had urged Zedekiah and the princes to submit to Babylon’s rule, and he had suffered greatly at the hands of his own people. But his kind treatment of Jeremiah was ultimately due to God’s **promise**: “I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD” (Jer 1:8, 19). God took Jeremiah from the guardhouse and placed him in the care of **Gedaliah**. Gedaliah’s father, Ahikam, had saved Jeremiah’s life twenty years earlier (Jer 26:24), and his grandfather Shaphan was none other than the secretary (scribe) of Josiah (2 Kgs 22:3)! This shows us that God takes **care** of those who are faithful to follow His will, and that even in the midst of ruin, God can prosper and protect us. Today’s reading includes two psalms of Asaph that speak of the devastation of Jerusalem. The first, Psalm 74, begins by asking, “O God, why have you rejected us **forever**?” The author then poignantly described the destruction of the once beautiful city. Yet he did not spiral into despair. Instead he recalled the greatness of God’s past deeds and the power of God’s creative acts. He ended by urging God to repay the enemy for what they had done and to vindicate Israel. This psalm teaches us that it’s appropriate to call God to action on the basis of His **character** and His **covenant**. We should never give in to despair; rather, we should meditate on God’s promise and God’s power. The second, Psalm 79, begins by announcing that the nations had defiled the temple: “They have laid Jerusalem in **ruins**” (Ps 79:1). The author then pleaded: “Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; deliver us, and atone for our sins, for your name’s sake!” (Ps 79:9). This psalm teaches us that God’s judgments are designed to **draw** us to His side. We should run to Him, ask for His forgiveness, and then call on Him to restore and refresh. Then we will be able to praise His name (Ps 79:13).