

PERSPECTIVE

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- In Christ, we are **blessed**, even while we are **stressed**, but the **best** is yet to come.

PERSPECTIVE

- Blessed are the (description of our lives) for (promise of what's to come).

PERSPECTIVE - *BLESSED*

- The beatitudes describe the supreme happiness, and the current behavior, and the guaranteed future of a real Christian.

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- Psalm 82:3-4 ³ Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. ⁴ Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

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- Revelation 1:9 I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

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- Matthew 5:10-12 Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

PERSPECTIVE

- In more than 40 nations around the world today Christians are being persecuted for their faith.

Areas of the world where Christians face persecution include:

Afghanistan	Egypt	Libya	Somalia
Algeria	Eritrea	Malaysia	Sri Lanka
Azerbaijan	Ethiopia	Maldives	Sudan
Bangladesh	Gaza and the West Bank	Mindanao, Philippines	Syria
Belarus	India	Mauritania	Tajikistan
Bhutan	Indonesia	Morocco	Tibet (China)
Brunei	Iran	Nepal	Tunisia
Burma (Myanmar)	Iraq	Nigeria	Turkey
Chiapas, Mexico	Jordan	North Korea	Turkmenistan
China	Kuwait	Oman	United Arab Emirates
Colombia	Kyrgyzstan	Pakistan	Uzbekistan
Comoros	Laos	Qatar	Vietnam
Cuba	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia	Yemen

Asia Bibi

Location: **Pakistan**

Arrested: **June 2009**

Days Imprisoned: **838**



Youcef Nadarkhani

Location: Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Arrested: **October 2009**

Days Imprisoned: **723**



PERSPECTIVE

- There is a paradox of **blessedness** now in the midst of **extreme suffering**, while waiting for the **fulfillment of God's promises**.

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Freedom from fear of death.

- **Hebrews 2:14-15** by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil-- ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.