

Jeremiah 40

JPS [Online]

Jeremiah Remains in Judah

¹The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in chains among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, that were carried away captive unto Babylon. ²And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him: 'The LORD thy God pronounced this evil upon this place; ³and the LORD hath brought it, and done according as He spoke; because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not hearkened to His voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. ⁴And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which are upon thy hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come, and I will look well unto thee; but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear; behold, all the land is before thee; whither it seemeth good and right unto thee to go, thither go.—⁵Yet he would not go back.—Go back then to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people; or go wheresoever it seemeth right unto thee to go.' So the captain of the guard gave him an allowance and a present, and let him go. ⁶Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

Gedaliah Governs in Judah

(2 Kings 25:22–24)

⁷Now when all the captains of the forces that were in the fields, even they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of the poorest of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon; ⁸then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men. ⁹And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan swore unto them and to their men, saying: 'Fear not to serve the Chaldeans; dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. ¹⁰As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to stand before the Chaldeans that may come unto us; but ye, gather ye wine and summer fruits and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken.' ¹¹Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, and among the children of Ammon, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan; ¹²then all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits in great abundance.

The Plot against Gedaliah

¹³Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, ¹⁴and said unto him: 'Dost thou know that Baalis the king of the children of Ammon hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take thy life?' But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. ¹⁵Then Johanan the son of Kareah spoke to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying: 'Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know it; wherefore should he take thy life, that all the Jews that are gathered unto thee should be scattered,

and the remnant of Judah perish?' **16**But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah: 'Thou shalt not do this thing; for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.'