

### Gedaliah Urges the Judahite Army to Stay and Settle Down (c. Sep/Oct 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:23–24	Jeremiah 40:7–12
<p>23 All of the officers of the Judahite army and their troops heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah to govern.</p> <p>So they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite.</p> <p>24 Gedaliah took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety. He said, “You don’t need to be afraid to submit to the Babylonian officials. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you.”</p>	<p>7 Now some of the officers of the Judean army and their troops had been hiding in the countryside. They heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam to govern the country. They also heard that he had been put in charge over the men, women, and children from the poorer classes of the land who had not been carried off into exile in Babylon.</p> <p>8 So all these officers and their troops came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah son of the Maacathite.</p> <p>9 Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety. “Do not be afraid to submit to the Babylonians. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you.</p> <p>10 I for my part will stay at Mizpah to represent you before the Babylonians whenever they come to us. You for your part go ahead and harvest the wine, the dates, the figs, and the olive oil, and store them in jars. Go ahead and settle down in the towns that you have taken over.”</p> <p>11 Moreover, all the Judeans who were in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and all the other countries heard what had happened. They heard that the king of Babylon had allowed some people to stay in Judah and that he had appointed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, to govern them.</p> <p>12 So all these Judeans returned to the land of Judah from the places where they had been scattered. They came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. Thus they harvested a large amount of wine and dates and figs.</p>

### The Ammonite Scheme: Ishmael Assassinates Gedaliah (October 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:25	Jeremiah 40:13–41:3
<p>25 But in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, who was a member of the royal family, came with ten of his men</p>	<p>40:13 Johanan and all the officers of the troops that had been hiding in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah.</p> <p>14 They said to him, “Are you at all aware that King Baalis of Ammon has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to kill you?” But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them.</p> <p>15 Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah there at Mizpah, “Let me go and kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah before anyone knows about it. Otherwise he will kill you and all the Judeans who have rallied around you will be scattered. Then what remains of Judah will disappear.”</p> <p>16 But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, “Do not do that because what you are saying about Ishmael is not true.”</p> <p>41:1 But in the seventh month Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama who was a member of the royal family and had been one of Zedekiah’s chief officers, came with ten of his men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah. While they were eating a meal together with him there at Mizpah,</p> <p>2 Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him</p>

<p>and murdered Gedaliah,</p> <p>as well as the Judeans and Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah.</p>	<p>stood up, pulled out their swords, and killed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. Thus Ishmael killed the man that the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.</p> <p>3 Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah and the Babylonian soldiers who happened to be there.</p>
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### The Ammonite Scheme: Johanan Defeats Ishmael (October 587 BC)

Jeremiah 41:4–15

- 4 On the day after Gedaliah had been murdered, before anyone even knew about it,
- 5 eighty men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. They had shaved off their beards, torn their clothes, and cut themselves to show they were mourning. They were carrying grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem.
- 6 Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them. He was pretending to cry as he walked along. When he met them, he said to them, “Come with me to meet Gedaliah son of Ahikam.”
- 7 But as soon as they were inside the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them and threw their bodies in a cistern.
- 8 But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, “Do not kill us. For we will give you the stores of wheat, barley, olive oil, and honey we have hidden in a field. So he spared their lives and did not kill them along with the rest.
- 9 Now the cistern where Ishmael threw all the dead bodies of those he had killed was a large one that King Asa had constructed as part of his defenses against King Baasha of Israel. Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it with dead bodies.
- 10 Then Ishmael took captive all the people who were still left alive in Mizpah. This included the royal princesses and all the rest of the people in Mizpah that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had put under the authority of Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah took all these people captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.
- 11 Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him heard about all the atrocities that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had committed.
- 12 So they took all their troops and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They caught up with him near the large pool at Gibeon.
- 13 When all the people that Ishmael had taken captive saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers with him, they were glad.
- 14 All those people that Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned and went over to Johanan son of Kareah.
- 15 But Ishmael son of Nethaniah managed to escape from Johanan along with eight of his men, and he went on over to Ammon.

### Johanan and the Remnant Decide to Flee to Egypt (October 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:26

Jeremiah 41:16–18

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| <p>26 Then all the people, from the youngest to the oldest, as well as the army officers, left for Egypt,</p> <p>because they were afraid of what the Babylonians might do.</p> | <p>16 Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him led off all the people who had been left alive at Mizpah. They had rescued them from Ishmael son of Nethaniah after he killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. They led off the men, women, children, soldiers, and court officials whom they had brought away from Gibeon.</p> <p>17 They</p> <p>set out to go to Egypt to get away from the Babylonians, but stopped at Geruth Kimham near Bethlehem.</p> <p>18 They were afraid of what the Babylonians might do because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.</p> |
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### The Flight to Egypt (c. November–December 587 BC)

Jeremiah 42:1–43:7

#### The People Ask Jeremiah to Speak to God on Their Behalf

- 42:1 Then all the army officers, including Johanan son of Kareah and Jezaniah son of Hoshaiah and all the people of every class, went to the prophet Jeremiah.

2 They said to him, "Please grant our request and pray to the LORD your God for all those of us who are still left alive here. For, as you yourself can see, there are only a few of us left out of the many there were before.

3 Pray that the LORD your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do."

4 The prophet Jeremiah answered them, "Agreed! I will indeed pray to the LORD your God as you have asked. I will tell you everything the LORD replies in response to you. I will not keep anything back from you."

### **The People Promise to Obey God**

5 They answered Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not do just as the LORD sends you to tell us to do.

6 We will obey what the LORD our God to whom we are sending you tells us to do. It does not matter whether we like what he tells us or not. We will obey what he tells us to do so that things will go well for us."

### **Jeremiah Tells the People What God Said**

7 Ten days later the LORD spoke to Jeremiah.

8 So Jeremiah summoned Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him and all the people of every class.

9 Then Jeremiah said to them, "You sent me to the LORD God of Israel to make your request known to him. Here is what he says to you:

10 'If you will just stay in this land, I will build you up. I will not tear you down. I will firmly plant you. I will not uproot you. For I am filled with sorrow because of the disaster that I have brought on you.

11 Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you now fear. Do not be afraid of him because I will be with you to save you and to rescue you from his power. I, the LORD, affirm it!

12 I will have compassion on you so that he in turn will have mercy on you and allow you to return to your land.'

13 "You must not disobey the LORD your God by saying, 'We will not stay in this land.'

14 You must not say, 'No, we will not stay. Instead we will go and live in the land of Egypt where we will not face war, or hear the enemy's trumpet calls, or starve for lack of food.'

15 If you people who remain in Judah do that, then listen to what the LORD says. The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you are so determined to go to Egypt that you go and settle there,

16 the wars you fear will catch up with you there in the land of Egypt. The starvation you are worried about will follow you there to Egypt. You will die there.

17 All the people who are determined to go and settle in Egypt will die from war, starvation, or disease. No one will survive or escape the disaster I will bring on them.'

18 For the LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you go to Egypt, I will pour out my wrath on you just as I poured out my anger and wrath on the citizens of Jerusalem. You will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse. You will never see this place again.'

19 "The LORD has told you people who remain in Judah, 'Do not go to Egypt.' Be very sure of this: I warn you here and now.

20 You are making a fatal mistake. For you sent me to the LORD your God and asked me, 'Pray to the LORD our God for us. Tell us what the LORD our God says and we will do it.'

21 This day I have told you what he said. But you do not want to obey the LORD by doing what he sent me to tell you.

22 So now be very sure of this: You will die from war, starvation, or disease in the place where you want to go and live."

### **The People Refuse to Believe Jeremiah**

43:1 Jeremiah finished telling all the people all these things the LORD their God had sent him to tell them.

2 Then Azariah son of Hoshaiiah, Johanan son of Kareah, and other arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The LORD our God did not send you to tell us, 'You must not go to Egypt and settle there.'

3 But Baruch son of Neriah is stirring you up against us. He wants to hand us over to the Babylonians so that they will kill us or carry us off into exile in Babylon."

### **The People Travel to Egypt and Take Jeremiah With Them**

4 So Johanan son of Kareah, all the army officers, and all the rest of the people did not obey the LORD's command to stay in the land.

5 Instead Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers led off all the Judean remnant who had come back to live in the land of Judah from all the nations where they had been scattered.

6 They also led off all the men, women, children, and royal princesses that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had left with Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. This included the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah.

7 They went on to Egypt because they refused to obey the LORD, and came to Tahpanhes.

## Jeremiah Confronts the Jews in Egypt for Their Idolatry (c. 587/586 BC)

Jeremiah 43:8–44:30

### Jeremiah's Prophecy of Nebuchadnezzar's Triumph over Egypt

43:8 At Tahpanhes the LORD spoke to Jeremiah.

9 "Take some large stones and bury them in the mortar of the clay pavement at the entrance of Pharaoh's residence here in Tahpanhes. Do it while the people of Judah present there are watching.

10 Then tell them, 'The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, "I will bring my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will set his throne over these stones which I have buried. He will pitch his royal tent over them.

11 He will come and attack Egypt. Those who are destined to die of disease will die of disease. Those who are destined to be carried off into exile will be carried off into exile. Those who are destined to die in war will die in war.

12 He will set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt. He will burn their gods or carry them off as captives. He will pick Egypt clean like a shepherd picks the lice from his clothing. He will leave there unharmed.

13 He will demolish the sacred pillars in the temple of the sun in Egypt and will burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt.'"

### Jeremiah Condemns the Jews' Idolatry in Egypt

44:1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who were living in the land of Egypt, those in Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, and in the region of southern Egypt.

2 "The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'You have seen all the disaster I brought on Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah. Indeed, they now lie in ruins and are deserted.

3 This happened because of the wickedness the people living there did. They made me angry by worshiping and offering sacrifice to other gods whom neither they nor you nor your ancestors previously knew.

4 I sent my servants the prophets to you people over and over again warning you not to do this disgusting thing I hate.

5 But the people of Jerusalem and Judah would not listen or pay any attention. They would not stop the wickedness they were doing nor quit sacrificing to other gods.

6 So my anger and my wrath were poured out and burned like a fire through the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. That is why they have become the desolate ruins that they are today.'

7 "So now the LORD, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, asks, 'Why will you do such great harm to yourselves? Why should every man, woman, child, and baby of yours be destroyed from the midst of Judah? Why should you leave yourselves without a remnant?

8 That is what will result from your making me angry by what you are doing. You are making me angry by sacrificing to other gods here in the land of Egypt where you live. You will be destroyed for doing that! You will become an example used in curses and an object of ridicule among all the nations of the earth.

9 Have you forgotten all the wicked things that have been done in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem by your ancestors, by the kings of Judah and their wives, by you and your wives?

10 To this day your people have shown no contrition! They have not revered me nor followed the laws and statutes I commanded you and your ancestors.'

11 "Because of this, the LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, 'I am determined to bring disaster on you, even to the point of destroying all the Judeans here.

12 I will see to it that all the Judean remnant that was determined to go and live in the land of Egypt will be destroyed. Here in the land of Egypt they will fall in battle or perish from starvation. People of every class will die in war or from starvation. They will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse.

13 I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt with war, starvation, and disease just as I punished Jerusalem.

14 None of the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive to return to the land of Judah. Though they long to return and live there, none of them shall return except a few fugitives.'"

### The Jews Reject Jeremiah's Warning and Proclaim Their Allegiance to the Queen of Heaven

15 Then all the men who were aware that their wives were sacrificing to other gods, as well as all their wives, answered Jeremiah. There was a great crowd of them representing all the people who lived in northern and southern Egypt. They answered,

16 "We will not listen to what you claim the LORD has spoken to us!

17 Instead we will do everything we vowed we would do. We will sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the goddess called the Queen of Heaven just as we and our ancestors, our kings, and our leaders previously did in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and had no troubles.

18 But ever since we stopped sacrificing and pouring out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven, we have been in great need. Our people have died in wars or of starvation."

19 The women added, "We did indeed sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven. But it was with the full knowledge and approval of our husbands that we made cakes in her image and poured out drink offerings to her."

**Jeremiah Condemns the People's Decision**

20 Then Jeremiah replied to all the people, both men and women, who responded to him in this way.

21 “The LORD did indeed remember and call to mind what you did! He remembered the sacrifices you and your ancestors, your kings, your leaders, and all the rest of the people of the land offered to other gods in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem.

22 Finally the LORD could no longer endure your wicked deeds and the disgusting things you did. That is why your land has become the desolate, uninhabited ruin that it is today. That is why it has become a proverbial example used in curses.

23 You have sacrificed to other gods! You have sinned against the LORD! You have not obeyed the LORD! You have not followed his laws, his statutes, and his decrees! That is why this disaster that is evident to this day has happened to you.”

24 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people, particularly to all the women. “Listen to what the LORD has to say all you people of Judah who are in Egypt.

25 The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, ‘You women have confirmed by your actions what you vowed with your lips! You said, “We will certainly carry out our vows to sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven.” Well, then fulfill your vows! Carry them out!’

26 But listen to what the LORD has to say, all you people of Judah who are living in the land of Egypt. The LORD says, ‘I hereby swear by my own great name that none of the people of Judah who are living anywhere in Egypt will ever again invoke my name in their oaths! Never again will any of them use it in an oath saying, “As surely as the Lord God lives....”’

27 I will indeed see to it that disaster, not prosperity, happens to them. All the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will die in war or from starvation until not one of them is left.

28 Some who survive in battle will return to the land of Judah from the land of Egypt. But they will be very few indeed! Then the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will know whose word proves true, mine or theirs.’

**A Sign of Coming Punishment**

29 Moreover the LORD says, ‘I will make something happen to prove that I will punish you in this place. I will do it so that you will know that my threats to bring disaster on you will prove true.

30 I, the LORD, promise that I will hand Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt over to his enemies who are seeking to kill him. I will do that just as surely as I handed King Zedekiah of Judah over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, his enemy who was seeking to kill him.”

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