Jeremiah

Chapter 38

1

Now Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur,
Jucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah
heard the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the
people. 2. Thus says the Lord, Those who stay in the city
shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but those
who go out to the Chaldeans shall live; they shall have their lives
as a prize of war, and live. 3. Thus says the Lord, This city
shall surely be handed over to the army of the King of
Babylon and be taken. 4. Then the officials said the King,
This man ought to be put to death, because he is discouraging
the soldiers who are left in this city, and all the people who
by speaking such words to them. For this man is not
seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm. 5. King
Zedekiah said, 'Here he is; he is in your hands, for the King is
powerless against you. 6. So they took Jeremiah and threw him
into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the
court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. Now
there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and Jeremiah
sank in the mud.

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7.

Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch in the king's ~~thous~~ house
heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. The
king happened to be sitting at the Benjamin Gate.
8. So Ebed-melech left the king's house and spoke to the
king. 9. "My lord king, these men have acted wickedly in
all they did to the prophet Jeremiah by throwing him
into the cistern to die there of hunger, for there is no
bread left in the city." 10. Then the king commanded Ebed-
-melech the Ethiopian "Take three men with you from here,
and pull the prophet Jeremiah up from the cistern before
he dies." 11. So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went
to the house of the king, to a wardrobe of the storehouse,
and took from there old rags and worn-out clothes, which
he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes. 12. Then
Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Just put the
rags and clothes between your armpits and the ropes."
Jeremiah did so.

13.

Then they drew Jeremiah up by the ropes and pulled him
out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the court of
the guard. 14. King Zedekiah sent for the prophet Jeremiah
and received him at the third entrance of the temple of
the Lord. The king said to Jeremiah, 'I have something
to ask you; do not hide anything from me.' 15. If I tell you,
you will put me to death, will you not? And if I give
you advice, you will not listen to me.' 16. So King Zedekiah
swore an oath in secret to Jeremiah, 'As the Lord lives, who
gave us our lives, I will not put you to death or hand you
over to these men who seek your life.' 17. Then Jeremiah said
to Zedekiah, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of Hosts, the God
of Israel, If you will only surrender to the officials of the
King of Babylon, then your life shall be spared, and this
city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house
shall live. 18 But if you do not surrender to the officials of
the king of Babylon, then this city shall be handed over
to the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you
yourself shall not escape from their hand.'

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19.

King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Judeans
who have deserted to the Chaldeans, for I might be handed over
to them and they would abuse me. 20. "Jeremiah said, "That will
not happen. Just obey the voice of the Lord in what I say
to you, and it shall go well with you, and life shall be spared.
21. But if you are determined not to surrender, this is what
the Lord has shown me ~ 22. a vision of all the women remain~
ing in the house of the king of Judah, being led out ~~the~~ to the
officials of the king of Babylon and saying, "Your trusted friends
have seduced you and have overcome you; Now that your
feet are stuck in the mud, they desert you." 23 All your
wives and your children shall be led out to the Chaldeans,
and you yourself shall not escape from their hand, but
shall be seized by the king of Babylon; and this city
shall be burned with fire. 24. Then Zedekiah said to
Jeremiah, "Do not let anyone else know of this
~~cons~~ conversation, or you will die.

25.

If the officials should hear that I have spoken with you,
"Just tell us what you said to the king; do not conceal it
from us, or we will put you to death. What did the king
say to you?" 26. then you shall say to them, "I was presenting
my plea to the king not to send me back to the house
of Jonathon to die there." 27. All the officials did come to
Jeremiah and questioned him; and he answered them
in the very words the king had commanded. So they
stopped questioning him, for the conversation had not
been overheard. 28. And Jeremiah remained in the court
of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

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1

In the ninth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the tenth
month, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and all his army
came against Jerusalem and besieged it; 2. in the eleventh
year of Zedekiah in the fourth month, on the ninth day
of the month, a breach was made in the city. 3. When
Jerusalem was taken, all the officials of the king of
Babylon came and sat in the middle gate: Nergal-
sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim the Rabsaris, Nergal-
sharezer the Rabmag, with all the rest of the officials of
the king of Babylon. 4. When King Zedekiah of Judah
and all the soldiers saw them, they fled, going out of
the city at night by way of the king's garden through
the gate between the two walls; and they went towards
the Arabah. 5. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued
them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho;
and when they had taken him, they brought him up
to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, at Riblah, in the
plains of Jericho; and when they had taken him, they
brought him up to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, at

5.

Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and he passed sentence
on him. 6 The King of Babylon slaughtered the sons of
Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes; also the king of
Babylon slaughtered all the nobles of Judah. 7 He put
out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters
to take him to Babylon. 8 The Chaldeans burned the
king's house and the houses of the people, and
broke down the walls of Jerusalem. 9 Then
Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard exiled to
Babylon the rest of the people who were left in the
city, those who had deserted to him, and the people
who remained. 10 Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard
left in the land of Judah some of the poor people
who owned nothing, and gave them vineyards and
fields at the same time. 11 King Nebuchadrezzar of
Babylon gave command concerning Jeremiah through
Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, saying,

12.
'Take him, look after him well and do him no harm, but
13.
deal with him as he may ask you.' So Nebuzaradan the
the captain of the guard, Nebushazban the Rabsaris,
Nergalsharezer the Rabmag, and all the chief officers of
14.
the king of Babylon sent and took Jeremiah from the
court of the guard. They entrusted him to Gedaliah the
son Ahikam son of Shaphan to be brought home. So he
15.
stayed with his own people. The word of the Lord came
to Jeremiah while he was confined in the court of the
16.
guard: Go and say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian: Thus
says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to
fulfil my words against this city for evil and not for
good, and they shall be accomplished in your presence on
17.
that day. But I will save you on that day, says the
Lord, and you shall not be handed over to those whom
18.
you dread. For I will surely save you, and you shall not
fall by the sword; but you shall have your life as a prize
of war, because you have trusted in me, says the Lord.

JEREMIAH

CHAPTER 40

Jeremiah 40

34 High Street Methodist Church, Harpenden

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord
after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard
had let him go from Ramah, when he took
him bound in fetters along with all the
captives of Jerusalem and Judah who were
being exiled to Babylon. 2 The captain of
the guard took Jeremiah and said to him,
'The Lord your God threatened this place with
disaster; 3 and now the Lord has brought
it about, and has done as he said, because
all of you sinned against the Lord and did
not obey his voice. Therefore this thing has
come upon you. 4 Now look, I have just released
you today from the fetters on your hands. If you
wish to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will
take good care of you; but if you do not wish to
come with me to Babylon, you need not come.
See, the whole land is before you; go wherever you
think it good and right to go. 5 If you remain, then
return to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan,

whom the king of Babylon appointed governor of the
towns of Judah, and stay with him among the
people; or go wherever you think it right to go.' So
the captain of the guard gave him an allowance
of food and a present, and let him go. 6 Then
Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at
Mizpah, and stayed with him among the people
who were left in the land.

7. When all the leaders of the forces in the open country
and their troops heard that the king of Babylon
had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam governor
in the land, and committed to him men, women and
children, those of the poorest of the land who had not
been taken into exile to Babylon, 8 they went to Gedaliah
son of Ahikam son of Shaphan. Swore to them
and their troops, saying, 'Do not be afraid to serve
the Chaldeans. Stay in the land and serve the
the king of Babylon, and it shall go well with
you.

* at Mizpah – Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, Jezaniah son of the Maacathite, they and their troops.
9. Gedaliah

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10. As for me, I am staying at Mizpah to represent you before the Chaldeans who come to us; but as for you, gather wine + summer fruits + oil, and store them in your vessels, and live in the towns that you have taken over.' 11. Likewise, when all the Judeans who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in other lands heard the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan as governor over them, 12. then all the Judeans returned from all the places to which they had been scattered and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah

at Mizpah; and they gathered wine and
summer fruits in great abundance.
13) Now Johanan son of Kareah and all the
leaders of the forces in the open country came
to Gedaliah at Mispah (14) and said to
him, 'Are you aware that Baalis king of the
Ammonites has sent Ishmael son of
Nethaniah to take your life?' But
Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe
them. (15) Then Johanan son of Kareah
spoke secretly to Gedaliah at Mispah,
'Please let me go and kill Ishmael son of
Nethaniah, and no one else will know.
Why should he take your life, so that all
the Judeans who are gathered around you
would be scattered, and the remnant of
Judah would perish? (16) But Gedaliah
son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of
Kareah, 'Do not do such a thing, for you
are telling a lie about Ishmael.'