

GOD'S ETERNAL WORD
Containing
THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS
of the
HOLY BIBLE

Translated from the original languages
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List of Abbreviations to use in Computer Searches

FINDING CHAPTERS

This version does not enable calling up a chapter and verse directly. To find a chapter, use Edit / Find (Ctrl f) and type in the required abbreviation below, followed by a space and then the chapter number and press Alt-f. In more recent versions of Windows, click Find and then More and remove the check in front of All Word forms. Then scroll down to the required verse. The abbreviation for each chapter is listed in hidden text at the beginning of each chapter. (Do not add a chapter number after Obd , 2 Jh, 3 Jh or Jd.) You can return to this list of abbreviations by using F5 and clicking Bookmark, then a, then Go to. Then use Esc to clear the box.

	Abbreviation	ECCLESIASTES	Eccl
GENESIS	Gn	SONG OF SOLOMON	SSol
EXODUS	Ex	ISAIAH	Isa
LEVITICUS	Lv	JEREMIAH	Jr
NUMBERS	Nm	LAMENTATIONS	Lam
DEUTERONOMY	Dt	EZEKIEL	Ezk
JOSHUA	Jos	DANIEL	Dn
JUDGES	Jdg	HOSEA	Hos
RUTH	Rth	JOEL	Jl
1 SAMUEL	1 Sm	AMOS	Ams
2 SAMUEL	2 Sm	OBADIAH	Obd
1 KINGS	1 Kng	JONAH	Jnh
2 KINGS	2 Kng	MICAH	Mch
1 CHRONICLES	1 Chr	NAHUM	Nah
2 CHRONICLES	2 Chr	HABAKKUK	Hbk
EZRA	Ezr	ZEPHANIAH	Zph
NEHEMIAH	Neh	HAGGAI	Hgg
ESTHER	Esth	ZECHARIAH	Zch
JOB	Jb	MALACHI	Ml
PSALMS	Ps		
PROVERBS	Prv		

MATTHEW	Mt	1 TIMOTHY	1 Tm
MARK	Mk	2 TIMOTHY	2 Tm
LUKE	Lk	TITUS	Tt
JOHN	Jn	PHILEMON	Plm
ACTS	Ac	HEBREWS	Hb
ROMANS	Rm	JAMES	Jm
1 CORINTHIANS	1 Cor	1 PETER	1 Pt
2 CORINTHIANS	2 Cor	2 PETER	2 Pt
GALATIANS	Gal	1 JOHN	1 Jh
EPHESIANS	Eph	2 JOHN	2 Jh
PHILIPPIANS	Plp	3 JOHN	3 Jh
COLOSSIANS	Col	JUDE	Jd
1 THESSALONIANS	1 Ths	REVELATION	Rv
2 THESSALONIANS	2 Ths		

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Preface

God-fearing translators work with the strong motivation of the redemption from sin and death that Jesus Christ has won for them. This motivates them to praise God and be humbly obedient for their great twofold task. They must be faithful in two respects in particular, faithful to the meaning of God's Word in the original and attuned to the nature of the receptor language.

Faithfulness to the original means honest grappling with the witness of Bible manuscripts and understanding of the biblical languages, Hebrew, some Aramaic and Greek. Personal preferences must never decide what the Word of God is and what is not. Let one example suffice. In the *KJV*, "out the book of life," in a passage that warns against adding or omitting (Revelation 22:19), cannot claim to be the Word of God. Erasmus had no Greek available for this section and translated back from the Vulgate, which had *libro* ("from the book") instead of *ligno* "from the tree." The Greek manuscripts affirm that "from the tree" is Word of God.

Those who ask, "Why another translation?" deserve an answer. Some recent translations have far too readily assumed that some readings in the Hebrew of the Old Testament were corrupt. They have often had recourse to Greek and other versions, which the footnotes in editions of the Hebrew text reproduced, instead of translating the Masoretic text and even put conjectures into the text as the Word of God. Several versions have designated these in footnotes as "corrections." Hebrew copyists had never tampered with the text. Even when they recognised that what they read differed from copyists' transmission of what the inspired authors had written, they placed what people were to read in the margin. The Dead Sea Scrolls have affirmed the accurate transmission of the Hebrew text in books such as Isaiah. Some translations have exposed their biases towards higher criticism.

An important principle in translation should be the rule that the context should determine the shades of meaning in words in the original, not the mere words themselves. "To shed blood" often meant, "to commit murder." However, it is wrong to replace the word "blood" by "death" in sacrificial and redemptive contexts. Lock-step translation of a word in the original Hebrew or Greek by the same equivalent in English is a barrier to intelligibility. An idiomatic translation does not try to retain the forms of the original languages but the meaning of the original, which is God's message.

Idiom should be appropriate for the people who speak the language. Idioms differ from one language to another and in a language over time. An American does not like saying that Stephen was "stoned," because they want to avoid suggesting that he was drunk! Luther was more successful in finding appropriate expressions in the receptor language than translators like Jerome had been before him. Hebrew had a meagre supply of adjectives and adverbs and often used nouns that depended on other nouns, where Modern English abounds in adjectives and adverbs. Modern English prefers to translate many event-nouns by verbs. People who have been translating the Scriptures in some third-world countries have shown the way towards the translation of abstracts, events and relations by the route of "kernel sentences" like "God declares me righteous" for "justification." They had to work in some languages without a passive voice and had to recast sentences in the active voice. Such expertise has shown the way to translation into Modern English. Grammatical spell-checkers in computers for Modern English call attention to passive formulations, which increase reading difficulty. Passives are wordier and are less precise if there is no mention of an agent or instrument. Jewish people who spoke Greek, including Jesus, often reverently avoided direct use of God's name through passive formulations like "will not be judged." Speakers of Modern English find difficulty with very long sentences, as Ephesians 1:3-14 is in the original Greek. In short, translators must be keenly aware of the language into which they are translating.

Some recent English translations handled well relational words such as connectives, prepositions and genitive nouns. Translators often ought to handle the Hebrew construct-absolute relation and the Greek genitive that depends on another noun in a broad variety of ways. They may have to render "the blessing of God" as "the blessing that God gives" or "our praising God." "The Promise of the Father" in Acts means, "the Spirit, whom the Father has promised." However, "the gift of the Spirit" is not "the charismatic gift that the Spirit gives," but "the Spirit, whom the Father gives."

What a translator chooses often has profound effects. Translators have often exposed their doctrinal biases when they have rendered relational words into English. Examples abound. Jerome's use of *gratia* for both *charis* (grace) and *charisma* (charismatic gift) led to the Roman Catholic understanding of God's grace as something in human beings. A crucial test for some translators has been the relationship of the two event nouns "repentance" and "forgiveness" in Mark 1:4, "preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." The translators of the *GNB* and the *CEV* have demonstrated their conviction that there is no direct relationship between baptism and God's forgiveness. Modern English often does not need to express parti-

cles in the original like “for” and “therefore” because they are obvious from the context. However, some translators have simply omitted theologically important relational words like “for” in passages like Galatians 3:26-27. The *GNB* reflects a Baptist bias. The *NIV* and some others reflect a Reformed bias. The *Jerusalem Bible* reflects a Roman Catholic bias when it frequently translates *dikaiosynê* by “justice” instead of “righteousness.” Some of the passages on which the Pentecostals base wrong doctrine (like “received the Holy Ghost since ye believed,” Acts 19:2) have been unfortunate translations in the *KJV* and they often refuse to use any other translation. Baptists rely heavily on the mistranslation “teach” as the main verb in Matt 28:19 before “baptising and teaching.”

In addition, Australian idiom is closer to British than to American usage. Bible translations from America often ignore the fact that the Greek Aorist was wider than the English past tense. It is appropriate to translate it by an English perfect tense in primary sequence when there is no definite reference to time. Therefore, “The Son of Man has come” is preferable when Jesus speaks to His disciples, rather than “The Son of Man came.” There is a difference between “Jesus rose from the dead on the third day” and “Jesus has risen from the dead.” The effect of the past event continues up to the present. The two Hebrew tenses had to cover the whole range of meaning in all the English tenses. Some translators have far too often ignored options such as the pluperfect and the perfect continuous for the Hebrew perfect and have often unnecessarily translated the Hebrew perfect as a present tense in English. The context often suggests that “I have been crying to You” is more appropriate than “I cried to You.” American translators unnecessarily avoid “may” in final clauses as if it were always permissive. In final clauses, they often use “might” in primary sequence and even “do,” “does,” “will,” and “can.” In historic sequence, they often use “could” or “would” instead of “might.” When you listen for the final clause in a collect in the liturgy, you can easily tell if it comes from America. Imperatives, in collects and everywhere else, are primary verbs.

People should acknowledge that their language changes over time. In formal written English, the use of “shall” and “will” is almost the opposite of what it was in 1611. Besides, modern spoken English often reflects a different usage from formal written English. In spoken English “I will” mostly does not mean, “I am determined to.” This translation consistently uses “shall” for the simple future after “I” and “We.”

Here is a paradox. There are good and bad ways to be literal. When we interpret the Scriptures, we usually require the literal meaning, not a figurative one as the intended one. Exceptions arise only when the context requires a figurative meaning. However, in translation, an idiomatic translation readily conveys the right meaning. A literal translation encourages people to allegorise when they have misunderstood the meaning.

Greek often preferred to subordinate one clause to another. Modern English, which is closer to Hebrew than Greek in this respect, prefers to co-ordinate ideas. Therefore, final verbs often replace participles.

Some translators should have been more aware of the need to retain key words as important bearers of meaning in some passages and contexts.

Translators into Modern English can often avoid Semitic idioms without being unfaithful to the meaning of the original. “And it came to pass” was a device that kept an expression of time away from the beginning of a sentence. Modern English does not feel the need for this. Hebrew often used a second verb of speaking or “saying” to introduce direct speech, where English simply uses inverted commas. Hebrew sometimes used the verb “add” to express repetition. “He added to do it” means, “He did it again.” Hebrew uses the word “if” to introduce a strong statement with the main clause omitted. “If I see him again (may God treat me severely)” means, “I shall certainly not see him again.” Hebrew often used the future indicative to express a command and a negative future to express a categorical command, as in the Ten Commandments. In the Commandments, “You shall not” is appropriate but not “Don’t”. Hebrew used expressions like “sons of” freely but English prefers to translate the meaning differently. “Israelites” or “people of Israel” catches the meaning of “sons of Israel.” “Wedding guests” is preferable to “sons of the wedding hall.” Hebrew often used a pronoun or adverb later in an adjectival clause to focus the meaning of a relative pronoun. These are redundant in English. “...Who...his” means, “...whose”. Hebrew sometimes expressed distributive ideas by repetition. “Two two” means, “in pairs,” or “two by two”. Most of these Semitic expressions occur also in the Greek of the New Testament.

Sometimes the loss of imagery in a translation is regrettable. That may happen when a translator goes for meaning only. Sometimes the imagery in the original makes it difficult for the English hearer to understand the meaning. Agricultural people understood about a bullock being “stiff-necked” when it refused to submit to a yoke. “Stubborn” may convey the meaning, at the loss of some of the imagery.

The translators of the *GNB* have often ruled out suggestive ambiguity by opting for one meaning. They should have recognised that putting in more words often limits meaning. “By water and by blood” has

fuller meaning than “by the water of His baptism and the blood of His death.”

Hebrew people often used parallelism in poetry. Translators should be cautious not to telescope the two parts of a parallelism, because it results, at least, in a loss of emphasis. Fine liturgical language, as Cranmer has shown, can result from carefully chosen synonyms used together. It is a pity when translators destroy parallelisms in the Psalms and elsewhere. Telescoping should not compress: “I shall be merciful to anyone to whom I am merciful; and I shall have compassion on anyone on whom I have compassion.” The *GNB* telescopes Exodus 33:19, for example.

English is not particularly fond of beginning sentences with “and” and “but.” Count the number of times this occurs in Mark Chapter 1 in the *KJV*. However, it is unnecessary to try to exclude “ands” and “buts” from the beginning of all sentences. Since the distinction between Law and Gospel is theologically important and part of this is the difference between imperatives and indicatives, this translation generally marks commands and prohibitions with an exclamation mark.

Masoretes and editors of the Greek New Testament did not add punctuation until later. A good translation should not rely on punctuation or capitalisation for meaning, because people obviously do not hear them.

According to English grammarians like Partridge, after a definite antecedent (a name or a noun with some way of defining it), a relative clause is essentially parenthetical. It adds more information and does not provide definition. Accordingly, a comma should regularly precede a parenthetical “which,” except when a preposition governs it. “That” without a comma before it should be the relative that introduces defining relative clauses.

In formal English, translators should avoid abbreviations like “can’t,” “don’t,” and “isn’t,” except where colloquial expressions are appropriate to the context.

Both Hebrew and Greek often did not add words like “only” and “other” where speakers of Modern English feel that they are necessary. The translator may supply these from the context without fearing the accusation that he is adding to God’s Word.

Hebrew and Greek often expressed a reflexive or an emphasising idea by using words like “body,” “soul,” and “spirit.” “Every soul” sometimes meant “everyone.” Jesus talked about exchanging one’s “soul” (or “life”) alongside of the expression “denying oneself.” “He poured out his soul” may mean, “He poured out himself.” In some Psalms, “My soul” is a rough equivalent for the personal pronoun. However, in contexts of death and dying, the Bible says different things about the body and the soul.

People who spoke Hebrew and Greek regularly used words like “heart” and “life” in the singular where English idiom prefers the plural. No one should criticise the use of plurals for these.

The headings and sub-headings owe much to those in *God’s Word to the Nations (NET)* but in Romans the headings follow the outline in Nygren’s commentary.

The Old Testament has gone a little further in avoiding “And” and “But” at the beginning of sentences and reducing the use of semi-colons.

This translation has capitalised personal pronouns that refer to God. It has used exclamation marks after sentences with imperatives, prohibitions and wishes. This second edition makes a few slight corrections, several resulting from further study. In the prophets paragraphing and quotation marks have made clearer the interplay between the words of the Lord and of His prophets.

Words in the Old Testament that are quoted or alluded to in the New Testament are in bold font and words in the New Testament that are quoted or alluded to in the Old Testament are also in bold font. The principle is that the New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is revealed in the New; and Christ is the centre of both.

In the third edition, more attention has been given to direct and reported speech in the OT prophets.

GENESIS

1

The account of the origin of the earth (1:1-2:4) — Job 38:4-11; John 1:1-5

¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the water. ³ God said, “**Let there be light!**”^{*1} And there was light.

⁴ God saw that the light was good. God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God named the light “day” and named the darkness “night.” There was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶ God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water!”

⁷ So, God made the expanse and separated the water below the expanse from the water above it. It was so.

⁸ God named the expanse “sky.” There was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹ God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let the dry land appear!”

It was so. ¹⁰ God named the dry land “earth,” and named the gathered water “seas.” God saw that it was good.

¹¹ God said, “Let the **earth sprout vegetation**: plants bearing seeds and fruit trees bearing fruit with seeds in it, each according to its kind!”

It was so. ¹² The **earth produced vegetation**: plants bearing seeds according to their own kinds and trees bearing fruit with seeds in it each according to its kind. God saw that it was good. ¹³ There was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴ God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night! Let them serve as signs to mark feasts, days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth!”

It was so. ¹⁶ God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day and the smaller light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night and to separate the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ There was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰ God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures and let flying creatures fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky!”

²¹ Therefore, God created the large sea creatures, every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds and every winged creature according to its kind. God saw that they were

good. ²² God blessed them and said: “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas; and let there be many flying creatures on the earth!”

²³ There was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴ God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: domestic animals, crawling animals and wild animals according to their kinds!”

It was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the domestic animals according to their kinds and every animal that crawls on the ground according to its kind. God saw that it was good.

²⁶ God said: “Let Us make man **in Our image, in Our likeness and** let them rule over the fish in the sea, over the flying creatures in the sky, over the domestic animals and over every kind of animal that crawls on the earth!”

²⁷ So, God created man **in His own image**. He created them **in God’s image**. **He created them male and female**.

²⁸ God blessed them and told them: “Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and bring it under your control! Rule over the fish in the sea, the flying creatures in the sky and over every kind of animal that crawls on the earth.

²⁹ God said: “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant on the face of all the earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ I have also given every green plant as food to every wild animal, to every flying creature in the sky and to every animal that crawls on the ground, to everything that has the breath of life.” It was so. ³¹ God saw all that He had made and, indeed, it was very good. There was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2

God’s rest on the seventh day

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in their entire vast array. ² By the seventh day God had completed the work that He had been doing. **Then, on the seventh day, He rested from all His work**, which He had done. ³ Therefore, God has blessed the seventh day and has set it apart as holy, because on that day He rested from all the work of creation that He had done.

⁴ This is the account of the origin of the heavens and the earth.

The family history of Adam (2:4b-5:1)

^{4b} When earth and sky were created, at the time when the LORD God made them, ⁵ there was yet no shrub of the field on the earth and no green plants were yet springing up in the field. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth. There was no man to farm the ground. ⁶ Surface-water used to go up from

¹ In this translation words in bold face are ones that are quoted or alluded to in the New Testament.

the earth and water the whole face of the ground.

God's forming of the first two human beings

⁷ Then the LORD God formed the **man from** the dust of **the ground** and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils and **the man became a living being.** ⁸ The LORD God had planted a garden in Eden, in the east and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹ The LORD God had caused every kind of tree that was pleasing to the eye and that was good **for food** to grow out of the ground. **The tree of life was in the middle of the garden,** as well as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ A river flowed from Eden to water the garden. From there it divided into four headwaters. ¹¹ The name of the first river is Pishon. This one flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² The gold of that land is good. Bdelium and onyx stone are also found there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon. This one winds around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris. This one flows east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden, to farm it and to take care of it.

¹⁶ The LORD God commanded the man: "Although you may freely eat from every tree of the garden,

¹⁷ you shall not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! For in the day when you eat from it you will surely die."

¹⁸ The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I shall make him a helper, suitable for him."

¹⁹ The LORD God had formed from the ground every beast of the field and every bird in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them. Whatever the man named each living creature, that became its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all the domestic animals, the birds in the sky and every wild animal. However, Adam did not find a helper who was suitable for him. ²¹ The LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep and, while the man was sleeping, He took out one of his ribs and closed its place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God fashioned the rib that He had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ The man said: "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She will be named 'woman,' because she has been taken from 'man.'" ²⁴ **Therefore, a man will leave his father and his mother. He will be united with his wife and they will become one flesh.** ²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked but were not ashamed.

3

Adam and Eve's fall into sin and the first promise of the Saviour — Rom 5:12-21

¹ **The snake** was more cunning than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He asked the woman, "Has God really said, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden!'"?

² The woman told the snake: "We may eat the fruit

from the trees in the garden. ³ However, God has said about the fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden: 'You shall not eat from it, and shall not touch it or you will die!'"

⁴ **The snake** told the woman, "You will certainly not die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was a delight to look at and that the tree was desirable for making someone wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. Then she also gave some to her husband, who was with her and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened and they realised that they were naked. Therefore, they sewed fig leaves together and made loin coverings for themselves.

⁸ At the time of the day when there was a breeze, the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden and hid from the presence of the LORD God among the trees in the garden. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to the man and asked him, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ The man said, "I heard Your voice in the garden and was afraid, because I was naked. So, I hid."

¹¹ He said, "Who has told you that you are naked? Have you eaten fruit from the tree from which I have commanded you not to eat?"

¹² Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it."

¹³ Then the LORD God asked the woman, "What is this that you have done?"

The woman said, "**The snake deceived me, and I ate.**"

¹⁴ Then the LORD God told the snake: "Because you have done this, you are cursed, more than any domestic animal and any wild animal. You will crawl on your belly and eat dust all the days of your life. ¹⁵ I shall make you and the woman hostile to each other and shall make your descendants and her Descendant hostile to each other. He will **crush** your head and you will crush His heel."

¹⁶ He told the woman: "I shall greatly increase your painful labour and your pregnancy. In pain you will give birth to children. You will yearn for your husband and he will rule over you."

¹⁷ Then to the man He said: "Because you have listened to what your wife has said and have eaten from the tree about which I had commanded you, 'You shall not eat from it!' the ground is **cursed** because of you. You will eat from it through painful toil all the days of your life. ¹⁸ It will cause both **thorns and thistles to grow** for you and you will eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ You will eat bread in the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground. For you were taken from it. For you are dust and you will return to dust."

²⁰ The man named his wife “Eve,”² because she was the mother of every living person.

²¹ Then the LORD God made tunics from skins for the man and his wife and clothed them.

²² Then the LORD God said: “Look! Man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil. However, that he may not reach out his hand and take **from the tree of life** as well and **eat** it, so that he would live for ever —.”

²³ Therefore, the LORD God sent him out of the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ He drove the man out and placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden with a flaming sword-blade, which turned in all directions, to guard the way to **the tree of life**.

4

Cain’s murder of Abel — Luke 11:51, Heb 11:4, Heb 12:24

¹ The man had relations with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, “I have acquired a man, the LORD.”

² Then she gave birth to his brother Abel. Abel was the shepherd of a flock of sheep, but Cain farmed the soil. ³ In the course of time, Cain brought some of what the ground produced as an offering to the LORD. ⁴ Abel also brought some first-born animals of his flock and some of their pieces of fat. The LORD looked favourably at Abel and his offering.

⁵ However, He did not look favourably at Cain and his offering. Cain became very angry and his face was downcast.

⁶ The LORD asked Cain: “Why are you angry and why has your face fallen? ⁷ If you do right, will you not be accepted? However, if you do not do right, sin is crouching at the door. It longs to get you, but you should master it!”

⁸ Cain spoke to his brother Abel. However, while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

⁹ Then the LORD asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

He answered, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

¹⁰ He asked: “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s spilt blood is **crying out to Me** from the ground. ¹¹ Therefore, you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s spilt blood from your hand. ¹² When you work the ground, it will no longer yield you its produce. You will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.”

¹³ Cain told the LORD: “My punishment is greater than I can endure. ¹⁴ Look! Today You have driven me from the face of the ground, and I shall be hidden from Your presence. I shall be a homeless wanderer on the earth, and anyone who finds me will kill me.”

¹⁵ However, the LORD told him, “Therefore, anyone

who kills Cain will meet with sevenfold retribution.”

Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to keep anyone who found him from killing him. ¹⁶ Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and lived in the land of Nod,³ to the east of Eden.

The family-line of Cain

¹⁷ Cain had relations with his wife, she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was building a city and named the city “Enoch,” after his son’s name.

¹⁸ Enoch was the father of Irad. Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael and Methushael was the father of Lamech.

¹⁹ Lamech married two women. One was named “Adah,” and the other was named “Zillah.” ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the father of those who live in tents and own livestock.

²¹ His brother’s name was “Jubal.” He was the father of all who play the lyre and the pipe. ²² Zillah also gave birth to Tubal-Cain. He was a smith, who taught every craftsman in copper and iron. Tubal-Cain’s sister was Naamah.

²³ Lamech told his wives: “Adah and Zillah, listen to me! You wives of Lamech, listen to what I say! ‘I have killed a man for bruising me, a boy for wounding me.’ ²⁴ If revenge is taken on Cain seven times as much, then on Lamech seventy-seven times as much.”

The birth of Seth

²⁵ Adam came together with his wife again. She gave birth to a son and named him “Seth,” saying, “It is because God has appointed another child for me instead of Abel. For Cain has killed Abel.”

²⁶ Seth also had a son and named him “Enosh.”

At that time, a beginning was made in calling on the name of the LORD.

5

¹ This is the family history of Adam.

The family history of Noah (5:3-6:9)

The account of the line from Adam to Noah — 1 Chron 1:1-4, Luke 3:36-38

^{1b} When God created man **He made him like God**.

² **He created them male and female**. He blessed them and named them “mankind” when He created them.³ When Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he had a son who was in his own likeness, in his own image, and named him “Seth.” ⁴ After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived for eight hundred years and had other sons and daughters. ⁵ Altogether, Adam lived for nine hundred and thirty years and died.

⁶ When Seth had lived for a hundred and five years, he became the father of Enosh. ⁷ After Seth became the father of Enosh, he lived for eight hundred and seven years and had other sons and daughters.

⁸ Altogether, Seth lived for nine hundred and twelve years and died.

² Eve means, “Life.”

³ Nod means, “Wandering.”

⁹ When Enosh had lived for ninety years, he became the father of Kenan. ¹⁰ After Enosh became the father of Kenan, he lived for eight hundred and fifteen years and had other sons and daughters. ¹¹ Altogether, Enosh lived for nine hundred and five years and died.

¹² When Kenan had lived for seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel. ¹³ After Kenan became the father of Mahalalel, he lived for eight hundred and forty years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁴ Altogether, Kenan lived for nine hundred and ten years and died.

¹⁵ When Mahalalel had lived for sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶ After Mahalalel became the father of Jared, he lived for eight hundred and thirty years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁷ Altogether, Mahalalel lived for eight hundred and ninety-five years and died.

¹⁸ When Jared had lived for one hundred and sixty-two years, he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹ After Jared became the father of Enoch, he lived for eight hundred years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰ Altogether, Jared lived for nine hundred and sixty-two years and died.

²¹ When Enoch had lived for sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah. ²² After Enoch became the father of Methuselah, he walked **with God** for three hundred years and had other sons and daughters. ²³ Altogether, Enoch lived for three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ Enoch walked **with God** and **then he was no more, because God took him away.**

²⁵ When Methuselah had lived for one hundred and eighty-seven years, he became the father of Lamech.

²⁶ After Methuselah became the father of Lamech, he lived for seven hundred and eighty-two years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁷ Altogether, Methuselah lived for nine hundred and sixty-nine years and died.

²⁸ When Lamech had lived for one hundred and eighty-two years, he had a son ²⁹ and named him "Noah."⁴ He said, "This child will bring us comfort from the work and painful toil of our hands because of the ground, which the LORD has cursed."

³⁰ After Lamech became the father of Noah, he lived for five hundred and ninety-five years and had other sons and daughters. ³¹ Altogether, Lamech lived for seven hundred and seventy-seven years and then he died. ³² After Noah was five hundred years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

6

The increasing wickedness in the world and God's intention to wipe out sinful mankind

¹ When mankind began to become numerous on the surface of the earth, daughters were born to them.

² The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful and married whatever women they chose.

³ Then the LORD said: "My Spirit will not struggle for ever with human beings because of their errors. They are sinful human nature. However, they will still live for a hundred and twenty years."

⁴ There were giants on the earth in those days, as well as later, when the sons of God had intercourse with the daughters of men, who gave birth to children by them. These were the heroes who were famous men from time long ago. ⁵ The LORD saw that the people on the earth were very wicked and that every tendency of the thoughts in their hearts was nothing but evil all the time. ⁶ The LORD regretted that He had made mankind on the earth and felt grieved in His heart.

⁷ The LORD said: "I shall wipe from the face of the ground the people whom I have created, both people, cattle, creeping things and birds of the sky, because I am sorry that I have made them."

⁸ However, the LORD regarded Noah kindly.

⁹ This is the family-history of Noah.

The family history of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth (6:10-10:1)

^{9b} Noah was a righteous man. He was blameless among the people of his time. Noah walked with God.

¹⁰ Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

¹¹ The world was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. ¹² God saw that the world was indeed corrupt, because every human being on earth had made his way of life corrupt.

The building of the ark

¹³ God told Noah: "The end of all human beings has come before Me, because the earth has become full of violence because of them. So, look! I am about to destroy them together with the earth. ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher-wood! Make compartments in the ark! Coat it inside and outside with tar! ¹⁵ This is how you shall make it: The ark shall be a hundred and fifty metres long, twenty-five metres wide and fifteen metres high! ¹⁶ Make a roof for the ark! Finish it to precisely fifty centimetres from the top! Put the door of the ark in the side of it! Build it with lower, second and third decks! ¹⁷ Look! I am about to bring flood water on the earth to destroy every being that has the breath of life under the sky. Everything that is on the earth will die. ¹⁸ However, I shall establish My Covenant with you: You shall go into the ark, you, your sons, your wife and your sons' wives with you! ¹⁹ You shall take two of every kind of living being, of every animal, into the ark, to keep them alive with you! They must be a male and a female! ²⁰ Two of every kind of bird, every kind of animal and every kind of creature that crawls on the ground will come to you to keep them alive. ²¹ You shall collect every kind of food that is eaten and store it with you, that it may be food for yourself and for them!"

²² Noah did exactly as God had commanded him. That is what he did.

7

⁴ Noah means, "Rest."

Genesis

The great flood — Luke 17:26-27

¹ The LORD told Noah: “Go into the ark, you and your whole family! For I have seen that you are righteous before Me among the people of today. ² Take with you seven pairs of every clean animal, a male and its female and a pair of the unclean animals, a male and its female! ³ Take also seven pairs of the birds of the sky, male and female, to keep their progeny alive all over the earth! ⁴ For after seven more days I shall make it rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights and shall wipe from the face of the ground every living creature that I have made.”

⁵ Noah did exactly as the LORD had commanded him.

⁶ Noah was six hundred years old when **the flood** water **came** on the earth. ⁷ **Noah**, his sons, his wife and his sons’ wives **went** with him **into the ark** to escape from the water of the flood. ⁸ Clean animals and unclean animals, birds and everything that crawls on the ground ⁹ came in pairs, male and female, to Noah in the ark as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ After seven days, the water of the flood came on the earth. ¹¹ In the six-hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month, on that day, all the springs of the great deep broke open, the windows of the heavens burst open, ¹² and the rain came down on the earth for forty days and forty nights. ¹³ On that very day Noah and Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, as well as Noah’s wife and his sons’ three wives, went with them into the ark. ¹⁴ They came, together with every wild animal according to its kind, every domestic animal according to its kind, every creature that crawls on the earth according to its kind and every bird according to its kind, every creature with wings. ¹⁵ They came in pairs to Noah in the ark out of all living creatures that had the breath of life in them. ¹⁶ Those that came in were male and female. Some of every kind of living creature came as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut him in. ¹⁷ For forty days the flood came on the earth. As the water increased, it lifted the ark, so that it rose high above the ground. ¹⁸ As the water swelled and became very deep on the earth, the ark floated on the surface of the water. ¹⁹ The water swelled extremely over the earth and all the high mountains under the entire sky were covered. ²⁰ They swelled seven and a half metres on top of the mountains, and they were covered. ²¹ Every living creature that moved on the earth died, including the birds, the tame animals, the wild animals, all the swarming creatures that teemed on the earth and every human being. ²² Everything that had in its nostrils the breath of the spirit of life, everything that was on the dry land, died. ²³ Therefore, God wiped out every living being that was on the surface of the ground, human beings, animals, crawling creatures and birds of the sky. They were wiped off the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark were left.

The end of the flood

²⁴ The water flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days.

8

¹ However, God remembered Noah, every wild animal and every tame animal that was with him in the ark. God made a wind blow over the earth and the water receded. ² The springs of the deep and the windows of the heavens had been stopped up and the rain from the sky had been kept back. ³ The water continued to recede from the earth, so that by the end of the one hundred and fifty days the water had gone down.

⁴ On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵ The water continued to decrease until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains appeared. ⁶ After forty more days, Noah opened the window that he had made in the ark ⁷ and sent out a raven. It kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. ⁸ Next, he sent out a dove, to find out if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. ⁹ However, when the dove could not find a place to set the sole of its foot, because there was water all over the whole earth, it came back to him at the ark. He put out his hand, caught the dove and brought it back into the ark with him. ¹⁰ After he had again waited for seven more days, he sent the dove out of the ark again. ¹¹ The dove came to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked leaf of an olive-tree! Then Noah knew that the water had subsided on the earth. ¹² After he had waited again for seven days more, he sent the dove out, and it did not come back to him any longer. ¹³ By the first day of the first month of the six hundred and first year of Noah, the water had dried up from the land. Then Noah took off the roof of the ark, looked out and saw that the surface of the ground had dried up.

¹⁴ By the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the earth had become dry. ¹⁵ Then God spoke to Noah, ¹⁶ “Come out of the ark, you and your wife, your sons and your sons’ wives with you! ¹⁷ Bring out with you every kind of living being that is with you, birds, domestic animals and every creature that crawls on the ground, that they may abound on the earth, have young and increase in number on the earth!”

¹⁸ Therefore, Noah came out together with his sons, his wife and his sons’ wives. ¹⁹ Every animal, every crawling creature and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, came out of the ark by their families.

²⁰ Noah built an altar to the LORD, took some of every kind of clean animal and every kind of clean bird and made a burnt offering on the altar. ²¹ When the LORD smelled the soothing aroma, the LORD told Himself: “I shall not curse the ground again because

of human beings. For what human beings think in their hearts is evil from their youth. Never again shall I kill every living thing, as I have done. ²² While the earth continues to exist, sowing and harvesting, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not cease.’

9

God's Covenant with Noah and his sons

¹ God blessed Noah and his sons. He told them: “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth! ² All the animals on the earth, all the birds of the sky, everything else that moves on the ground and all the fish in the sea will be afraid of you and be terrified by you. You have been given control over them. ³ You may eat any moving thing that has life. As I have given you the green plants, I have given you them all. ⁴ However, you shall not eat any meat that contains its life, that is, its blood! ⁵ I shall certainly demand an accounting for your lifeblood. I shall demand it from every animal and from human beings. I shall demand an accounting for the life of a human being from his fellowman. ⁶ If anyone sheds the blood of a human being, his blood should be shed by a human being! For God made human beings in His own image. ⁷ As for you, be fruitful and increase in number! Abound on the earth and become numerous on it!”

⁸ Then God told Noah and his sons with him: ⁹ “Look! I Myself am establishing My Covenant with you and with your descendants after you, ¹⁰ and with every living being that has been with you, the birds, the domestic animals and all the wild animals together with you. It is for all those that have come out of the ark, yes, for every living being on the earth. ¹¹ I shall establish My Covenant with you: Never again will the water of a flood cut off every living being. Never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

¹² God also said: “This is the sign of the Covenant that I am giving between Me and you and every living being that is with you, for all generations to come. ¹³ I have put My rainbow in the clouds that it may be a sign of the Covenant between Me and the earth.

¹⁴ Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵ I shall remember My Covenant, which is between Me and you and every living being with every kind of flesh. Never again will the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.

¹⁶ When the rainbow is in the clouds, I shall see it and remember the everlasting Covenant between God and every living being of every kind of flesh that is on the earth.”

¹⁷ God told Noah, “That is the sign of the Covenant that I have established between Me and all living beings that are on the earth.”

Noah's curse on Canaan and his blessing on Shem and Japheth

¹⁸ Noah's sons, who had come out of the ark, were Shem, Ham and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. ¹⁹ These were the three sons of Noah and from

them the people came who spread out all over the earth.

²⁰ Noah began to farm the soil and planted a vineyard.

²¹ He drank some of the wine, became drunk and exposed himself inside his tent. ²² When Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked, he told his two brothers outside. ²³ However, Shem and Japheth took his garment and the two of them laid it over their shoulders, walked backwards and covered their naked father. Because they faced the other way, they did not see their naked father. ²⁴ When Noah woke up from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵ Noah said, “Cursed be Canaan! He will be the lowest of slaves to his brothers.”

²⁶ He also said: “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem! ²⁷ May God provide ample space for Japheth! May Japheth live in the tents of Shem and may Canaan be his slave!”

²⁸ Noah lived for three hundred and fifty years after the flood. ²⁹ Altogether, Noah lived for nine hundred and fifty years and died.

10

¹ This is the family history of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Children were born to them after the flood.

The account of the nations descended from Japheth, Ham and Shem (10:2-11:10)

The descendants of Japheth — 1 Chronicles 1:4-7

² The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras. ³ The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah. ⁴ The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, the people of Cyprus and the Dodanim.*⁵ ⁵ From these the maritime nations branched off in their countries, each with its own language, by their clans inside their nations.

The descendants of Ham — 1 Chronicles 1:8-16

⁶ The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan. ⁷ The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

⁸ Cush became the father of Nimrod. Nimrod began to be a despot on the earth. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. That is why people say, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.”

¹⁰ Nimrod began his kingdom with Babylon, Erech, Akkad and Calneh, in the country of Shinar. ¹¹ From that country, he went out to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, ¹² and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah. That is the greatest city.

¹³ Mizraim was the father of the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, ¹⁴ Pathrus, Casluh (from whom the Philistines originated) and the people of Caphtor. ¹⁵ Canaan was the father of Sidon, his first-

⁵ The Septuagint reads: “and the people of Rhodes.”

born and then he had Heth,¹⁶ and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites,¹⁷ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,¹⁸ the Arvadites, the Zemarites and the Hamathites. Later the Canaanite clans dispersed.¹⁹ The boundary of the Canaanites extended from Sidon towards Gerar as far as Gaza and then towards Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.²⁰ These were the sons of Ham by their clans and languages, in their countries and their nations.

The descendants of Shem — Genesis 11:10-27, 1 Chronicles 1:17-27

²¹ Shem, Japheth's elder brother, also had children. He was the ancestor of all the sons of Eber.²² The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram.²³ The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether and Mash.²⁴ Arphaxad was the father of Shelah and Shelah was the father of Eber.²⁵ Eber had two sons. One had the name "Peleg,"²⁶ because in his time the earth was divided. His brother's name was "Joktan."²⁷ Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,²⁸ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,²⁹ Obal, Abimael, Sheba,³⁰ Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.³¹ The region where they lived extended from Mesha towards Sephar, in the eastern hill-country.³² These were the sons of Shem by their clans and their languages, in their countries according to their nations.³³ These were the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, inside their nations. From these the nations branched out in the world after the flood.

11

The confusion of languages at Babel

¹ The whole earth had one language with a common vocabulary.² As people journeyed from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.³ They told one another, "Come! Let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly!"

They had bricks for stones and tar for mortar.⁴ Then they said: "Come! Let us build a city for ourselves and a tower with its top in the sky, that we may make a name for ourselves and that we may not be scattered over the surface of the whole earth!"

⁵ The LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the sons of men had built.⁶ The LORD said: "Look! They are one people. They all have one language, and this is what they are beginning to do. Now nothing that they plan to do will be impossible for them.⁷ Come! Let Us go down there and confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech!"

⁸ So, the LORD scattered them from there all over the earth, and they ceased building the city.⁹ This is why it was named "Babel,"¹⁰ because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. From there, the

LORD scattered them all over the surface of the whole earth.

¹⁰ This is the family history of Shem.

The history of the family-line from Shem to Terah and Abram (11:10-11:26) — 1 Chronicles 1:17-23, Luke 3:34-36

^{10b} Shem was one hundred when he became the father of Arphaxad, two years after the flood.¹¹ After Shem became the father of Arphaxad, he lived for five hundred years and had other sons and daughters.

¹² When Arphaxad had lived for thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah.¹³ After Arphaxad became the father of Shelah, he lived for four hundred and three years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁴ When Shelah had lived for thirty years, he became the father of Eber.¹⁵ After Shelah became the father of Eber, he lived for four hundred and three years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁶ When Eber had lived thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg.¹⁷ After Eber became the father of Peleg, he lived for four hundred and thirty years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁸ When Peleg had lived for thirty years, he became the father of Reu.¹⁹ After Peleg became the father of Reu, he lived for two hundred and nine years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰ When Reu had lived for thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug.²¹ After Reu became the father of Serug, he lived for two hundred and seven years and had other sons and daughters.

²² When Serug had lived for thirty years, he became the father of Nahor.²³ After Serug became the father of Nahor, he lived for two hundred years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁴ When Nahor had lived for twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah.²⁵ After Nahor became the father of Terah, he lived for one hundred and nineteen years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁶ After Terah had lived for seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.

²⁷ This is the family history of Terah.

The family-history of Abram, Lot, Hagar and Ishmael and Isaac (11:27-25:19)

^{27b} Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot.²⁸ Haran died while his father Terah was still with him in Ur of the Chaldeans, in his native land.²⁹ Abram and Nahor married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milcah and Iscah.³⁰ Sarai was barren. She had no children.

³¹ Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, the son of Haran and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son, Abram, and together they left Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the country of Canaan. However, when they came to Haran, they settled there.³² Terah lived for two hundred and five years. Terah died in Haran.

⁶ Eber is the origin of the word "Hebrews."

⁷ Peleg means, "Division."

⁸ Babel means, "Gate of God."

12

God's first promise to Abram — Acts 7:2-5

¹ The LORD had told Abram: “**Leave your land, your relatives and your father’s family and go to the land that I shall show you!** ² I shall make you into a great nation. I shall bless you. I shall make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I shall bless those who bless you and shall curse him who curses you and **in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.**”

The arrival of Abram in the promised land and the second promise to Abram

⁴ Therefore, Abram left, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when **he left** Haran. ⁵ Abram took his wife Sarai, his brother’s son Lot and all the possessions that they had accumulated, as well as the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they arrived in the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram travelled through the land to the place at Shechem, to the large tree of Moreh. The Canaanites were then in the land. ⁷ The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “**I shall give this land to your offspring.**”

Therefore, he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ He moved on from there to the hill-country east of Bethel and put up his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. ⁹ Then Abram broke camp and continued to move on toward the Negev.

Abram's deception of Pharaoh in Egypt — compare similar incidents in 20:1-18, 26:1-11

¹⁰ There was a famine in the land and Abram went down to Egypt to stay there as a foreigner for a while, because the famine was severe in the land. ¹¹ When Abram came close to Egypt and was about to enter it, he told his wife Sarai: “Please listen! I know that you look beautiful. ¹² When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ They will kill me but let you live. ¹³ Please say that you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and I may stay alive because of you!”

¹⁴ When Abram came into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. ¹⁵ When Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they commended her to Pharaoh and the woman was taken to his palace. ¹⁶ He treated Abram well for her sake and Abram obtained sheep, cattle, male donkeys, menservants, maidservants, female donkeys and camels.

¹⁷ However, the LORD inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram’s wife Sarai. ¹⁸ Pharaoh summoned Abram and asked: “What is this that you have done to me? Why have you not told me that she is your wife? ¹⁹ Why have you said, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I have taken her to be my wife? Now therefore, here is your wife. Take her and go away!”

²⁰ Pharaoh gave some men orders about Abram, and they sent him away, with his wife and everything that he had.

13

The separation of Lot from Abram

¹ Therefore, Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything that he had, and Lot went with him. ² Abram had become very rich in livestock, silver and gold. ³ He often moved camp and went from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been the first time, ⁴ the place where he had first made the altar. Abram called on the name of the LORD there.

⁵ Lot, who was accompanying Abram, also had flocks, herds and tents. ⁶ However, the land could not support them, so that they could live together. For their possessions were too great for them to be able to live together. ⁷ The men who were minding Abram’s herds quarrelled with those who were minding Lot’s herds. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the country at that time. ⁸ Therefore, Abram told Lot: “Please, let there be no quarrelling between you and me or between your herdsmen and mine! For we are relatives. ⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me! If you go to the left, I shall go to the right. If you go to the right, I shall go to the left.”

¹⁰ Lot looked up and saw that the whole wide area of the Jordan was well watered everywhere towards Zoar, like the garden of the LORD and like the land of Egypt. This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. ¹¹ Then Lot chose for himself the whole wide area of the Jordan and set out to the east. So, they separated from each other. ¹² Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and moved his tents as far as Sodom. ¹³ The men of Sodom were wicked and very sinful against the LORD.

The third promise to Abram

¹⁴ After Lot moved away from Abram, the LORD told Abram: “Lift up your eyes from the place where you are and look to the north, to the south, to the east and to the west! ¹⁵ For **I shall give** all the land that you see **to you and to your offspring** for ever. ¹⁶ I shall also make your descendants like the dust of the earth, so that, if anyone could count the dust of the earth, your descendants could also be counted. ¹⁷ Get up and walk through the length and breadth of the land! For I shall give it to you.”

¹⁸ Then Abram moved his tents and went to live beside the large trees of Mamre, which are at Hebron. There he built an altar to the LORD.

14

Abram's rescue of Lot and the people of Sodom

¹ At the time when Amraphel was the king of Shinar, Arioch was the king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer was the

king of Elam and Tidal was the king of Goiim, ² these kings made war against Bera, the king of Sodom, Birsha, the king of Gomorrah, Shinab, the king of Admah, Shemeber, the king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). ³ All these latter kings joined their forces in the valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). ⁴ They had been subject to Chedorlaomer for twelve years but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. ⁵ In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him had come and defeated the Rephaites at Ashteroth-Karnaim, the Zuzites at Ham, the Emites in the plain of Kiriathaim ⁶ and the Horites in their hill-country of Seir, as far as El-Paran, which is near the desert. ⁷ Then they had turned back and gone to En-Mishpat (that is, Kadesh) and had defeated the whole domain of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon-Tamar. ⁸ Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and drew up in battle order against them in the Valley of Siddim ⁹ against Chedorlaomer, the king of Elam, Tidal, the king of Goiim, Amraphel, the king of Shinar and Arioch, the king of Ellasar. Four kings were against five. ¹⁰ The valley of Siddim had many bitumen pits. When the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some men fell into them and the rest fled to the hill-country. ¹¹ The enemy seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food and went away. ¹² They also took Abram's nephew Lot and his goods and departed. Lot had been living in Sodom. ¹³ Someone who had escaped came and reported this to Abram, the Hebrew. Abram was living near the large trees of Mamre, who was an Amorite, a brother of Eshcol and Aner. They were allies of Abram. ¹⁴ When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his three hundred and eighteen followers, who were slaves born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan. ¹⁵ He and his servants split up, attacked them by night, defeated them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶ He brought back all the goods and brought back his relative Lot with his goods, as well as the women and the other people.

¹⁷ **After Abram had defeated Chedorlaomer and the kings with him and had come back**, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of the Plain (that is, the King's Valley).

The blessing of Abram by Melchizedek — Hebrews 7:1-2

¹⁸ **Then Melchizedek, the king of Salem** brought out bread and wine. He was **the priest of God Most High**. ¹⁹ He **blessed Abram**, saying: "May Abram be blessed by God Most High, the Creator of heaven and earth! ²⁰ May God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hands, also be blessed!"

Then **Abram gave him a tenth** of everything.

²¹ The king of Sodom told Abram, "Give me the people but take the goods for yourself!"

²² However, Abram answered the king of Sodom: "**I have raised my hand to the LORD**, to God Most High, the **Maker of heaven and earth**, ²³ that I shall certainly not take anything that belongs to you, not even a thread or a sandal-thong, that you may not say, 'I have made Abram rich.' ²⁴ The only exceptions are what the young men have eaten and the share of the men who have come with me. As for Aner, Eshcol and Mamre, let them take their share!"

15

God's fourth promise to Abram and His Covenant with him — Hebrews 11:8-10

¹ After this, the Word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram! I am your Shield and your very great Reward."

² Abram asked: "O Lord GOD, what will You give me? For I continue to be childless and the one who will become the heir of my household is Eliezer of Damascus."

³ Then Abram also said, "Look! You have given me no offspring and so a member of my household will be my heir."

⁴ Then the Word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but one who comes from your own body will be your heir."

⁵ He took Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count **the stars**, if you can count them!"

He also told him, "**Your offspring will be like them!**"

⁶ **Abram believed the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness.**

⁷ God also told Abram, "I am the LORD and have brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit."

⁸ However, Abram asked, "O Lord GOD, how can I know that I shall inherit it?"

⁹ He told Abram, "Bring Me a young cow three years old, a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtle-dove and a young pigeon!"

¹⁰ Abram brought all these for Him. Then he cut them into halves and laid each half opposite its corresponding piece. However, he did not cut the birds into halves. ¹¹ When birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram frightened them away. ¹² While the sun was going down, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and then a **dreadful, deep** darkness came over Abram.

¹³ God **told Abram**: "You should know for certain that **your descendants will be strangers in a country that is not their own, where they will serve them as slaves! They will subdue them for four hundred years.** ¹⁴ However, **I shall also judge the nation whom they serve, and after that they will leave with many possessions.** ¹⁵ You yourself will go to your fathers in peace. You will be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶ The fourth generation will come back here. For the **iniquity** of the Amorites has not yet **reached its full measure.**"

¹⁷ After the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch appeared and passed between those pieces. ¹⁸ On that day, the LORD made a Covenant with Abram. He said: “I have given this land to your descendants, from the river of Egypt **as far as the great river**, the river **Euphrates**, ¹⁹ where the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaites, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites are.”

16

The birth of Abram's son Ishmael from his maidservant Hagar

¹ Abram's wife Sarai had not borne him any children. However, she had an Egyptian maidservant, whose name was Hagar. ² So, Sarai told Abram, “Look! Since the LORD has prevented me from bearing children, please cohabit with my maid! Perhaps I shall get a child from her.”

Abram agreed to what Sarai had told him. ³ Therefore, after Abram had been living in Canaan for ten years, Sarai, Abram's wife, took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband, Abram, to be his wife. ⁴ He cohabited with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When she knew that she was pregnant, she despised her mistress. ⁵ Then Sarai told Abram: “You are responsible for the wrong that I am suffering. I put my maidservant into your embrace, and, now that she has seen that she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me!”

⁶ Abram told Sarai: “Look! Your maidservant is under your control. Do to her what you think is best!”

Then Sarai humiliated her, so that she ran away from her. ⁷ However, the Angel of the LORD found her at a spring of water in the wilderness. It was the spring on the road to Shur. ⁸ He said, “Hagar, Sarai's maidservant, where have you come from and where are you going?”

She answered, “I am running away from my mistress Sarai.”

⁹ The Angel of the LORD told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit yourself to her control!” ¹⁰ The Angel of the LORD also told her, “I shall indeed give you so many descendants that they will be too many to be counted.”

¹¹ The Angel of the LORD also told her: “Look! You are pregnant. You will have a son and you shall name him ‘Ishmael’!” ⁹ For the LORD has heard about your affliction. ¹² He will be a wild donkey of a man. His hand will be against everyone, else and everyone else's hand will be against him. He will live in opposition to all his relatives.”

¹³ She gave the name “El-Roi” ¹⁰ to the LORD, who had been talking to her. For, she said, “Have I, even here, seen the back of Him who is looking after me?”

¹⁴ That is why the well has been called, “Beer-Lahai-Roi.” ¹¹ It is there, between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵ Hagar bore Abram a son and Abram named his son, to whom Hagar had given birth, “Ishmael.” ¹⁶ Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

17

God's fifth promise to Abram, followed by circumcision — Exodus 12:43-13:2.

¹ When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and told him: “I am God Almighty. Live in My presence and be blameless! ² I shall make My Covenant between Me and you and shall give you very many descendants.”

³ Abram fell face-down, and God spoke to him:

⁴ “This is My very own Covenant with you. You will be the father of many nations. ⁵ You will not be called ‘Abram’ any longer, but your name will be ‘Abraham,’ ¹² because **I have made you a father of many nations**. ⁶ I shall make you extremely fruitful, **I shall make nations of you** and kings will come from you.

⁷ I shall establish My Covenant between Me and **you and your descendants** after you for generations to come. It will be an everlasting Covenant, that **I may be your God** and the God of your descendants after you. ⁸ I shall also give you and your descendants after you the land in which you are living as a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as their property for ever. I shall also be their God.”

⁹ Then God told Abraham: “You shall keep My Covenant, you and your descendants after you in their generations! ¹⁰ This is My **Covenant**, which you shall keep, between Me, your people and your descendants after you: Every male among you must **be circumcised!** ¹¹ You shall have yourselves **circumcised** in the flesh of your foreskins, and that will be **the mark** of the Covenant between Me and you! ¹² When any boy among you is eight days old, he shall be circumcised, every male in your coming generations, whether he is born in the household or purchased with money from any foreigner who is not one of your descendants! ¹³ Every boy born in your household or purchased with your money shall certainly be circumcised, that My Covenant in your flesh may be an everlasting Covenant! ¹⁴ If any male is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people! He has broken My Covenant.”

The promise of Isaac's birth

¹⁵ God also told Abraham: “As for your wife Sarai, you shall not call her ‘Sarai,’ but her name shall be ‘Sarah’! ¹³ ¹⁶ I shall bless her and have also given you a son from her. I shall bless her, and she will become the mother of nations. Kings of peoples will come from her.”

⁹ Ishmael means, “God hears.”

¹⁰ El-Roi means, “God sees me.”

¹¹ Beer-Lahai-Roi means, “Well of the Living One, who sees me.”

¹² Abram means, “High father” and Abraham means, “Father of many.”

¹³ Sarah means, “Princess.”

¹⁷ Abraham fell face-down and laughed. He asked himself. “Will a son be born to a man when he is a hundred years old? Or will Sarah have a child when she is ninety?”

¹⁸ Then Abraham told God, “If only Ishmael might live in Your presence!”

¹⁹ God said: “On the contrary! Your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you shall name him ‘Isaac’!¹⁴ I shall establish My Covenant with him as an everlasting Covenant with his descendants after him. ²⁰ I have heard you also concerning Ishmael. Look! I have blessed him and shall make him fruitful. I shall make him exceedingly many. He will be the father of twelve princes, and I shall make him into a great nation. ²¹ Nevertheless, I shall establish My Covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this fixed time next year.”

²² When God had finished speaking to Abraham, He went up from him.

The circumcision of Abraham’s household

²³ Abraham took his son Ishmael, every slave who had been born in his household and everyone whom he had bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s household and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins on that very day, as God had told him. ²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ His son Ishmael was thirteen when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ On that very same day, Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. ²⁷ All the men of his household, the slaves who had been born in the household and those who had been bought with money from a foreigner were circumcised with him.

18

Abraham’s hospitality to visitors, God’s sixth promise to Abraham and the promise of a son — Hebrews 13:2

¹ The LORD appeared to Abraham beside the large trees of Mamre when he was sitting at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. ² When Abraham looked up, he suddenly saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed down to the ground.

³ Abraham said: “My Lord, if I have now found favour in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by! ⁴ Please let a little water be brought! Wash your feet and rest yourselves under the tree! ⁵ Let me bring some bread! Then you may refresh yourselves. After that you may go on your way, since this is why you have come to your servant.”

They answered, “Do as you have said!”

⁶ Therefore, Abraham hurried to Sarah in the tent. He said, “Quickly, get seven litres of fine flour, knead it and make some bread-cakes!”

⁷ Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf that was

tender and good and gave it to his servant, who quickly prepared it. ⁸ He also took curds and milk as well as the calf that he had prepared and set these before them. Then he stood beside them under the tree while they ate.

⁹ They asked him, “Where is your wife, Sarah?” He answered, “There, in the tent.”

¹⁰ Then the LORD said, “**I shall surely return to you about this time next year and, indeed, your wife Sarah will have a son.**”

Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind Him. ¹¹ Abraham and Sarah were old and well advanced in years, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. ¹² Sarah laughed to herself, thinking, “Now that I am worn out, shall I have pleasure? What is more, my lord is old.”

¹³ The LORD asked Abraham: “Why has Sarah laughed and asked, ‘Shall I really bear a child now that I am old?’ ¹⁴ **Is anything too difficult for the LORD? When I come back to you about this time next year, Sarah will have a son.**”

¹⁵ Sarah denied it, saying, “I did not laugh.”

For she was afraid. However, He said, “Not so, but you did laugh.”

God’s disclosure of His plan to destroy Sodom

¹⁶ When the men stood up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom and Abraham kept walking along with them to send them on their way. ¹⁷ The LORD said: “Should I hide from Abraham what I am going to do, ¹⁸ since Abraham will certainly become a great and powerful nation, and **all nations of the earth will be blessed in him?** ¹⁹ For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his family after him to keep the Way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, that the LORD may bring about for Abraham what He has promised about him.”

²⁰ Then the LORD said: “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is certainly great, and their sin is very serious. ²¹ I shall go down and see whether everything that they have been doing is entirely as bad as the outcry that has come to Me against them. If not, I shall know it.”

²² Then the men turned away from there and went on toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD.

Abraham’s intercession for Sodom

²³ Abraham came closer and asked: “Will You really sweep away the innocent person with the guilty person? ²⁴ Suppose there are fifty innocent people in the city. Will You really sweep them away? Will You not spare the place for the sake of the fifty innocent people who are in it? ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing, to kill the innocent person with the guilty person and treat the innocent person and the guilty person alike! Far be it from You! Will not the Judge of the entire earth do what is just?”

²⁶ The LORD said, “If at Sodom I find fifty innocent

¹⁴ Isaac means, “He laughs.”

people in the city, I shall spare the whole place for their sake.”

²⁷ Abraham answered: “Indeed now, although I am only dust and ashes, I have taken it on myself to speak to the LORD: ²⁸ Suppose there are five fewer than fifty innocent people? Will You destroy the whole city because of the five?”

He said, “I shall not destroy it if I find forty-five there.”

²⁹ Abraham spoke to Him yet again, “Suppose only forty are found there?”

He answered, “I shall not do it for the sake of forty.”

³⁰ Then he said, “Please let the Lord not be angry but let me speak! Suppose thirty are found there?”

He answered, “I shall not do it if I find thirty there.”

³¹ He said, “Indeed now, I have taken it on myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there?”

He answered, “I shall not destroy it for the sake of the twenty.”

³² He said, “Please let the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more! Suppose only ten are found there?”

He answered, “I shall not destroy it for the sake of the ten.”

³³ When the LORD had finished speaking to Abraham, He left, and Abraham returned home.

19

The wickedness of the people of Sodom and their assault on Lot's guests

¹ The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, while Lot was sitting in the gateway of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face toward the ground. ² He said, “Please, my masters, please turn in at your servant's home and spend the night! Wash your feet! Then you may get up early and go on your way.”

However, they said, “No! We shall spend the night in the open square.”

³ Nevertheless, he urged them very strongly so that they turned in with him. They went into his home, and he prepared a dinner for them. He baked bread without yeast, and they ate it. ⁴ Before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house. ⁵ They called to Lot and asked him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have intercourse with them!”

⁶ Lot went out to them at the doorway and shut the door behind him. ⁷ He said: “Please, my friends, do not behave wickedly! ⁸ Please look! I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Please let me bring them out to you! Do whatever you like with them! Only do not do anything to these men! For this is the reason why they have come under the protection of my roof.”

⁹ However, they replied, “Stand farther back!” Then they said: “This one man has come here as a foreigner and has continually been acting as a judge! We shall

treat you more wickedly than those men.”

Then they urged Lot very strongly and moved closer to break down the door. ¹⁰ However, the men inside reached out their hands, pulled Lot towards them into the house and shut the door. ¹¹ They struck the men in front of the door of the house, both young and old, with dazzling light, so that they gave up trying to find the door.

Lot's rescue from Sodom and the destruction of the cities on the plain — Matthew 11:23-24, Luke 17:28-32

¹² Then the men asked Lot: “Have you anyone else here, a son-in-law, your sons, your daughters or anyone else whom you have in the city? Take them out of the place! ¹³ For we are about to destroy this place. For their outcry has become so loud in the presence of the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.”

¹⁴ Therefore, Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters. He said: “Get up! Come out of this place! For the LORD is about to destroy the city!”

However, his sons-in-law thought that he was joking.

¹⁵ When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot. They said: “Get up! Take your wife and your two daughters, who are here, that you may not be swept away when the city is punished!”

¹⁶ When he kept delaying, the men took him by the hand and took his wife by her hand and his two daughters by their hands, because the LORD was sparing him. Then they brought him out and set him outside of the city. ¹⁷ After they had brought them outside, one said: “Get yourselves to safety for the sake of your lives! Do not look behind and do not stop anywhere in the plain! Get to the hills for safety, that you may not be swept away!”

¹⁸ However, Lot told them: “No, my masters, please!

¹⁹ Please consider! Your servant has found favour in your sight, and You have been very kind to me by saving my life. However, I cannot get myself safely to the hill-country. Otherwise, the calamity will overtake me, and I shall die. ²⁰ Please look! This city is near enough to flee to and is a modest one. Please let me get myself there for safety! Is it not a modest one? Then I shall stay alive.”

²¹ He told him: “See! I have been favourable to you also in this matter. I shall not overthrow the city about which you have spoken. ²² Hurry! Get yourself there safely! For I cannot do anything until you arrive there.”

That is why the town was named “Zoar.”*¹⁵ ²³ The sun had risen over the country when Lot arrived at Zoar.

²⁴ Then the LORD rained **sulphur and fire** on Sodom and Gomorrah, **from** the LORD out of **heaven**. ²⁵ **He overthrew** those cities, the whole plain, all who were living in the cities and what was growing on the ground. ²⁶ However, Lot's wife **looked back** and

¹⁵ Zoar means, “Little.”

turned into a pillar of salt.

²⁷ Early in the morning Abraham got up and went to the place where he had stood before the LORD.

²⁸ When he looked down towards Sodom and Gomorrah and over the entire land of the plain, he saw that the **smoke** of the land **went up like the smoke of a furnace**. ²⁹ In this way, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, He remembered Abraham and brought Lot out of the destruction when He overthrew the cities where Lot had been living.

The birth of two sons of Lot by his own daughters, the origin of the Moabites and the Ammonites

³⁰ However, Lot went up out of Zoar and settled in the hill-country with his two daughters, because he was afraid to live in Zoar and lived in a cave with his two daughters. ³¹ The first-born told the younger one: "Our father is old, and there is no man in the country to marry us as is the custom all over the earth.

³² Come! Let us give our father a drink of wine, that we may sleep with him, that we may preserve descendants from our father!"

³³ Therefore, that night they gave their father wine to drink, and the elder daughter went in and lay down with her father. He did not know when she lay down or when she got up. ³⁴ The next day the elder daughter told the younger: "Yesterday evening I slept with my father. Let us make him drink wine tonight too! Then you go and sleep with him, that we may preserve descendants from our father!"

³⁵ Therefore, they gave their father wine to drink that night too. The younger daughter went and slept with him. He did not know when she lay down or when she got up. ³⁶ Lot's two daughters became pregnant from their own father. ³⁷ The first-born gave birth to a son and named him "Moab."¹⁶ He is the ancestor of the Moabites of today. ³⁸ The younger daughter also gave birth to a son and named him "Ben-Ammi."¹⁷ He is the ancestor of the Ammonites of today.

20

Abraham's deception of Abimelech — compare similar incidents, Genesis 12:10-20, 26:1-11

¹ Abraham left from there, moved to the country of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. He stayed as a foreigner in Gerar. ² Abraham said about his wife Sarah, "She is my sister."

Then Abimelech, the king of Gerar, sent some men and took Sarah away. ³ However, God came to Abimelech in a dream during the night and told him, "Look! You are as good as dead because of the woman whom you have taken. She is a man's wife."

⁴ However, Abimelech had not yet come near her. He asked: "LORD, will You kill a nation even if it is innocent? ⁵ Did he not tell me himself, 'She is my sister,' and did not she herself say, 'He is my brother'? I have done this in good faith and with innocent hands."

⁶ Then God told him in the dream: "Yes, I know that you have done this in good faith. I Myself have also held you back from sinning against Me. That is why I have not allowed you to touch her. ⁷ Now therefore, give the man's wife back to him, because he is a prophet, that he may pray for you! So, save your life! However, if you do not give her back, be aware that you and all who belong to you will certainly die!"

⁸ Abimelech got up early in the morning and summoned all his officials. When the men heard him tell them all about this, they were very afraid. ⁹ Then Abimelech summoned Abraham. He asked him: "What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you, that you have brought a serious sin on me and on my kingdom? You have done things to me that should not be done."

¹⁰ Abimelech also asked Abraham, "What did you have in mind when you did this?"

¹¹ Abraham said: "I did it because I thought, 'Nobody fears God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.' ¹² Besides, she truly is my sister, the daughter of my father, although not of my mother, and she became my wife. ¹³ When God made me wander from my father's home, I told her, 'This is the favour that you should do to me: Whenever we come to any place, say about me, "He is my brother!"'"

¹⁴ Then Abimelech took sheep, cattle, men-servants and maidservants, gave them to Abraham and gave his wife Sarah back to him. ¹⁵ Abimelech said: "Look! My country is open to you. Live wherever you please!"

¹⁶ Then he told Sarah: "Look! I have given your brother a thousand shekels of silver. See! That is a declaration to all who are with you and to everyone else that your honour is unblemished, and before everyone you will be completely in the right."

¹⁷ Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife and his maidservants, so that they could have children. ¹⁸ For the LORD had closed every womb in Abimelech's household because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

21

The birth of Isaac — Hebrews 11:11

¹ The LORD came to help Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what He had promised.

² Sarah became pregnant and gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age at the exact time that God had promised him. ³ Abraham named his new-born son, whom Sarah had borne to him, "Isaac."¹⁸ ⁴ Abraham **circumcised** his son Isaac **on the eighth day**, as God had commanded him. ⁵ Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶ Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." ⁷ She also said: "Who would ever have told Abraham, 'Sarah has

¹⁶ Moab sounds like "From a father."

¹⁷ Ben-Ammi means, "Son of my own people."

¹⁸ Isaac means, "He laughs" (cf. Gn 17:17, 18:12-14).

suckled children'? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

The sending away of Hagar and Ishmael and God's protection of them — Galatians 4:21-30

⁸ The child grew and was weaned. On the day when Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a big feast. ⁹ Sarah saw that the son of the Egyptian Hagar, whom she had borne to Abraham, was mocking. ¹⁰ She told Abraham, "**Get rid of this slave-woman and her son! For this slave-woman's son will not share the inheritance with my son Isaac.**"

¹¹ Abraham was very distressed about this, because his son was involved. ¹² However, God told Abraham: "Do not be distressed about the boy or about your slave-woman! Comply with everything that Sarah is telling you! For **it is through Isaac that your offspring will be named.**" ¹³ I shall also make the slave-woman's son into a nation, because he is your offspring."

¹⁴ Abraham got up early the next morning, took some bread and a skin containing water and gave them to Hagar. He put them on her shoulder, gave the boy to her and sent her away. So, she left and wandered around in the Wilderness of Beer-Sheba. ¹⁵ When the water in the container was used up, she put the boy under one of the bushes. ¹⁶ Then she went a good way off, about as far away as an arrow can be shot, and sat down by herself. For she thought, "I do not want to watch the boy die."

So, she sat down opposite him and wept aloud. ¹⁷ God heard the boy's voice, and the Angel of God called to Hagar from heaven. He asked her: "What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid! For God has heard the boy's voice from where he is lying. ¹⁸ Get up! Lift the boy up and take hold of him with your hand! For I shall make him into a great nation."

¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went, filled the container with water and gave the boy a drink. ²⁰ God was with the boy. He grew up, lived in the wilderness and became an archer. ²¹ He lived in the Wilderness of Paran, and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Abraham's treaty with Abimelech

²² At that time Abimelech and Phicol, the general of his army, told Abraham: "God is with you in everything that you are doing. ²³ Now therefore, swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my children or with my descendants but treat me and the country in which you have been residing as a foreigner as kindly as I have been treating you!"

²⁴ Abraham said, "I swear it."

²⁵ Then Abraham began to rebuke Abimelech about a well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized.

²⁶ Abimelech answered, "I do not know who has done this. You have neither told me about it, nor have I heard about it until today."

²⁷ Abraham took some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a treaty.

²⁸ Then Abraham put seven young ewe-lambs of the flock to one side by themselves.

²⁹ Abimelech asked Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven ewe-lambs, which you have put to one side by themselves?"

³⁰ He replied, "You will accept these seven ewe-lambs from my hand, that you may be my witness that I have dug this well."

³¹ Therefore, he called that place "Beer-Sheba,"¹⁹ because the two of them swore an oath there. ³² After they had made a treaty at Beer-Sheba, Abimelech and Phicol, the general of his army, left to go back to the land of the Philistines. ³³ Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beer-Sheba and there he called on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. ³⁴ Abraham resided for a long time as a foreigner in the land of the Philistines.

22

God's testing of Abraham's faith — Hebrews 11:17-19

¹ After these things, God tested Abraham. God said to him, "Abraham!"

He replied, "Here I am."

² God said: "Take **your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love**, and go to the region of Moriah! **Sacrifice** him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall point out to you!"

³ Abraham got up early the next morning and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. He cut the wood for the burnt offering. Then he got up and started out for the place about which God had told him. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ Then Abraham told his servants: "Stay here with the donkey and let the lad and me go over there, that we may worship! Then we shall come back to you."

⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac and he himself carried the burning coals and the knife. The two of them went on together. ⁷ Then Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Father!"

Abraham said, "Here I am, my son."

Then Isaac said, "Look! We have the fire and the wood where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

⁸ Abraham answered, "God will provide Himself with a lamb for the burnt offering, my son."

The two of them went on together. ⁹ When they reached the place about which God had told him, **Abraham** built the altar there and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied up **his son Isaac** and laid him **on the altar**, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ **Abraham** reached out his hand and took the knife **to slay his son.**

¹¹ However, the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said: "Abraham! Abraham!"

He replied, "Here I am."

¹² He said: "Do not lay your hand on the boy! Do not

¹⁹ Beer-Sheba means, "Well of an oath."

do anything to him! For I know now that you fear God. You have not withheld your son, your **only son**, from Me.”

¹³ When Abraham looked up, he saw behind him a ram caught by his horns in the thicket. So, Abraham went, took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ Abraham named that place “The LORD Will Provide.” It is still said today, “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.”

God's seventh promise to Abraham

¹⁵ The Angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time. ¹⁶ He said: “**I have sworn** an oath **by Myself**,” declares the LORD, ‘that, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ **I shall certainly bless you**. I shall certainly also **make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore**. Your descendants will possess the city-gates of their enemies. ¹⁸ **In your Descendant all the nations of the earth will be blessed**, because you have listened to what I have said.’”

¹⁹ Abraham went back to his men-servants, and they set out and went together to Beer-Sheba. Then Abraham lived at Beer-Sheba.

The family of Nahor

²⁰ After this, Abraham was told: “Milcah has also given birth to children to your brother Nahor: ²¹ his first-born Uz, his brother Buz, Kemuel (the father of Aram), ²² Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph and Bethuel.”

²³ Bethuel became the father of Rebekah. Milcah bore these eight sons to Nahor, Abraham’s brother.

²⁴ Nahor’s concubine, whose name was Reumah, also gave birth to Tebah, Gaham, Tahash and Maacah.

23

The death and burial of Sarah

¹ Sarah lived for one hundred and twenty-seven years. That was the length of Sarah’s life. ² Sarah died at Kiriath-Arba, which is Hebron, in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her. ³ Then Abraham left the side of his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, ⁴ “**I am a sojourner and a foreigner** among you. Sell me property for a burial place in your country, that I may take my dead wife away and bury her!”

⁵ The Hittites answered Abraham, ⁶ “Listen to us, my master! You are a prince of God among us. Bury your dead wife in the best of our burial places! None of us will refuse to let you bury your dead wife in his burial place.”

⁷ Abraham stood up and then bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. ⁸ He told them: “If you are willing to let me take my dead wife away and bury her, then listen to me! Intercede with Ephron, the son of Zohar, on my behalf, ⁹ that he may let me have the cave of Machpelah, which belongs to him! It is at the edge of his field. Let him give it to me in your presence for its full price as a property for a burial place in

your country!”

¹⁰ Ephron was sitting among the Hittites. Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham while all the Hittites who had come to the gate of his city were listening:

¹¹ “No, my master! Listen to me! I am herewith giving you the field and am giving you the cave that is in it. I am giving it to you in the presence of my kinsmen. Bury your dead wife!”

¹² Abraham bowed down before the people of the land. ¹³ He told Ephron, while the people of the country were listening: “However, if you are willing, if only you might listen to me! I am herewith paying you the price of the field. Accept it from me! Then I shall bury my dead wife there.”

¹⁴ Ephron answered Abraham, ¹⁵ “My master, listen to me! The land is worth four kilograms and eight hundred grams of silver. What is that between you and me? So, bury your dead wife!”

¹⁶ Abraham agreed to Ephron’s terms. **Abraham weighed out** for Ephron the price that he had stated while the Hittites were listening: four kilograms and eight hundred grams of silver, at the current weight among the merchants. ¹⁷ So, the field of Ephron, which was at Machpelah near Mamre, the field with the cave in it and all the trees that were in the field inside its entire boundary were purchased ¹⁸ by Abraham. They became his property in the presence of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of Ephron’s city.

¹⁹ After this, Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which is Hebron, in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ So, the field and the cave in it, which had once belonged to the Hittites, were deeded to Abraham as his property for a burial place.

24

Abraham's instructions to his servant about a wife for Isaac

¹ Abraham was old and well advanced in age, and the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way. ² Abraham told the oldest servant of his household, who was managing everything that he owned: “Please put your hand under my thigh, ³ that I may make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I am living!

⁴ Rather, swear that you will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac!”

⁵ The servant asked him: “What if the woman is not willing to come away with me to this country? Should I without fail take your son back to the country from which you have come?”

⁶ Abraham told him: “Be careful that you do not take my son back there! ⁷ The LORD, the God of heaven, who has taken me from my father’s home and the land of my relatives, who has spoken to me and who has sworn to me, ‘I shall give this land to your descendants,’ will send His angel ahead of you, and you shall

get a wife for my son from there! ⁸ However, if the woman is not willing to come back with you, you will not be bound any longer by what you swear to me here. You shall simply not take my son back there!”

Abraham's servant's journey to Haran to find a wife for Isaac

⁹ The servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore an oath to him about this matter. ¹⁰ Then the servant took ten of his masters' camels and left. He also took all kinds of his masters' valuable articles with him. He set out and went to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia. ¹¹ He made the camels kneel outside of the city near a well. It was in the evening, at the time when women go out to draw water. ¹² Then he said: “O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, please give me success today and be kind to my master Abraham! ¹³ See! I am standing beside this spring of water and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴ Let it be so that the girl is the one, who, when I ask her, ‘Please tilt your jar for me, that I may have a drink,’ replies, ‘Drink, and I shall also give your camels a drink!’ Let her be the one whom You have assigned for Your servant Isaac! This is how I shall know that You have been kind to my master.”

¹⁵ Before he had finished speaking, there was Rebekah coming out. She was the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, who was the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother. She had her jar on her shoulder. ¹⁶ The young woman had a very beautiful figure. She was a virgin. No man had slept with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again. ¹⁷ Then the servant ran to meet her and asked her: “Please, let me sip a little water from your jar!”

¹⁸ She said, “Drink, my master!”

She quickly lowered her jar to her hand and gave him a drink. ¹⁹ After she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I shall also keep drawing water for your camels, until they have finished drinking.”

²⁰ She quickly emptied out her jar into the watering-trough, ran back to the well to draw more water and drew enough for all his camels. ²¹ The man was standing gazing at her silently, to find out whether the LORD had made his journey successful or not. ²² When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a golden nose-ring weighing six grams and two golden bracelets weighing one hundred and twenty grams for her wrists. ²³ Then he asked, “Whose daughter are you? Please tell me! Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?”

²⁴ She answered him: “I am the daughter of Bethuel, who is the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.”

²⁵ She also told him, “We have plenty of straw and other fodder and also a place to spend the night.”

²⁶ The man knelt and worshipped the LORD. ²⁷ He said: “Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham! He has not failed to be merciful and faithful to my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the

journey to the home of my master's relatives.”

²⁸ The young woman ran and told her mother's household about these things. ²⁹ Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban ran outside to the man at the spring. ³⁰ When he had seen the nose-ring and the bracelets on his sister's wrists and had heard his sister Rebekah tell what the man had told her, he went to the man. There he was, standing with the camels beside the spring. ³¹ He said: “Come in, you whom the LORD has blessed! Why are you standing outside? I have made room in the house and cleared up a place for the camels.”

³² So, the man went to the house, unsaddled the camels, gave them straw and other fodder and gave him water to wash his feet and for the feet of the men who were with him. ³³ However, when food was set before him, he said, “I shall not eat until I have told you what I have to say.”

Laban said, “Speak on!”

³⁴ He said: “I am Abraham's servant. ³⁵ The LORD has richly blessed my master, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, men-servants and women-servants and camels and donkeys. ³⁶ Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master after she had grown old, and my master has given him everything that he owns. ³⁷ My master has made me swear, ‘You shall not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose country I am living! ³⁸ Instead, you shall go to my father's family and my relatives and get a wife for my son!’ ³⁹ I asked my master, ‘What if the woman will not come with me?’ ⁴⁰ He answered me, ‘The LORD, before whom I have been living, will send His angel with you. He will make your journey successful, and you shall get my son a wife from my relatives and from my father's family! ⁴¹ Then you will be released from the obligation of my oath. After you go to my relatives, even if they do not give anyone to you, you will be free from the obligation of your oath to me.’

⁴² When I came to the spring today, I prayed: ‘LORD, God of my master Abraham, please, if You are really granting success to my errand, on which I am coming, ⁴³ look! I am standing beside the spring of water. When the virgin comes out to draw water, and I tell her, ‘Please give me a little water to drink from your jar!’ ⁴⁴ and she tells me, ‘Not only may you have a drink, but I shall also draw water for your camels,’ let her be the woman whom the LORD has assigned for my master's son!’ ⁴⁵ I had not yet finished saying this in my heart when there was Rebekah coming out with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water. I asked her, ‘Please, give me a drink!’ ⁴⁶ She quickly let down her jar from her shoulder and said, ‘Have a drink! I shall also give your camels a drink.’ Therefore, I had a drink and she also gave the camels a drink. ⁴⁷ Then I asked her, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ She answered, ‘The daughter of Bethuel, the

son of Nahor, whom Milcah bore to him.' Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. ⁴⁸ I knelt and worshipped the LORD. I blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who led me on the right way to get the daughter of my master's relative for his son. ⁴⁹ So now, tell me whether you intend to treat my master with true kindness, and, if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left!"

⁵⁰ Laban and Bethuel answered: "The thing has come from the LORD. We cannot say anything bad or anything good to you. ⁵¹ Here before you is Rebekah. Take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has said!"

⁵² When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he bowed down to the ground before the LORD. ⁵³ Then the servant took out silver and gold jewellery and garments and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave expensive gifts to her brother and to her mother. ⁵⁴ Then he and the men who were with him ate, drank and stayed overnight. When they got up in the morning, he said, "Send me on my way to my master!"

⁵⁵ Her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us ten days or so! After that she may go."

⁵⁶ He told them, "Do not delay me! Now that the LORD has made my errand successful, send me on my way, that I may go to my master!"

⁵⁷ They said, "We shall call the young woman, that we may ask her personally."

⁵⁸ They called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?"

She said, "I shall go."

⁵⁹ Therefore, they sent their sister Rebekah on her way, along with her nurse, Abraham's servant and his men. ⁶⁰ They blessed Rebekah, saying to her: "Our sister, may you become the mother of ten million! May your descendants also take possession of the city-gates of those who hate them!"

⁶¹ Rebekah and her maids started out. They rode on the camels and followed the man. So, the servant took Rebekah with him and left.

The marriage of Isaac and Rebekah

⁶² Isaac had arrived back after he had come from Beer-Lahai-Roi and was living in the Negev. ⁶³ Isaac had gone out into the field toward evening to meditate. When he looked up, there he saw camels approaching. ⁶⁴ Rebekah also looked up and, when she saw Isaac, she dismounted from her camel. ⁶⁵ She asked the servant, "Who is the man over there coming through the field to meet us?"

The servant answered, "That is my master."

Then she took her veil and covered herself. ⁶⁶ The servant reported to Isaac everything that he had done.

⁶⁷ Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah. He married Rebekah. She became his wife, and he loved her. So, Isaac was comforted after his mother's

death.

25

Abraham's marriage to Keturah — 1 Chronicles 1:32-33

¹ Abraham married again, and his wife's name was Keturah. ² She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. ³ Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Asshurites, the Letushites and the Lemmites. ⁴ The descendants of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah. ⁵ Abraham gave Isaac everything that he owned. ⁶ However, Abraham gave presents to the sons of the concubines that he had and while he was still living sent them away from his son Isaac to a land in the east.

The death of Abraham

⁷ This was the span of the years of Abraham's life. He lived for one hundred and seventy-five years.

⁸ Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age. After a long and full life he was gathered to his people. ⁹ His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, which is near Mamre, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite. ¹⁰ It was the field that Abraham had bought from the Hittites. Abraham was buried there with his wife Sarah. ¹¹ After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac lived at Beer Lahai-Roi.

¹² This is the family record of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, whom Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian maidservant, bore to Abraham.

Ishmael's descendants — 1 Chronicles 1:29-31

¹³ These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, listed in the order of their birth: The first-born of Ishmael was Nebaioth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴ Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵ Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. ¹⁶ These were the sons of Ishmael and these were their names according to their settlements and camps. There were twelve leaders of their tribes. ¹⁷ Altogether, Ishmael lived for one hundred and thirty-seven years. He breathed his last, died and was gathered to his people. ¹⁸ His descendants lived in the area from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt, in the direction of Asshur. He settled over against all his relatives.

¹⁹ This is the family-history of Isaac, Abraham's son.

The family-history of Isaac 25:19-26:34

The birth of the twins Esau and Jacob — Romans 9:10-12

^{19b} Abraham became the father of Isaac. ²⁰ Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Aramean from Paddan-Aram and the sister of Laban the Aramean. ²¹ Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was childless. The LORD granted his plea, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. ²² When the babies inside her were pushing each other around, she said, "If it is like this, why am I like this?"

Therefore, she went to inquire of the LORD. ²³ The

LORD told her: “Two nations are in your womb. Two peoples will go their separate ways from your body. One people will be stronger than the other, and **the older one will serve the younger one.**”

²⁴ When her time was due for her to give birth, it was apparent that there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ The first came out red. His whole body was like a hairy coat, and so they named him “Esau.”^{*20} ²⁶ After that, his brother came out, with his hand holding Esau’s heel, and so he was named “Jacob.”^{*21} Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

Esau’s contempt for his rights as the first-born — Hebrews 12:16

²⁷ When the boys grew up, Esau was an expert hunter, a man of the outdoors. However, Jacob was an orderly man, living in tents. ²⁸ Isaac loved Esau because he liked to eat wild game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. ²⁹ Once, when Jacob was boiling some food, Esau came in from the field, feeling exhausted. ³⁰ Esau told Jacob, “Please let me gulp down some of the red food — this red food! For I am exhausted.”

That is why he was called “Edom.”

³¹ Jacob answered, “First sell me your rights as the elder son!”

³² Esau said, “Look! I am about to die. Then what good is a birth-right to me?”

³³ However, Jacob said, “Swear an oath to me first!”

Esau swore an oath to him and **sold his rights as the first-born** to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentils that he had cooked. Esau ate and drank, and then got up and went away. In this way Esau **showed contempt for his rights as the first-born.**

26

God’s first promise to Isaac

¹ There was a famine in the land in addition to the earlier famine that had occurred in the time of Abraham and Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines at Gerar. ² The LORD appeared to Isaac. He said: “Do not go down to Egypt! Live in the land where I am telling you to live! ³ Live as a foreigner in this country! I shall be with you and bless you. For I shall give all these lands to you and your descendants and shall carry out the oath that I have sworn to your father Abraham. ⁴ I shall **make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky.** I shall give all these lands to your descendants and **in your Descendant all the nations of the earth will be blessed.**

⁵ For Abraham listened to My voice and kept what I obligated him to do, My Commandments, My Prescriptions and My Laws.”

Isaac’s deception of Abimelech at Gerar — compare similar incidents Genesis 12:10-20, 20:1-18

⁶ So, Isaac continued to live in Gerar. ⁷ When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he answered, “She is my sister.” For he was afraid to say, “She is

my wife.” For he thought, “Otherwise the men of this place might kill me for the sake of Rebekah, because she has a beautiful figure.”

⁸ When Isaac had been there for a long time, Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, looked down out of the window and saw Isaac fondling his wife Rebekah. ⁹ Abimelech summoned Isaac and said, “So, she is your wife! How then could you say, ‘She is my sister’?”

Isaac answered, “I thought, ‘Otherwise I might die because of her.’”

¹⁰ Abimelech said: “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have slept with your wife. Then you would have made us guilty of a wrong.”

¹¹ Abimelech gave orders to all the people: “Anyone who touches this man or his wife will certainly be put to death.”

Isaac’s struggle for peace and prosperity

¹² Isaac sowed a seed in that country and that year he harvested a hundred measures of grain, because the LORD had been blessing him. ¹³ The man became rich and kept on progressing and becoming richer, until he had become very wealthy. ¹⁴ He owned flocks and herds and had many servants, so that the Philistines envied him. ¹⁵ The Philistines had stopped up all the wells that his father’s servants had dug while Abraham was alive and had filled them with soil. ¹⁶ Abimelech told Isaac, “Move away from us! For you have become much mightier than we are.”

¹⁷ So, Isaac moved away from there, camped in the Valley of Gerar and lived there. ¹⁸ Isaac dug out again the wells of water that they had dug during his father Abraham’s lifetime, because the Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham died. He gave them the same names as his father had given them.

¹⁹ Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and found a spring-fed well there. ²⁰ However, the herdsmen of Gerar had a dispute with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “This water is ours!” So, Isaac named the well “Esek,”^{*22} because they had quarrelled with him.

²¹ Then they dug another well but had a dispute over that one also. So, Isaac named it “Sitnah,”^{*23} ²² He moved on from there and dug another well. When they did not have a dispute over that well, he named it “Rehoboth,”^{*24} saying, “Surely now the LORD has provided wide room for us, that we may be fruitful in the land.”

God’s second promise to Isaac

²³ Then Isaac went up from there to Beer-Sheba.

²⁴ The same night the LORD appeared to him and said: “I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid! For I am with you, I shall bless you and give you many descendants because of My servant

²⁰ Esau means, “Hairy.”

²¹ Jacob means, “He grasps the heel.”

²² Esek means, “Quarrel.”

²³ Sitnah means, “Hostility.”

²⁴ Rehoboth means, “Open places.”

Abraham.”

²⁵ Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD. Then Isaac pitched his tent there and his servants dug a well there.

Isaac's treaty with Abimelech

²⁶ Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his close friend Ahuzzath and Phicol, the commander of his army. ²⁷ Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?”

²⁸ However, they said: “We have clearly seen that the LORD has been with you. So, we said, ‘There ought to be an obligation by an oath between you and us, which puts a curse on a transgressor.’ Therefore, let us make a treaty with you, ²⁹ that you will not do any harm to us, as we on our part have not touched you and as we have been doing nothing but good to you! We have let you go away in peace. You are now blessed by the LORD.”

³⁰ Isaac made a feast for them, and they ate and drank.

³¹ Early the next morning the men swore an oath to one another. Then Isaac sent them on their way, and they parted from him in peace. ³² On that day Isaac's servants came and informed him about the well that they had dug. They told him, “We have found water.”

³³ He called it “Shibah.” That is why the city is called “Beer-Sheba” to this day.

Esau's marriages to Hittite wives

³⁴ When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith, the daughter of Beerli the Hittite. He also married Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. ³⁵ These women were a source of bitter grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

27

The family-history of Jacob 27:1-37:2

Jacob's deception of Isaac to obtain his blessing

¹ When Isaac was old, his eyesight became so dim that he could not see. He called Esau, his elder son and said to him, “My son!”

He answered him, “Yes, I am here.”

² Isaac said: “You see that I am old and do not know when I am going to die. ³ Now then, please get your weapons, your quiver and your bow, go out to the open country and hunt some game for me! ⁴ Then prepare for me the kind of delicious meal that I like! Bring it to me to eat, that I myself may give you my blessing before I die!”

⁵ Rebekah was listening while Isaac was speaking to his son Esau. When Esau went to the open country to hunt some game and bring it back, ⁶ Rebekah told her son Jacob: “Look! I have just heard your father speaking to your brother Esau. He said, ⁷ ‘Fetch me some game and prepare a delicious meal for me to eat! Then I shall give you my blessing in the presence of the LORD before I die.’ ⁸ Now therefore, my son, obey me in what I am telling you to do! ⁹ Please, go to the flock and get me two choice young goats from there,

that I may use them to prepare for your father the kind of delicious meal that he likes! ¹⁰ Then you shall take it to your father to eat, that he may give you his blessing before he dies!”

¹¹ However, Jacob answered his mother Rebekah: “Look! My brother Esau is a hairy man, and I am a man with a smooth skin. ¹² What if my father feels me? He will think that I am mocking him. Then I shall bring a curse on myself instead of a blessing.”

¹³ However, his mother told him, “Let your curse be on me, my son! Just do as I say! Go and get them for me!”

¹⁴ He went, got them and brought them to his mother. His mother prepared the kind of delicious meal that his father liked. ¹⁵ Rebekah took her elder son Esau's favourite clothes, which she had with her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. ¹⁶ She also covered his hands and the hairless parts of his neck with pieces of skin from the young goats. ¹⁷ Then she put the delicious meat and the bread that she had prepared in the hands of her son Jacob. ¹⁸ He went in to his father and said, “My father!”

He said, “Yes, I am here. Who are you, my son?”

¹⁹ Jacob told his father: “I am Esau, your first-born son. I have done as you told me. Please get up, take a seat and eat some of my game, that you may give me your blessing in person!”

²⁰ Isaac asked his son, “How did you find anything as quickly as this, my son?”

He answered, “Because the LORD, your God, ordained it for me.”

²¹ Isaac told Jacob, “Please come closer, that I may feel you, my son, to see whether you really are my son Esau or not!”

²² Jacob went closer to his father Isaac. He felt him and said, “The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's.”

However, he did not recognise him, because his hands were hairy like the hands of his brother Esau. That is why he blessed him.

²⁴ However, he asked, “Are you really my son Esau?” He answered, “I am.”

²⁵ He said, “Bring it closer to me, that I may eat some of my son's game, that I may give you my blessing in person!”

Jacob took it closer to Isaac, and Isaac ate it. Jacob also passed him some wine, and he drank it. ²⁶ Then his father Isaac told him, “Please come here and kiss me, my son!”

²⁷ He went closer and kissed him. When Isaac had caught the smell of his clothes, he gave him his blessing. He said: “See! The smell of my son is like the smell of an open field that the LORD has blessed.

²⁸ Therefore, may God give you the dew from the sky and fertile tracts of the earth, with plenty of grain and wine! ²⁹ May nations serve you, and peoples bow down before you! Be a master over your brothers!

May your mother's sons bow down before you! Cursed be those who curse you, and blessed be those who bless you!"

Esau's reception of an inferior blessing and his hatred of Jacob — Hebrews 12:17

³⁰ When Isaac had finished blessing Jacob and Jacob had scarcely left the presence of his father Isaac, his brother Esau came in from his hunting. ³¹ He also had prepared a delicious meal and took it to his father. He told his father, "Let my father please sit up and eat some of his son's game, that you may give me your blessing in person!"

³² His father Isaac asked him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am your son, your first-born, Esau."

³³ Isaac shook very violently and asked: "Who was it then who hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate all of it just before you came in and so that I gave him my blessing? Yes, and he must stay blessed!"

³⁴ When Esau heard what his father said, he cried out very loudly and very bitterly. He told his father, "Bless me, me also, my father!"

³⁵ Isaac said, "Your brother has come in deceitfully and has taken away your blessing."

³⁶ Esau said: "Is he not rightly named 'Jacob'?"²⁵ He has cheated me these two times. He has taken away my rights as the first-born son. Look! Now he has also taken away my blessing."

Then he asked, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"

³⁷ Isaac answered Esau: "Look! I have made him your master and have made all his relatives his servants. I have supported him with grain and wine. What, then, am I to do for you, my son?"

³⁸ Esau asked his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, me too, my father!"

Then Esau wept aloud. ³⁹ His father Isaac answered him: "Your dwelling will be fertile tracts of the earth but away from the dew of the sky above. ⁴⁰ You will use your sword to live and serve your brother. However, the time will come when you roam about and pull his yoke away from the back of your neck."

⁴¹ Esau harboured animosity towards Jacob because of the blessing that his father had given him. Esau said to himself, "The time to mourn for my father is coming closer. Then I shall kill my brother Jacob."

⁴² When Rebekah was told what her elder son Esau was saying, she sent a message and summoned her younger son Jacob. She told him: "Watch out! Your brother Esau is planning revenge against you, intending to kill you. ⁴³ So now, my son, do what I say! Flee at once for your safety to my brother Laban at Haran!

⁴⁴ Stay with him for a few days until your brother's fury subsides, ⁴⁵ until your brother is not angry with you any longer and forgets what you have done to him! Then I shall send word and get you from there. Why should I have to mourn the loss of both of you in

one day?"

⁴⁶ Then Rebekah told Isaac: "I am disgusted with living because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries a Hittite woman like these, one of the women of this country, why should I go on living?"

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Jacob's journey to his mother's relatives

¹ Isaac called Jacob, blessed him and gave him a command. He told him: "You shall not marry one of the women of Canaan! ² Go at once to Paddan-Aram, to the home of Bethuel, your mother's father and get yourself a wife there from the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother! ³ May God Almighty bless you, make you fruitful and make you many, that you may become a company of peoples! ⁴ May He give the blessing given to Abraham to you and to your descendants with you, that you may inherit the land where you are living as a foreigner, the land that God gave to Abraham!"

⁵ Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-Aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel, the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, who was the mother of Jacob and Esau.

Esau's marriage to an Ishmaelite

⁶ Esau learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Paddan-Aram to get a wife from there. He learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had commanded him, "You shall not marry a Canaanite woman!" ⁷ He also saw that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Paddan-Aram. ⁸ When Esau realised that his father Isaac considered that the women of Canaan were evil, ⁹ Esau went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, who was the daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael and who was the sister of Nebaioth, in addition to the wives whom he already had.

God's promise to Jacob in a dream at Bethel

¹⁰ Then Jacob left Beer-Sheba and travelled towards Haran. ¹¹ When he came to a certain place, he spent the night there because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones of the place, put it under his head as a pillow and lay down there. ¹² He had a dream in which he saw a stairway set up on the earth. Its top reached up to heaven, and he saw the angels of God going up and coming down on it. ¹³ He saw the LORD standing above it, and He said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I shall give the land on which you are lying to you and to your descendants. ¹⁴ Your descendants will be like the dust on the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. In you and **in your Descendant all the families of the earth will be blessed.** ¹⁵ Moreover, look! I shall be with you and shall watch over you everywhere you go. I shall bring you back to this land. For I shall not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

¹⁶ When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he exclaimed,

²⁵ Jacob means, "He grasps the heel."

“Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.”¹⁷ He was afraid and said: “How awe-inspiring this place is! This is nothing less than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven!”

¹⁸ Jacob got up early in the morning, took the stone he had put under his head, set it up as an upright memorial stone and poured olive-oil on top of it. ¹⁹ He named that place “Bethel.”²⁶ However, previously that city used to be called “Luz.”

²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow, saying: “If God is with me, if He keeps me on this journey that I am making, if He gives me food to eat and clothes to wear,²¹ and, if I return to my father’s house in safety, then the LORD will be my God. ²² In addition, this stone, which I have set as a marker, will be ‘the House of God.’ I shall also surely give to You a tenth of all that You give to me.”

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Jacob’s arrival at Haran and his meeting with Rachel

¹ Jacob departed and came to the land of the people in the east. ² When he looked, he saw a well in the field and also saw three flocks of sheep there lying near it, because shepherds watered the flocks at that well. The stone over the mouth of the well was large. ³ After all the flocks had gathered there, the shepherds used to roll the stone away from the mouth of the well, water the sheep and put the stone back in its place over the mouth of the well. ⁴ Jacob asked the shepherds, “My friends, where are you from?”

They said, “We are from Haran.”

⁵ He asked them, “Do you know Laban, Nahor’s grandson?”

They answered, “We know him.”

⁶ Jacob asked them, “Is he well?”

They answered, “He is well. Look! Here his daughter Rachel is coming with his sheep.”

⁷ He said: “Look! It is still broad daylight. It is not time yet for the livestock to be rounded up. Water the sheep and go and pasture them!”

⁸ They said: “We cannot, until all the flocks gather together, and the shepherds roll the stone away from the mouth of the well. Then we water the sheep.”

⁹ While he was still talking to them Rachel came with her father’s sheep. For she was a shepherdess.

¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother’s brother, he went nearer, rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban, his mother’s brother. ¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud. ¹² When Jacob told Rachel that he was her father’s relative and that he was Rebekah’s son, she ran and told her father. ¹³ When Laban heard the news about his sister’s son Jacob, he ran to meet him. He hugged and kissed him and took him to his home. Then Jacob told Laban all these things.

¹⁴ Laban told him, “You really are my own bone and flesh!”

Jacob’s marriage to both daughters of Laban, Leah and Rachel

^{14b} After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month, ¹⁵ Laban asked Jacob, “Should you work for me for nothing because you are my relative? Tell me what your wages should be!”

¹⁶ Laban had two daughters. The name of the elder one was Leah and the name of the younger one was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah’s eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful in form and looks. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel. So, he said, “I shall work for you for seven years in return for Rachel, your younger daughter.”

¹⁹ Laban said, “It is better that I should give her to you than that I should give her to any other man. Stay here with me!”

²⁰ Jacob worked for seven years in return for Rachel and they seemed like only a few days to him because he loved her.

²¹ Then Jacob told Laban, “Give me my wife! My time is up. I want to marry her.”

²² So, Laban gathered all the people of the place and gave a feast. ²³ However, in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob. Jacob slept with her. ²⁴ (Laban had given his servant-girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant-girl.) ²⁵ In the morning, Jacob saw that she was Leah. Jacob asked Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Have I not been working with you in return for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?”

²⁶ Laban answered: “Things are not done like that in our country, that the younger daughter should be given in marriage before the first-born. ²⁷ Finish the bridal week of this woman! Then this other one will also be given to you, in return for working seven more years with me.”

²⁸ That is what Jacob did. He finished the week with Leah. Then Laban gave his daughter Rachel to Jacob to be his wife. ²⁹ (Laban had given his maidservant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maidservant.)

³⁰ So, Jacob married Rachel too. He also loved Rachel more than Leah and worked for Laban for still another seven years.

Leah and Rachel’s competition for Jacob’s love and Jacob’s eleven children

³¹ When the LORD saw that Leah was slighted, He opened her womb, whereas Rachel was barren.

³² Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him “Reuben.”²⁷ For she said, “It is because the LORD has seen my misery. Surely now my husband will love me.”

³³ She became pregnant again and, when she had given birth to a son, she said, “Because the LORD has heard that I am being slighted, He has also given me this one.” So, she named him “Simeon.”²⁸

²⁶ Bethel means, “House of God.”

²⁷ Reuben means, “See, a son.”

²⁸ Simeon means, “Hearing.”

³⁴ She became pregnant again and, when she had given birth to a son, she said: “Now at last my husband will attach himself to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore, he was named “Levi.”^{*29}

³⁵ She became pregnant again and, when she had given birth to a son, she said, “This time I shall praise the LORD.” Therefore, she named him “Judah.”^{*30} Then she stopped having children.

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¹ When Rachel saw she had given Jacob no children, she became jealous of her sister. She told Jacob, “Give me children! If I do not have any, I am going to die.”

² Jacob became angry with Rachel. He asked, “Am I in the place of God? He has kept you from having children.”

³ She said: “There is my maidservant Bilhah. Sleep with her, that she may give birth to a child on my knees, that I also may get a child from her!”

⁴ So, she gave him her maidservant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob slept with her. ⁵ Bilhah became pregnant and bore a son to Jacob. ⁶ Rachel said: “God has judged in my favour. He has also heard my request and has given me a son.” Because of this, she named him “Dan.”^{*31}

⁷ Then Bilhah, Rachel’s maidservant became pregnant again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸ Rachel said, “I have wrestled mightily with my sister. I have even won.” So, she named him “Naphtali.”^{*32}

⁹ When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her maidservant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as his wife. ¹⁰ Then Zilpah, Leah’s maidservant, bore Jacob a son. ¹¹ Leah said. “Good fortune has come.” So, she named him “Gad.”^{*33}

¹² When Zilpah, Leah’s maidservant, bore Jacob a second son, ¹³ Leah said, “How happy I am! **Women will call me happy.**” So, she named him “Asher.”^{*34}

¹⁴ During the wheat harvest Reuben went out and found some mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. Rachel asked Leah, “Please give me some of your son’s mandrakes!”

¹⁵ Leah asked her, “Has it not been enough for you to take away my husband? Will you also take my son’s mandrakes?”

Rachel said, “Very well. He will sleep with you tonight in return for your son’s mandrakes.”

¹⁶ When Jacob came in from the field that evening, Leah went out to meet him. She told him: “You must sleep with me! For I have unquestionably hired you with my son’s mandrakes.”

So, he slept with her that night. ¹⁷ God heard Leah,

and she became pregnant and bore Jacob a fifth son.

¹⁸ Leah said, “God has given me my wages, because I have given my maidservant to my husband.” So, she named him “Issachar.”^{*35}

¹⁹ Leah became pregnant again and bore Jacob a sixth son. ²⁰ Leah said: “God has made me a fine gift. Now my husband will make me a lawful wife, because I have borne him six sons.” So, she named him “Zebulon.”^{*36}

²¹ Later she gave birth to a daughter and named her “Dinah.”

²² God also remembered Rachel. God listened to her and opened her womb. ²³ She became pregnant, gave birth to a son and said, “God has taken away my disgrace.” ²⁴ She named him “Joseph,”^{*37} and said, “May the LORD add to me another son!”

Jacob’s struggle with Laban for prosperity

²⁵ After Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob told Laban: “Send me on my way, that I may go to my own home and my own country! ²⁶ Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have been serving you, that I may leave! For you know the service that I have been doing for you.”

²⁷ However, Laban answered him: “Please do not leave! If you are kind to me, I have learned through divination that the LORD has been blessing me because of you.”

²⁸ Laban added, “Specify the wages I should pay you, and I shall pay them!”

²⁹ Jacob answered him: “You yourself know the work that I have been doing for you and what has happened to your livestock under my care. ³⁰ For, before I came, you had only a little, but now it has increased greatly. The LORD has been blessing you because I am here. Now, however, when am I to do something for my own family as well?”

³¹ Laban asked, “What should I pay you?”

Jacob answered: “Do not pay me anything! If you do this one thing for me, I shall feed and watch your flock again. ³² I shall go through your whole flock today and take out of it every speckled or spotted sheep, every lamb that is neither black nor white and any of the goats that are spotted and speckled. These will be my wages. ³³ My honesty will testify for me in time to come when you come to check on my wages. If I have any goat that is not speckled or spotted or any lamb that is neither black nor white, it will be considered as stolen.”

³⁴ Laban answered, “Yes. Please let it be as you have said!”

³⁵ However, that day Laban removed the striped and spotted he-goats and all the speckled and spotted she-goats, every animal that had only some white on it and every lamb that was neither white nor black, and

²⁹ Levi means, “Joined.”

³⁰ Judah means, “Let Him be praised!”

³¹ Dan means, “He has judged.”

³² Naphtali means, “My wrestling.”

³³ Gad means, “Good fortune.”

³⁴ Asher means, “Happy.”

³⁵ Issachar means, “Wages.”

³⁶ Zebulon means, “Dwelling.”

³⁷ Joseph means, “May He add!”

placed them in the care of his sons. ³⁶ Then he put a three-days' journey between himself and Jacob and Jacob continued to be the shepherd of the rest of Laban's flock. ³⁷ Jacob chose fresh rods of storax trees, almond trees and plane trees and peeled off bark to make white stripes in them, to expose the white that was in the rods. ³⁸ Then he placed the rods that he had peeled in the troughs at the watering places where the flocks used to come to drink, directly in front of the flocks, so that they were in heat when they came to drink. ³⁹ The flocks were in heat in front of the rods and gave birth to young that had twisted tails or were speckled or spotted. ⁴⁰ Jacob separated the young rams and set them in front of the ones in the flock that had twisted tails and all the ones that were neither white nor black in Laban's flock. Then he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban's flocks. ⁴¹ Whenever the stronger ewes were in heat, Jacob used to place the rods in the troughs where the flock could see them, that they might breed near the rods. ⁴² However, when the animals were weaker, he did not put out the rods. Consequently, the weaker animals belonged to Laban, but the stronger ones belonged to Jacob. ⁴³ In this way, the man became exceedingly prosperous and had large flocks, as well as maidservants, male servants, camels and donkeys.

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¹ Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying, "Jacob has taken everything that our father owned and has acquired all this wealth out of what used to belong to our father."

² Jacob also saw that Laban's attitude towards him was indeed not as friendly as it had been before.

God's repetition of His promise to Jacob

³ Then the LORD told Jacob, "Go back to the country of your fathers and your relatives! I shall be with you."

Jacob's departure from Haran with his family and possessions

⁴ So, Jacob sent someone to call Rachel and Leah to come to the field where his flock was. ⁵ He told them: "I see that your father's attitude toward me is not as it has been until now, but that the God of my father has been with me. ⁶ However, you know that I have been serving your father with all my strength. ⁷ Nevertheless, your father has been cheating me and has changed my wages ten times. However, God has not allowed him to harm me. ⁸ If he said, 'The speckled animals will be your wages,' then the whole flock gave birth to speckled young. If he said, 'The animals with twisted tails will be your wages,' the whole flock gave birth to young with twisted tails. ⁹ So, God has taken away your father's livestock and has given them to me. ¹⁰ Once, when the flocks were mating, I had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male-goats that were mating with the flock had twisted tails or were speckled or multi-coloured. ¹¹ In the dream the Angel of God said to me, 'Jacob!' I answered,

'Here I am.' ¹² He said, 'Look up! Notice that all the male goats that are mating with the flock have twisted tails or are speckled or multi-coloured! For I have been watching everything that Laban has been doing to you. ¹³ I am the God whom you saw at Bethel, where you poured oil on the upright stone marker and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to the land of your relatives!'"

¹⁴ Rachel and Leah answered him: "Do we still have any share in property or inheritance in our father's household? ¹⁵ Has he not been regarding us as foreigners? For he sold us and has completely consumed our money. ¹⁶ Surely all the wealth that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children. Now then, do everything that God has told you!"

¹⁷ Jacob acted. He put his children and his wives on camels. ¹⁸ He drove away all his livestock and all his property, which he had earned, the livestock that was his property, which he had acquired in Paddan-Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

¹⁹ When Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole the household gods that belonged to Laban.

²⁰ Jacob tricked the Aramean Laban by not telling him that he was running away. ²¹ He fled with all that he had. He set off, crossed the Euphrates and headed for the hill-country of Gilead.

Laban's pursuit of Jacob

²² On the third day Laban was told, "Jacob has fled."

²³ Laban took his relatives with him, pursued Jacob for seven days and caught up with him in the hill-country of Gilead. ²⁴ However, God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and told him, "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad!"

²⁵ When Laban overtook Jacob, Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill-country. Laban and his relatives also pitched their tents in the hill-country of Gilead.

²⁶ Laban asked Jacob: "What have you done? You have both deceived me and led away my daughters like captives taken with the sword. ²⁷ Why have you run away secretly and deceived me, without telling me? Otherwise, I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with tambourine and lyre. ²⁸ You did not give me the opportunity to kiss my grandchildren and my daughters. Now you have done a foolish thing. ²⁹ I have the power to harm you all, but yesterday evening the God of your father told me, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad!' ³⁰ So now, although you have evidently left because you have been longing deeply for the home of your father, why have you stolen my gods?"

³¹ Jacob answered Laban: "I left because I was afraid. For I thought that otherwise you would take your daughters away from me by force. ³² No person with whom you find your gods shall live! In the presence of our relatives investigate for yourself what is here with me and take what is yours with you!"

However, Jacob did not know Rachel had stolen them.

³³ Then Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent and into the tents of the two maidservants. However, he found nothing. After he had come out of Leah's tent, he went into Rachel's tent. ³⁴ Rachel had taken the household gods, had put them in her camel's saddlebag and had sat on them. Laban rummaged through the whole tent but found nothing.

³⁵ Rachel told her father, "Do not be angry, my master, that I cannot stand up in your presence! For I am having my period."

So, he searched for the household gods but did not find them. ³⁶ Then Jacob became angry and scolded Laban. Jacob demanded of Laban: "What offence have I committed? What is my sin, so that you have come in hot pursuit after me? ³⁷ For, although you have been rummaging through all my goods, what have you found of all your household goods? Put it here in front of your relatives and mine, and let them judge between the two of us! ³⁸ For twenty years now I have been with you. Your ewes and your she-goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten any rams of your flock. ³⁹ I did not bring anything torn by wild animals to you. I stood the loss of it myself. You used to require from me anything that had been stolen by day or stolen by night. ⁴⁰ There I was! In the day the heat consumed me and the frost by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. ⁴¹ I was in your home like this for twenty years. I worked for you for fourteen years for your two daughters and for six years for your flock, and you changed my wages ten times. ⁴² If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, the Awesome One of Isaac, had not been on my side, you would surely by now have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my misery and the toil of my hands and yesterday evening He gave judgment."

⁴³ Laban answered Jacob: "These women are my daughters, these children are my children, and this is my flock. Everything that you see is mine. Yet what can I do today for these daughters of mine or for their children, whom they have borne? ⁴⁴ Come then, let us, you and me, make a covenant, and let it stand as a witness between you and me!"

The covenant between Laban and Jacob

⁴⁵ Jacob took a stone and set it up as a marker.

⁴⁶ Jacob told his relatives, "Gather some stones!"

They took some stones and made a pile of them. Then they ate there on the pile of stones. ⁴⁷ Laban called it "Jegar-Sahadutha," but Jacob called it "Galeed."³⁸

⁴⁸ Laban said, "This pile of stones is a witness between you and me today."

This is why it was called "Galeed." ⁴⁹ It was also called "Mizpah,"³⁹ because he said: "May the LORD keep guard between you and me while we are away from each other! ⁵⁰ If you mistreat my daughters or

marry other women in addition to my daughters, even though no one is with us, then you should see that God is a witness between you and me!"

⁵¹ Laban also told Jacob: "Here is this pile of stones, and here is the marker that I have raised between you and me. ⁵² This pile of stones is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I shall not go past this pile of stones to your side to harm you and that you will not go past this pile of stones and this pillar to my side to harm me. ⁵³ Let the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us!"

Jacob made an oath by the Awesome One of his father Isaac. ⁵⁴ Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill-country and invited his relatives to eat a meal. After they had eaten a meal, they spent the night in the hill-country. ⁵⁵ Early the next morning Laban got up, kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban left and went back home.

32

Jacob's plans to win Esau's favour with gifts

¹ Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him. ² When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is the camp of God!" He named that place "Mahanaim."⁴⁰

³ Then Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

⁴ He gave them orders: "This is what you are to tell my master Esau: 'This is what Jacob your servant has said: "I have been living with Laban and have been staying away until now. ⁵ I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats and male and female servants. I have sent this message to my master that he may be kind to me."'"

⁶ When the messengers came back to Jacob, they said: "We went to your brother Esau. He is also coming to meet you. There are four hundred men with him."

⁷ Jacob was very afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, as well as the flocks, cattle and camels, into two groups. ⁸ He said: "If Esau comes to the first group and attacks it, then the group that is left may escape."

⁹ Then Jacob prayed: "O God of my grandfather Abraham and of my father Isaac! O LORD, You told me: 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I shall treat you well.' ¹⁰ I am not worthy of any of the loving treatment or any of the faithfulness that You have shown to Your servant. For I crossed this Jordan with only my shepherd's staff and now I have become two groups. ¹¹ Please save me from the hand of my brother Esau! For I am afraid of him, that he will come and attack me, as well as the mothers and their children. ¹² However, You have promised, 'I shall certainly treat you well and make **your descendants like the sand of the sea, which is too much to count.**'"

¹³ He stayed there that night and then selected a pre-

³⁸ Jegar-Sahadutha" and "Galeed" both mean, "Heap of Witness."

³⁹ Mizpah means, "Watch-Station."

⁴⁰ Mahanaim means, "Two camps."

sent for his brother Esau from what he had with him: ¹⁴ two hundred female-goats, twenty male-goats, two hundred ewes, twenty rams, ¹⁵ thirty milking camels with their young, forty cows, ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. ¹⁶ He placed them in the care of his servants, each herd by itself. He told his servants, "Go on ahead of me and keep an interval between each herd and the next!"

¹⁷ He ordered the one in the lead: "When my brother Esau meets you and asks you, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? Besides, who owns these animals in front of you?'" ¹⁸ then you shall say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob! They are a gift sent to my master Esau and, you should know, he also is behind us.'"

¹⁹ He gave the same orders to the second man, the third man and all the others who were driving the herds. He said: "That is how you should speak to Esau when you meet him!" ²⁰ You should also say, 'Realise that your servant Jacob is behind us!'" For he thought: "I shall appease him with the gift that is going ahead of me. Perhaps he will be friendly to me when I see his face after that."

²¹ So, the gift went on ahead of Jacob, but he himself spent that night in the camp.

Jacob's wrestling with God

²² During that night he got up, gathered his two wives, his two maidservants and his eleven children and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ He took them, sent them across the stream and sent over his possessions. ²⁴ When Jacob was left alone, a Man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁵ When the Man saw that He could not overpower him, He touched the socket of Jacob's hip, and the socket of Jacob's hip was dislocated as the Man wrestled with him. ²⁶ Then the Man said: "Let Me go! For it is daybreak."

However, Jacob answered, "I shall not let You go unless You bless me."

²⁷ Therefore, He asked him, "What is your name?" He answered, "Jacob."

²⁸ In addition, He said: "Your name will no longer be "Jacob" but "Israel,"^{*41} because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome."

²⁹ Then Jacob asked, "Please tell me Your name!"

He answered, "Why is it that you ask for My name?"

Then He blessed Jacob there. ³⁰ So, Jacob named that place "Peniel,"^{*42} saying, "It is because I have seen God face to face and yet my life has been preserved."

³¹ The sun rose on him as he passed Penuel, and he was limping because of his hip. ³² That is the reason why to this day the Israelites do not eat the sinew attached to the socket of the upper thigh, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip at the sinew of the upper thigh.

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Jacob's meeting with Esau

¹ Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming with four hundred men. Jacob divided his children among Leah, Rachel and the two maidservants. ² He put the maidservants with their children in front, Leah and her children after them and Rachel and Joseph in the rear.

³ He himself went on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times until he came close to his brother. ⁴ However, Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him. He threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. Then they wept. ⁵ When Esau looked up and saw the women and the children, he asked, "Who are these with you?"

Jacob answered, "They are the children whom God has graciously given to your servant."

⁶ Then the maidservants and their children came closer and bowed down. ⁷ Then Leah and her children also approached and bowed down. Finally, Joseph and Rachel approached and bowed down. ⁸ Esau asked, "What do you mean by this whole drove that I have met?"

He answered, "That my master may be kindly disposed to me."

⁹ However, Esau said, "I have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself!"

¹⁰ Jacob said: "No, please. If I have found that you are kindly disposed to me, please accept my gift from my hand! The reason is that for me to have seen your face is like seeing the face of God. You have been favourable to me. ¹¹ Please take the gift that I have brought you! God has been kind to me, and I have everything."

When Jacob urged him strongly, he accepted it.

¹² Esau said, "Let us get ready to go, and let me accompany you!"

¹³ However, Jacob told him: "My master knows that the children are tender and that I am caring for flocks and herds that are nursing their young. If anyone drives them too hard for just one day, all the animals will die. ¹⁴ My master should please go on ahead of his servant, that I may move along as slowly as is suitable for the pace of the expedition ahead of me and for the pace of the children, until I come to my master in Seir!"

¹⁵ Esau said, "Please let me leave some of my men with you!"

However, Jacob asked, "Why do that? Let my master just have a friendly attitude towards me!"

¹⁶ That day Esau left on his way back to Seir. ¹⁷ Jacob journeyed to Succoth, where he built a home for himself and shelters for his livestock. This is why the place was named "Succoth."^{*43}

Jacob's arrival at Shechem

¹⁸ When Jacob returned from Paddan-Aram, he ar-

⁴¹ Israel means, "God strives."

⁴² Peniel means, "Face of God" (elsewhere Penuel).

⁴³ Succoth means, "Shelters."

rived safely at the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, and camped in sight of the city. ¹⁹ He bought a piece of land for one hundred pieces of currency from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, and there he pitched his tent. ²⁰ He set up an altar there and called it "El-Elohe-Israel."^{*44}

34

The rape of Dinah by Shechem and her brothers' revenge

¹ Dinah, the daughter of Leah, whom Leah had borne to Jacob, went out to visit some women of the land.

² Shechem, the son of Hamor, the Hivite, the local ruler, saw Dinah, seized her, lay with her and violated her. ³ However, he became very fond of Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke affectionately to her. ⁴ Shechem told his father Hamor, "Get me this girl to be my wife!"

⁵ When Jacob heard that Shechem had defiled Dinah his daughter, his sons were with his livestock in the open country. So, Jacob kept quiet about it until they came in. ⁶ Hamor, the father of Shechem, came out to talk with Jacob. ⁷ Jacob's sons came in from the field when they heard what had happened. The men were indignant and very angry because Shechem had done a disgraceful thing to Israel's family by lying with Jacob's daughter. That kind of thing should not have happened. ⁸ Hamor told them: "My son Shechem deeply loves your daughter. Please give her to him as his wife! ⁹ Become related to us by marriage! Give us your daughters and take ours for yourselves! ¹⁰ Then you will live among us, and the country will be open to you. Live and move about freely in it and settle down in it!"

¹¹ Shechem also told Dinah's father and her brothers: "Let me find that you are kindly disposed towards me! Then I shall give you whatever you ask of me. ¹² Set the money to be paid to the bride's family and the gift that I should give as high as you want! I shall pay whatever you tell me. Only give me the young woman as my wife!"

¹³ Jacob's sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully because Shechem had defiled their sister Dinah. ¹⁴ They told them: "We cannot do this. We cannot give our sister to an uncircumcised man. For to us that would be disgraceful. ¹⁵ We are ready to do this for you on only one condition: that every male among you allows himself to be circumcised, so that you become like us. ¹⁶ Then we shall give you our daughters and take your daughters for ourselves. We shall settle among you and become one people. ¹⁷ However, if you do not listen to us and have yourselves circumcised, we shall take our daughter and go."

¹⁸ Hamor and his son Shechem liked their proposal.

¹⁹ The young man, who was the most honoured per-

son in all his father's family, did what they said immediately, because he took such pleasure in Jacob's daughter. ²⁰ Hamor and his son Shechem went to the gate of their city and spoke with the men of their city: ²¹ "These men are peaceable towards us. They should settle in the country and move about in it! You see that the land has plenty of room for them. We shall marry their daughters and let them marry our daughters. ²² The men are ready to live with us and become one people on only this one condition: that every one of our males lets himself be circumcised, just as they are circumcised. ²³ Will not their livestock, their property and all their animals become ours? Let us agree to do only this for them, that they may settle among us!"

²⁴ All the men who went out to the gate of Hamor's city agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male who went out to the gate of his city had himself circumcised. ²⁵ On the third day, when the men of the city were in pain, Simeon and Levi, two of Jacob's sons, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword, attacked the city while they felt secure and killed every male. ²⁶ They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword. Then they took Dinah from Shechem's house and left. ²⁷ Then the sons of Jacob came upon the dead bodies and plundered the city where their sister had been defiled. ²⁸ They took their flocks, their herds, their donkeys, whatever was in the city and in the open country, ²⁹ and all their wealth. They also took all their children and their wives captive and also plundered whatever was in the houses. ³⁰ Jacob told Simeon and Levi: "You have made me a social outcast. You have made the inhabitants of the country, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, hate me. My people are few in numbers. If they join forces against me and attack me and my family, and I shall be destroyed."

³¹ However, they replied, "Should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"

35

God's blessing on Jacob at Bethel

¹ God told Jacob: "Get ready! Go up to Bethel and stay there! Build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau."

² Then Jacob told his family and all who were with him: "Get rid of the foreign gods that you have with you! Purify yourselves and change your clothes!"

³ Then let us get ready, that we may go up to Bethel! I shall build an altar there to God, who answered me at the time when I was in trouble and who has been with me wherever I have been going."

⁴ Therefore, they handed over to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the big tree that was near Shechem. ⁵ When they set out, God terrified the people in the cities all around them, and so they did not pursue

⁴⁴ El-Elohe-Israel means, "A Mighty God is the God of Israel."

the sons of Jacob. ⁶ Jacob and all the people who were with him arrived at Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan. ⁷ He built an altar there and called the place “El-Bethel,” because God had revealed Himself to him there when he was fleeing from his brother. ⁸ Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died and was buried under the tall tree below Bethel. It was given the name “Allon-Bacuth.”*⁴⁵

The change of Jacob’s name to “Israel” and the repetition of the promise to him

⁹ After Jacob had come back from Paddan-Aram God appeared to him again and blessed him. ¹⁰ God told him, “Although your name has been ‘Jacob,’ you will no longer be named ‘Jacob,’ but your name will be ‘Israel.’”*⁴⁶ So, He named him “Israel.”

¹¹ God told him: “I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and increase in number! A nation, yes, a group of nations will come from you, and you will be the father of kings. ¹² I shall give to you the land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac. I shall give the land to your descendants after you.”

¹³ God went up from Jacob at the place where He had been speaking to him. ¹⁴ Jacob set up a stone memorial to mark the place where God had been talking to him. He poured out a wine offering on it. He also poured olive-oil on it. ¹⁵ Jacob had named the place where God had been speaking to him “Bethel.”*⁴⁷

The birth of Benjamin and the death of Rachel

¹⁶ Then they moved away from Bethel and were still some distance on the way to Ephrath when Rachel began giving birth to a child and she was having a difficult labour. ¹⁷ When she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife told her, “Do not be afraid! For you are having another son.”

¹⁸ Rachel was dying and, while her life was departing, she named him “Ben-Oni.”*⁴⁸ However, his father called him “Ben-Jamin.”*⁴⁹ ¹⁹ Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. ²⁰ Jacob set up a memorial stone over her grave. That is the memorial stone that is still at Rachel’s grave today.

²¹ Israel moved on and pitched his tent beyond Migdal-Eder. ²² While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, his father’s concubine, and Israel heard about it.

Jacob’s [Israel’s] twelve sons — 1 Chronicles 2:1-2

^{22b} Jacob had twelve sons. ²³ Leah’s sons were Reuben, Jacob’s first-born and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. ²⁴ Rachel’s sons were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁵ The sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s maidservant, were Dan and Naphtali. ²⁶ The sons of Zilpah, Leah’s maidservant, were Gad and Asher. These were Jacob’s sons, who were born in Paddan-Aram.

⁴⁵ Allon-Bacuth means, “Oak of mourning.”

⁴⁶ Israel means, “God strives” — compare Gn 32:28).

⁴⁷ Bethel means, “House of God.”

⁴⁸ Ben-Oni means, “Son of my sorrow.”

⁴⁹ Ben-Jamin means, “Son of my right hand.”

The death of Isaac

²⁷ Jacob went to his father Isaac at Mamre, at Kiriath-Arba, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac had lived as foreigners. ²⁸ Isaac was a hundred and eighty years old ²⁹ when he took his last breath and died. He was gathered to his people, old and having had a full life. His sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

36

The family-history of Esau and the first Edomites (36:1-40) — 1 Chronicles 1:35-54

¹ This is the family history of Esau, who is Edom.

² Esau chose his wives from the women of Canaan: Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon, the Hivite. ³ He also married Basemath, the daughter of Ishmael and the sister of Nebaioth. ⁴ Adah gave birth to Eliphaz for Esau, Basemath gave birth to Reuel, ⁵ and Oholibamah gave birth to Jeush, Jalam and Korah. These were the sons of Esau, who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, all the other persons in his household, his cattle, all his other animals and all the property that he had acquired in Canaan and went to another land away from his brother Jacob. ⁷ He did this because they had too many possessions for them to remain together. The land where they were living as foreigners could not support them both, because of their livestock. ⁸ So, Esau lived in the hill-country of Seir. Esau is Edom. ⁹ This is the family history of Esau, the father of the Edomites in the hill-country of Seir.

¹⁰ These were the names of Esau’s sons: Eliphaz, the son of Esau’s wife Adah and Reuel, the son of Esau’s wife Basemath. ¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam and Kenaz. ¹² Timna was a concubine of Esau’s son Eliphaz. She gave birth to Amalek for Eliphaz. These were the descendants of Esau’s wife Adah. ¹³ These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah. These were the descendants of Esau’s wife Basemath. ¹⁴ These were the sons of Esau’s wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon. She gave birth to Jeush, Jalam and Korah for Esau.

Clans and kings of Edom

¹⁵ These were the tribal chiefs among Esau’s descendants: the sons of Eliphaz, Esau’s first son: Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz, ¹⁶ Chief Korah, Chief Gatam and Chief Amalek. These were the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in the country of Edom. They were the descendants of Adah. ¹⁷ These were descendants of Esau’s son Reuel: Chief Nahath, Chief Zerah. Chief Shammah and Chief Mizzah. These were the chiefs of Reuel in the country of Edom. They were the descendants of Esau’s wife Basemath.

¹⁸ These were the descendants from Esau’s wife Oholibamah: Chief Jeush, Chief Jalam and Chief Ko-

rah. These were the chiefs that descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

¹⁹ These were the descendants of Esau who were their tribal chiefs. Esau is Edom.

²⁰ These were the sons of Seir the Horite, who lived in that region: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹ Dishon, Ezer and Dishan. These were the Horite tribal chiefs, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom. ²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam. Timna was Lotan's sister. ²³ These were the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho and Onam. ²⁴ These were the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. He was the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness while he was minding the donkeys of his father Zibeon. ²⁵ These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah. ²⁶ These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran and Cheran. ²⁷ These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan and Akan. ²⁸ These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran. ²⁹ These were the Horite chiefs: Chief Lotan, Chief Shobal, Chief Zibeon, Chief Anah, ³⁰ Chief Dishon, Chief Ezer and Chief Dishan. These were the Horite tribal chiefs in the land of Seir, chief by chief.

³¹ These were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites:

³² Bela, the son of Beor, reigned in Edom. His city was named "Dinhabah." ³² After Bela died, Jobab, the son of Zera from Bozrah, succeeded him as king.

³⁴ After Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites succeeded him as king. ³⁵ After Husham died, Hadad, the son of Bedad, who defeated the Midianites in the open country of Moab, succeeded him as king. The name of his city was "Avith." ³⁶ After Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah succeeded him as king. ³⁷ After Samlah died, Shaul from Rehoboth on the Euphrates succeeded him as king. ³⁸ After Shaul died, Baal-Hanan, the son of Acbor, succeeded him as king. ³⁹ After Baal-Hanan, the son of Acbor, died, Hadar succeeded him as king. The name of his city was "Pau." His wife's name was "Mehetabel," the daughter of Matred and the granddaughter of Mezahab.

⁴⁰ These were the names of the tribal chiefs who descended from Esau, according to their families, their places and by their names: Chief Timna, Chief Alvah, Chief Jetheth, ⁴¹ Chief Oholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, ⁴² Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, ⁴³ Chief Magdiel and Chief Iram. These were the tribal chiefs of Edom, according to the areas where they lived and by the property that they owned. Edom was Esau, the father of the Edomites.

37

¹ Jacob continued to live in the land of Canaan, the country where his father had been living as a foreigner.

² This is the family-history of Jacob.

The story of Joseph, ending with Jacob's arrival in Egypt, Jacob's

death and Joseph's death (37:3-50:26)

Joseph's dreams

^{2b} When Joseph was seventeen years old, he was taking care of the flock with his brothers. While he was a lad he was with the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah, and Joseph told his father about the bad things that his brothers were doing. ³ Israel loved Joseph more than all his other sons because he was born when Israel was old. He made Joseph a tunic reaching to the ankles. ⁴ When his brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than he loved any of Joseph's brothers, they hated him and could not speak to him in a friendly way.

⁵ Joseph had a dream and, when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. ⁶ He told them: "Please listen to this dream, which I have had! ⁷ I saw us tying up sheaves out in the field, and suddenly my sheaf got up and even stood upright, while your sheaves actually gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf."

⁸ His brothers asked him: "Will you really be a king over us? Or will you really rule over us?"

Therefore, they hated him even more because of his dreams and because of what he had said.

⁹ Then he had another dream and told his brothers about it. He said: "Listen! I have had another dream. I saw the sun, the moon and eleven stars bowing down to me."

¹⁰ When he told his father as well as his brothers about it, his father rebuked him. He asked him: "What is this dream that you have had? Shall we, I, your mother and your brothers, really come and bow down to the ground in front of you?"

¹¹ Joseph's brothers **were jealous of him**, but his father kept thinking about what he had said.

The sale of Joseph into slavery by his brothers

¹² Joseph's brothers went to Shechem to graze their father's flock there. ¹³ Israel asked Joseph, "Are your brothers not grazing the flock at Shechem? Come! I shall send you to them."

Joseph answered him, "Very well."

¹⁴ Jacob told him, "Please go and see if all is well with your brothers and well with the flock and bring me a report!"

Therefore, he sent him from the Valley of Hebron. When Joseph arrived at Shechem, ¹⁵ a man found him wandering around in the open country. The man asked him, "What are you looking for?"

¹⁶ He said, "I am looking for my brothers. Please tell me where they are grazing the flock!"

¹⁷ The man said, "They have moved away from here. For I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan!'"

So, Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸ They saw him from a distance, but, before he reached them, they plotted against him to kill him.

¹⁹ They said to one another: "Look! Here comes that master-dreamer! ²⁰ So come now! Let us kill him, throw him into one of the pits and say, 'A wild animal

has devoured him!’ Then we shall see what will become of his dreams.”

²¹ However, when Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from their hands. He said, “Let us not take his life!”

²² Reuben also told them: “Do not shed blood! Throw him into this cistern in the wilderness but do not lay a hand on him!”

Reuben said this to rescue him from their hands, to take him back to his father.

²³ When Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped off Joseph’s tunic, the tunic reaching to the ankles, which he was wearing. ²⁴ Then they took him and threw him into the cistern. It was an empty cistern, without water in it. ²⁵ When they sat down to eat a meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were carrying resinous gum, balm and myrrh. They were on their way to take them down to Egypt. ²⁶ Judah asked his brothers: “What shall we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his death?”

²⁷ Come! Let us sell him to the Ishmaelites! Let us not lay our hands on him! For he is our brother, our own flesh.”

His brothers agreed. ²⁸ When the Midianite traders were going past, the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the cistern. They **sold Joseph** for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took **Joseph to Egypt**.

²⁹ When Reuben returned to the cistern and saw that Joseph was not in the cistern, he tore his clothes.

³⁰ He went back to his brothers and said, “The boy is not there! Where do I myself go from here?”

³¹ Then they took Joseph’s tunic, slaughtered a male goat and dipped the tunic in the blood. ³² Then they sent the tunic, which reached to the ankles, back to their father. They said, “We have found this. Find out whether that is your son’s tunic or not!”

³³ Jacob recognised it and said: “It is my son’s tunic! A wild animal has devoured him. Joseph has certainly been torn in pieces.”

³⁴ Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth around his waist and mourned for his son for a long time. ³⁵ All his other sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. He said, “No! I shall still be mourning when I go down to my son in the grave.” This is how his father wept for him.

³⁶ In Egypt the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and a captain of the bodyguards.

38

Judah’s sin with Tamar

¹ At that time Judah left his brothers and went down to a man at Adullam whose name was Hirah. ² There Judah saw the daughter of a Canaanite whose name was Shua. He married her and lay with her. ³ She became pregnant and gave birth to a son, who was named “Er.” ⁴ She conceived again and gave birth to a

son and named him “Onan.” ⁵ She gave birth to still another son and named him “Shelah.” It was at Chezib that she gave birth to him.

⁶ Judah chose a wife for his first-born son Er and her name was “Tamar.” ⁷ However, the LORD regarded Er, Judah’s first-born, as a wicked person and the LORD killed him. ⁸ Then Judah told Onan: “Marry your **brother’s widow** and **fulfil your duty to her** as a brother-in-law! **Have a child** who will **belong to your brother!**”

⁹ However, Onan knew that the child would not belong to him. So, whenever he had intercourse with his brother’s widow, he spilled his semen on the ground, to avoid producing a child for his brother. ¹⁰ The LORD regarded what he had done as wicked and killed him also. ¹¹ Then Judah told Tamar, his daughter-in-law, “Stay as a widow in your father’s home, until my son Shelah grows up!” For he thought, “I do not want him to die too, like his brothers.”

So, Tamar went to live in her father’s home.

¹² After a long time, Judah’s wife, Shua’s daughter, died. When Judah recovered from his grief, he and his friend Hirah from Adullam went up to Timnah to the men who were shearing Judah’s sheep. ¹³ Tamar was told: “Look! Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.”

¹⁴ She took off her widow’s clothes, covered herself with a shawl, wrapped herself up and sat at the entrance to Enaim on the road to Timnah. For she had seen that, although Shelah had grown up, she had not been given to him as his wife. ¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he thought that she was a prostitute, because she had covered her face. ¹⁶ He went over to her by the roadside. He said, “Come now, let me sleep with you!” For he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She asked, “What will you give me, to let you sleep with me?”

¹⁷ He answered, “I shall send a young goat from the flock.”

She said, “Would you give me a pledge until you send it?”

¹⁸ He asked, “What pledge should I give you?”

She answered, “Your seal, cord and the shepherd’s staff that is in your hand.”

He gave her these and slept with her, and she became pregnant by him. ¹⁹ After she got up and left, she took off her shawl and put on her widow’s clothes again. ²⁰ Judah sent his friend the Adullamite to take the young goat and get the pledge from the woman, but he could not find her. ²¹ He asked the men who lived where she had been, “Where is the cult prostitute, the one by the roadside at Enaim?”

They answered, “There has not been any cult prostitute in this place.”

²² He went back to Judah and told him: “I could not find her, and the men at the place also said, ‘There has not been any cult prostitute in this place.’”

²³ Judah said: "Let her keep them! Otherwise we shall become a laughingstock. Look! I did send this young goat, but you could not find her."

²⁴ About three months afterwards Judah was told: "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has been a prostitute and, what is more, by being a prostitute she has become pregnant."

Judah said, "Bring her out! She must be burnt!"

²⁵ When she was being brought out, she sent a message to her father-in-law: "I am pregnant by the man to whom these things belong." She also said: "Please recognise to whom this signet ring, this cord and this shepherd's staff belong!"

²⁶ Judah recognised them and said, "She has been more righteous than I have been, because I did not let her marry my son Shelah."

However, he did not sleep with her again.

²⁷ When the time came for her to give birth, it became evident that there were twins in her womb. ²⁸ When she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand, and the midwife took a crimson thread and tied it on his wrist. She said, "This one came out first."

²⁹ However, when he pulled back his hand, his brother came out unexpectedly. She said: "How have you managed to break through? That is why he was named 'Perez.'" ⁵⁰ ³⁰ After that, his brother, who had the crimson thread on his wrist, came out and he was named "Zerah."⁵¹

39

Joseph's life as a slave in Potiphar's house

¹ Joseph was taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian, an official of Pharaoh and captain of the bodyguards, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. ² However, **the LORD was with Joseph**, and he became a successful man. He was in the home of his Egyptian master. ³ His master saw that **the LORD was with him** and that the LORD used to give him success in everything that he undertook. ⁴ Joseph's master was kind to him, and Joseph became his servant. His master put him in charge of his household and entrusted everything that he owned to him. ⁵ After the Egyptian appointed Joseph over his household and over everything that he owned, the LORD blessed his household because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything that his master had, both in the household and in the field. ⁶ He left everything that he had in Joseph's charge. Because he had him, he did not concern himself with anything except the food that he was eating.

Joseph was well built and good-looking. ⁷ After these things, his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

⁸ He refused. He told his master's wife: "Look! Because I am here, my master does not concern himself

with anything in the house. He has entrusted everything that he has to me. ⁹ In this house my master is no greater than I am. He has not withheld anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then could I do this very wicked thing and sin against God?"

¹⁰ Although she kept talking to Joseph day after day, he refused her requests to lie beside her and even to be with her. ¹¹ One day he went into the house to do his work, when none of the household servants was there in the house. ¹² She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" However, he left his cloak in her hand, ran away and went outside. ¹³ When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run outside, ¹⁴ she called her household servants. She told them: "Look! He has brought us a Hebrew man to play around with us. He came to me to sleep with me, but I screamed. ¹⁵ As soon as he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me, ran away and went outside."

¹⁶ She kept Joseph's cloak with her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she told him a similar story. She said: "The Hebrew slave whom you brought to us came to me to play around with me. ¹⁸ However, when I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran outside."

Joseph's imprisonment

¹⁹ When his master heard the story that his wife told him, "This is what your slave did to me," he burned with anger. ²⁰ Joseph's master arrested him and put him in prison, in the place where the king's prisoners were held. So, Joseph was there in the prison. ²¹ Nevertheless, **the LORD was with Joseph and extended His mercy to him. He made the superintendent of the prison kind to him.** ²² The superintendent of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the others who were held in that prison. He was responsible for everything that they were doing there. ²³ The superintendent of the prison paid no attention to anything entrusted to Joseph, because the LORD was with Joseph and because the LORD kept making whatever Joseph was doing successful.

40

Joseph's interpretation of the cup-bearer's and the baker's dreams in prison

¹ After this, the cup-bearer and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt.

² Pharaoh became angry with his two officers, the chief cup-bearer and the chief baker. ³ He put them under guard at the house of the captain of the bodyguards, in the same prison as where Joseph was being held. ⁴ The captain of the bodyguards assigned them to Joseph, who waited on them. After they had been under guard for a while, ⁵ each of the two men, the cup-bearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were being held in the prison, had a dream during the same night. Each had his own dream, which fitted its

⁵⁰ Perez means, "Breaking out."

⁵¹ Zerah means, "Brightness."

interpretation. ⁶ When Joseph went to them in the morning and looked at them, he saw that they were unhappy. ⁷ He asked Pharaoh's officials, who were with him under guard in his master's house, "Why are your faces so worried today?"

⁸ They answered him, "We have each had a dream, but there is no one to explain what each one means."

Joseph asked them. "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell me your dreams!"

⁹ So, the chief cup-bearer told Joseph his dream. He told him: "In my dream I saw a grapevine in front of me. ¹⁰ There were three branches on the vine. It looked as if it was budding. Its cluster of blossoms sprang up and its clusters ripened into grapes.

¹¹ Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, squeezed them out into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in Pharaoh's hand."

¹² Joseph told him: "This is the interpretation of it. The three branches are three days. ¹³ In three days Pharaoh will restore you to honour and put you back in your position. You will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand as you used to do when you were his cup-bearer.

¹⁴ However, I want you to remember me when all is well with you. Please be kind to me and mention me to Pharaoh! Get me out of this building! ¹⁵ For I have indeed been stolen away from the country of the Hebrews and here too I have not done anything to justify my being put into this dungeon."

¹⁶ When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favourable interpretation, he told Joseph: "I also have had a dream. I saw three baskets of cakes made with fine flour on my head. ¹⁷ In the top basket there were all kinds of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head."

¹⁸ Joseph answered: "This is the interpretation of it: The three baskets are three days. ¹⁹ In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat your flesh from you."

²⁰ On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, Pharaoh arranged a feast for all his officials. He gave special attention to the chief cup-bearer and the chief baker among his officials. ²¹ He put the chief cup-bearer back in his position, so that his cup-bearer again put the cup in Pharaoh's hand ²² but hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had told them in his interpretation. ²³ Nevertheless, the chief cup-bearer did not remember Joseph but forgot him.

41

Joseph's interpretation of the Pharaoh's dreams

¹ After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing beside the River Nile. ² He saw seven fine-looking fat cows coming up out of the river, and they grazed among the reeds. ³ Then he saw seven other cows, ugly and lean, coming up out of the river after them. They stood beside the other cows on the riverbank. ⁴ The ugly, lean cows ate up the seven fine-

looking fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

⁵ He fell asleep and had a second dream. He saw seven heads of grain, plump and healthy, sprouting up on a single stalk. ⁶ Then he saw seven scanty heads of grain scorched by the east wind sprouting up after them. ⁷ The scanty heads of grain swallowed up the seven plump and full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up and realised that it had been a dream. ⁸ In the morning his spirit was disturbed and he sent some men to call all the soothsayer-priests of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for Pharaoh.

⁹ Then the chief cup-bearer spoke up to Pharaoh. He said: "Today I must mention my faults. ¹⁰ When Pharaoh was angry with his officials, he placed me in custody at the house of the captain of the bodyguards, together with the chief baker. ¹¹ He and I each had dreams in the same night. Each of us had a dream that matched its own interpretation. ¹² A young Hebrew was there with us, a slave belonging to the captain of the bodyguards. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us. He told each of us the interpretation of his dream. ¹³ Our dreams turned out as he had interpreted them: Pharaoh restored me to my position and hanged the other man."

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent some men to call Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the dungeon. He shaved, changed his clothes and came to Pharaoh. ¹⁵ Pharaoh told Joseph: "I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it. However, I have heard that, when you hear a dream, you can interpret it."

¹⁶ Joseph answered Pharaoh: "I cannot do it. However, God will give Pharaoh an answer that indicates his welfare."

¹⁷ Pharaoh told Joseph: "In my dream I was standing beside the bank of the Nile. ¹⁸ I saw seven fat fine-looking cows coming up out of the river, and they grazed among the reeds. ¹⁹ Then I saw seven other cows coming up after them. They were thin, very ugly and skinny. I have never seen anything as ugly as they were in all the land of Egypt. ²⁰ The skinny, ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows. ²¹ Although these went into their bodies, no one would have known that they had gone into their bodies. They looked as ugly as they had at the beginning. Then I woke up.

²² "Then I suddenly saw in my dream seven heads of grain, full and good, sprouting up on a single stalk. ²³ Next I saw seven barren, thin heads scorched by the east wind sprouting up after them. ²⁴ The thin heads swallowed up the seven good heads. I told this to the soothsayer-priests, but no one could explain it to me."

²⁵ Joseph told Pharaoh: "The dreams of Pharaoh mean the same. God has told Pharaoh what He is about to do. ²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years. The dreams are the same. ²⁷ The seven skinny, ugly cows coming up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads of

grain scorched by the east wind will be seven years of famine. ²⁸ It is just as I have told Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. ²⁹ Look! Seven years are coming when there will be great plenty throughout the land of Egypt. ³⁰ Seven years of famine will follow them, during which a famine will exhaust the land, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. ³¹ The plenty will no longer be remembered in the land because of the famine that follows. For it will be very severe. ³² The reason why the dream has been given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will make it happen soon.

Joseph's advice to the Pharaoh

³³ "Now therefore, Pharaoh should choose an intelligent and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt! ³⁴ Pharaoh should do this and should appoint overseers over the land and collect one-fifth of what the land of Egypt produces during the seven plentiful years! ³⁵ They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and, under Pharaoh's authority, heap up grain for food in the cities and store it there! ³⁶ This food should be a reserve supply for the land for the seven years of famine that will occur in the land of Egypt, that the country may not be ruined by the famine!"

The elevation of Joseph to high office

³⁷ Pharaoh and all his officials approved the advice. ³⁸ Pharaoh asked his officials, "Can we find anyone like this, a man who has the Spirit of God in him?" ³⁹ Then Pharaoh told Joseph: "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one as perceptive and wise as you are. ⁴⁰ **You shall be in charge of my palace**, and all my people shall obey your instructions! Only in regard to the throne shall I be superior to you."

⁴¹ Pharaoh told Joseph, "See! **I have hereby put you in charge of** the entire land of **Egypt**."

⁴² Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in fine linen and put a golden chain around his neck. ⁴³ He had Joseph ride in his second chariot of state. People called out ahead of him, "Bow down!" Pharaoh **put Joseph in charge of** the entire land of **Egypt**.

⁴⁴ Pharaoh told Joseph, "Although I am Pharaoh, no one throughout the land of Egypt will raise his hand or his foot without your permission."

⁴⁵ Pharaoh gave Joseph the name "Zaphenath-Paneah"⁵² and gave him Asenath as his wife. She was the daughter of Potiphara, the priest of On. Then Joseph travelled over the land of Egypt.

Joseph's supervision of storage of grain

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old when he began to work for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and travelled through the entire land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the seven plentiful years the

land produced abundantly. ⁴⁸ Joseph collected all the food produced during the seven plentiful years that ensued in the land of Egypt. He stored the food in the cities. Inside each city he deposited the food from the fields around it. ⁴⁹ The grain that Joseph heaped up was like the sand by the sea. It was so plentiful that he stopped keeping records, because it could not be recorded.

⁵⁰ Two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara, the priest of On, before the first year of famine came. ⁵¹ Joseph named his first-born "Manasseh."⁵³ For he said, "God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." ⁵² He named the second son "Ephraim."⁵⁴ For he said, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

Joseph's distribution of relief during the famine

⁵³ The seven plentiful years that occurred in the land of Egypt ended. ⁵⁴ Then the seven years of famine began, as Joseph had said they would, and there was a famine in all the other countries. However, there was food in the entire land of Egypt. ⁵⁵ When **the whole land of Egypt was suffering from hunger**, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph! **Do what he tells you!**" ⁵⁶ When the famine had spread all over the land, Joseph opened all the stores that were among the Egyptians and sold grain to them. The famine was severe throughout the land of Egypt. ⁵⁷ Because the famine was severe all over the world, the whole world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain.

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The arrival of Jacob's sons in Egypt

¹ **When Jacob found out that there was grain for sale in Egypt**, he asked his sons, "Why do you keep looking at one another?" ² He added: "Look! **I have heard there is grain for sale in Egypt**. Go down there and buy some grain for us from there, that we may live and not die!"

³ Ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. ⁴ However, Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with the other brothers. For he said, "I am afraid that some fatal accident may happen to him."

⁵ Israel's sons went to buy grain along with the other people who were going, because **there was famine in** the land of **Canaan** also. ⁶ Joseph, as the ruler of the country, was selling grain to all the people of the country. So, when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces on the ground.

⁷ When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognised them. However, he kept his identity from them and spoke harshly to them. He asked them, "From where have you come?"

⁵² Zaphenath-Paneah" means, "God speaks and lives."

⁵³ Manasseh means, "He causes to forget."

⁵⁴ Ephraim means, "Double fruitfulness."

They answered, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food."

⁸ Although Joseph recognised his brothers, they did not recognise him. ⁹ Joseph remembered the dreams that he had had about them. He told them: "You are spies. You have come to find out where the country is undefended."

¹⁰ They answered him: "No, my master! Your servants have come to buy grain for food. ¹¹ We are all the sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies."

¹² However, he told them, "No! You have come to find out where the country is undefended."

¹³ They answered him: "Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. In fact, the youngest is now with our father and one is no more."

¹⁴ However, Joseph told them: "It is just as I have told you. You are spies. ¹⁵ This is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.

¹⁶ Send one of you to fetch your brother. The rest of you shall be kept in prison, that what you are saying may be tested, to see whether you are telling the truth! If not, as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies."

¹⁷ So, he put them in prison for three days. ¹⁸ On the third day Joseph told them: "Do this and live! I too fear God. ¹⁹ If you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody! The rest of you, go and take grain for your hungry families! ²⁰ You shall also fetch me your youngest brother, that what you are saying may be confirmed! Then you will not die."

The return of nine brothers to Canaan

So, that is what they did. ²¹ Then they told one another: "Surely we are bearing the consequences of our guilt concerning our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he was pleading with us for pity, and we would not listen. This is why this distress has come on us."

²² Reuben answered them: "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy!?' However, you would not listen. Yes, you see, we are being called to account for his blood."

²³ However, they were not aware that Joseph understood them. For he had been speaking to them through an interpreter. ²⁴ Joseph turned away from them and wept. When he came back, he spoke to them. Then he took Simeon from them and had him arrested while they were watching. ²⁵ Then Joseph gave an order to fill their sacks with grain, to return each man's money to his sack and to give them provisions for their journey. This was done for them. ²⁶ They loaded their grain on their donkeys and left. ²⁷ When one of them opened his sack to give fodder to his donkey at the place where they camped for the night, he saw his money. There it was in the mouth of his sack! ²⁸ He

told his brothers: "My money has been put back! Look! Here it is, in the mouth of my sack."

Their hearts sank and they trembled as they looked at each other. They asked, "What is this that God has done to us?"

The report of the nine brothers to Jacob in Canaan

²⁹ When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him everything that had happened to them. They said, ³⁰ "The ruler of the land spoke harshly to us and treated us as though we were spying on the land. ³¹ We told him, 'We are honest men. We have never been spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, the sons of our father. One is no more and the youngest is still with our father in the land of Canaan.' ³³ The man who is ruler of the land told us, 'This is how I shall know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers with me! Take food for your hungry families and go! ³⁴ Then bring your youngest brother to me, that I may know you are no spies but honest men! Then I shall give your brother back to you, and you may move about in this country.'"

³⁵ While they were emptying their sacks, they saw each one's bag of money in his sack. When they saw their bags of money, they and their father were afraid.

³⁶ Their father Jacob told them: "You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you are going to take Benjamin. All these things have come against me!"

³⁷ Reuben told his father: "You may put both of my sons to death if I do not bring him back to you. Entrust him to my care! I shall bring him back to you."

³⁸ However, Jacob replied: "My son shall not go down with you! His brother is dead, and he is the only one left. If a fatal accident should happen to him on the journey that you would make, you would bring this grey-haired old man down to his grave in sorrow."

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The second journey to Egypt for food together with Benjamin

¹ The famine continued to be severe in the land.

² After they had finished eating all the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father told them, "Go back and buy us a little food!"

³ However, Judah told him: "The man warned us solemnly, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.' ⁴ If you are going to send our brother along with us, we shall go down to buy food for you.

⁵ However, if you are not going to send him, we shall not go down, because the man told us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

⁶ Israel asked, "Why did you cause trouble for me by telling the man whether you had another brother?"

⁷ They replied: "The man questioned us closely about ourselves and our relatives. He asked, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' We told him exactly what he was asking. Could we in any way know that he would say, 'Fetch your brother down

here!?’”

⁸ Then Judah told his father Israel: “Send the lad with me, and let us go at once, that both you, we and our families may live and not die! ⁹ I shall myself stand surety for him. You may hold me personally responsible for him. If I fail to produce him before you, then you may blame me for it all my life. ¹⁰ For, if we had not been delaying so long, we could surely have returned twice by now.”

¹¹ Their father Israel told them: “If it must be so, then do this: Put in your sacks some of the best produce of the land and take a gift down to the man, a little mastic, a little honey, resin, gum, some pistachio nuts and almonds! ¹² Take a double amount of money with you and take back with you the money that was put back into the mouths of your sacks! Perhaps there was an oversight. ¹³ Take your brother also and go back to the man at once! ¹⁴ May God Almighty make the man merciful to you, that he may release your other brother to you and send Benjamin back! As for me, if I have lost my children, I have lost them.”

Joseph's dinner for his brothers at his house

¹⁵ So, the men took that gift. They also took twice as much money with them, as well as Benjamin. They got ready, went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph. ¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he told the man in charge of his house: “Take these men to my house, butcher an animal and prepare a meal! For the men will have dinner with me at noon.”

¹⁷ The man did as Joseph had told him and took the men to Joseph's home. ¹⁸ The men were afraid because they had been brought into Joseph's home. They said: “We are being brought here because of the money that was put back into our sacks the first time. He wants to fall upon us, attack us, take us as slaves and seize our donkeys.”

¹⁹ Therefore, they approached the man in charge of Joseph's house and spoke to him at the entrance to the house. ²⁰ They said: “With your permission, sir, we indeed came down the first time to buy food. ²¹ However, when we came to the place where we spent the night, we opened our sacks and saw that each man's money was in the mouth of his sack, the full amount of our money. So, we have brought it back with us. ²² We have also brought down additional money with us to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.”

²³ However, he said: “You have nothing to worry about. Do not be afraid! Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you. I received your money.”

Then he brought Simeon out to them. ²⁴ The steward took the brothers into Joseph's home. He gave them water, and they washed their feet. He also provided fodder for their donkeys. ²⁵ The men prepared their gift for when Joseph came at noon, because they had heard that they were going to eat there. ²⁶ When Jo-

seph came home, they presented to him the gift that they had brought into the house and bowed down to the ground before him. ²⁷ He inquired of them how they were and then he asked, “How is your aged father, about whom you told me? Is he still alive?”

²⁸ They answered, “Your servant, our father, is well. He is still alive.”

Then they knelt and prostrated themselves. ²⁹ When he looked around, he saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son. He asked, “Is this your youngest brother, about whom you told me?” He said, “May God be gracious to you, my son!”

³⁰ Then Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep, because his loving feelings towards his brother were aroused. He went into his private room and wept there. ³¹ Then he washed his face, came out and controlled himself. He said, “Serve the food!”

³² They served Joseph by himself and the brothers by themselves and served the Egyptians who were eating with him separately. For the Egyptians could not share their food with the Hebrews, because that is detestable to Egyptians. ³³ When the brothers sat down facing Joseph, the first-born was in the first-born's place and the youngest was in the youngest one's place, and the men looked at one another in astonishment. ³⁴ Joseph took up servings for them from his own table, but Benjamin's portion of honour was five times larger than the portions of all the others. So, they feasted and drank wine with him.

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Joseph's plan to test his brothers again

¹ Joseph gave these orders to the man in charge of his house: “Fill the men's sacks with as much food as they can carry and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack! ² Then put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the youngest one's sack, together with the money for his grain!”

He did as Joseph had told him. ³ At daybreak the men were sent on their way with their donkeys. ⁴ They had left the city but had not gone far when Joseph told the man in charge of his house: “Follow the men at once and, when you catch up with them, ask them, ‘Why have you repaid good with evil? ⁵ Is this not the thing from which my master drinks and which he uses to search for omens and to give them? This is a wicked thing that you have done!’”

⁶ When he had caught up with them, he repeated these words to them. ⁷ They answered him: “Why should my master say such things? Your servants would never do anything like that. ⁸ Look! We brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money that we found in the mouths of our sacks. How, then, would we steal silver or gold from your master's house? ⁹ If it is found with anyone of your servants, he will die, and the rest of us will become my master's slaves.”

¹⁰ He said: “Yes, now let it be as you say! The one

with whom it is found will be my slave, but the rest of you will be innocent.”

¹¹ Each one quickly took his sack down to the ground and each one opened his sack. ¹² So, the steward searched for it. He began with the eldest and ended with the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. ¹³ Then they tore their clothes. After each one loaded his donkey, they returned to the city.

¹⁴ Joseph was still in the house when Judah and his brothers came. They fell to the ground before him.

¹⁵ Joseph asked them: “What is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me searches for omens and issues them?”

¹⁶ Then Judah said: “What can we answer my master? What can we say? How can we prove that we are innocent? God has found out the guilt of your servants. Here we are. We are my master’s slaves, we ourselves in addition to the one in whose possession the cup has been found.”

¹⁷ He said: “I would never do that! The man in whose possession the cup has been found will become my slave, but the rest of you may go unharmed to your father.”

Judah’s intercession for Benjamin

¹⁸ Then Judah went closer to Joseph. He said: “With your permission, my master, please let your servant say something for my master to hear and do not become angry with your servant, even though you are equal to Pharaoh! ¹⁹ My master asked his servants, ‘Do you have a father or a brother?’ ²⁰ We told my master, ‘We have an old father and a young brother who was born when our father was old. His brother is dead, he is the only one of his mother’s sons left, and his father loves him.’ ²¹ Then you told your servants, ‘Bring him down to me, that I may see him for myself!’

²² “We told my master, ‘The lad cannot leave his father. If the lad left his father, his father would die.’

²³ Nevertheless, you told your servants, ‘If your youngest brother does not come down with you, you will not see my face again.’ ²⁴ When we went up to your servant, my father, we told him what my master had said. ²⁵ Then our father said, ‘Go back and buy us a little food!’ ²⁶ However, we replied, ‘We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, we shall go down. For we cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’ ²⁷ Your servant, my father, told us, ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons. ²⁸ One went away from me, and I said: “He has certainly been torn in pieces. I have not seen him since.” ²⁹ If you take this one away from me too, and he meets with a fatal accident, you will bring my grey hair down to the grave in misery.’ ³⁰ Now therefore, when I come to your servant, my father and the lad is not with us, since his father’s life is wrapped up with the lad’s life, ³¹ when he sees that the lad is not there, he will die. Your servants will bring the grey hair of

your servant, our father, down to the grave in sorrow.

³² For your servant stood surety for the lad to my father and said, ‘If I do not bring him back to you, then, my father, you may blame me for it for the rest of my life.’ ³³ Now therefore, please let your servant remain here as my master’s slave instead of the lad but let the lad go back up with his brothers! ³⁴ For how could I go back up to my father if the lad were not with me? I would not wish to see the misery that would come on my father.”

45

Joseph’s revelation of his identity to his brothers

¹ Then Joseph could no longer hold back his emotions before all who were standing near him and called out, “Make everyone leave my presence!”

There was no one else standing with **Joseph** when he **told his brothers who he was**. ² He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him and the household of Pharaoh heard him. ³ Then Joseph told his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?”

However, his brothers could not answer him because they were terrified at his presence. ⁴ Joseph told his brothers, “Please come closer to me!”

Therefore, they went closer. He said: “I am your brother Joseph, whom you **sold into Egypt**. ⁵ Now, however, do not be sad or angry with yourselves for selling me here! For it was to save lives that God has sent me ahead of you. ⁶ For two years now there has been a famine in the land, and there are five more years when there will be no ploughing or harvesting.

⁷ God has sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. ⁸ So now, it has not been you who have sent me here, but God. He has also made me a father to Pharaoh, master over his entire household and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Go up to my father quickly and tell him, ‘This is what your son Joseph has said: “God has made me master of all Egypt. Come down to me immediately! ¹⁰ You shall live in the region of Goshen, and you yourself, your children and your grandchildren will be near me with your flocks, your herds and everything else that you have! ¹¹ I shall provide for you there. For there will be five more years of famine. Otherwise you, your family and all who belong to you will lose your property.”’ ¹² Look! Your own eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin can see that it is my mouth that is speaking to you. ¹³ Tell my father about all the honour given to me in Egypt and about everything that you have seen and bring my father down here quickly!”

¹⁴ Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. ¹⁵ Joseph kissed all his brothers and wept over them. After that, his brothers talked with him.

Pharaoh’s invitation to Israel’s family to live in Egypt

¹⁶ When the news reached Pharaoh’s palace: “Joseph’s brothers have come,” Pharaoh and his officials

were pleased. ¹⁷ Pharaoh told Joseph, “Tell your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals, leave and go to the land of Canaan!’ ¹⁸ Fetch your father and your families and come to me, that I may give you the best of the land of Egypt! Then eat the finest things in the land!’ ¹⁹ You yourself are commanded to say, ‘Do this: Take some carts from the land of Egypt for your children and your wives! Bring your father and come!’ ²⁰ Do not begrudge seeing your belongings left behind! For the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.”

²¹ This is what the sons of Israel did. As Pharaoh had ordered, Joseph gave them carts and also gave them provisions for their journey. ²² He gave festive garments to all of them individually but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five festive garments. ²³ This is what he sent to his father: ten male donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread and other food for his father on the journey. ²⁴ As Joseph dismissed his brothers and they were leaving, he told them, “Do not be upset on the way!”

²⁵ They left Egypt and went up to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. ²⁶ When they told him, “Joseph is still alive and is ruler over all the land of Egypt,” his heart became numb, because he did not believe them. ²⁷ However, when they had told him everything that Joseph had told them and when he saw the carts that Joseph had sent to fetch him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. ²⁸ Israel said, “Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. Let me go that I may see him before I die!”

46

The departure of Jacob's whole family for Egypt

¹ Israel set out with all that he had. When he arrived at Beer-Sheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

God's revelation to Jacob about his descendants' return to Canaan

² God spoke to Israel in a vision at night. He said, “Jacob, Jacob!”

He answered, “Here I am.”

³ He said: “I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt! For I shall make you into a great nation there. ⁴ I Myself shall go down to Egypt with you and shall surely bring you back up again. Joseph's hand will also close your eyes.”

Jacob's journey to Egypt with his family

⁵ Then Jacob set out from Beer-Sheba. Israel's sons carried their father Jacob, their children and their wives in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to transport them. ⁶ They also took their livestock and the other possessions that they had acquired in the land of Canaan. So, **Jacob went to Egypt** together with all his descendants. ⁷ He took with him to Egypt his sons, his grandsons, his daughters and his granddaughters — all his descendants.

Israel's descendants — compare Exodus 6:14-16, 1 Chronicles 2:3-5

⁸ These are the names of Israel's descendants who

came into Egypt: Jacob and his sons. Jacob's first-born son was Reuben. ⁹ The sons of Reuben were Hanoah, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. ¹⁰ The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. ¹¹ The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath and Merari. ¹² The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah (but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. ¹³ The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puvah, Yob and Shimron. ¹⁴ The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon and Jahleel. ¹⁵ These were the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-Aram, together with his daughter Dinah. All these persons, his sons and his daughters, numbered thirty-three.

¹⁶ The sons of Gad were Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli. ¹⁷ The sons of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi and Beriah and their sister was Serah. The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel.

¹⁸ These were the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban had given to his daughter Leah. She bore these to Jacob and they numbered sixteen persons.

¹⁹ The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰ In Egypt, Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph. Asenath the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On, bore them to him. ²¹ The sons of Benjamin were Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard. ²² These were the descendants of Rachel, who were born to Jacob, fourteen persons in all.

²³ The son of Dan was Hushim. ²⁴ The sons of Naphtali were Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer and Shillem. ²⁵ These were the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel, and she bore these to Jacob, seven persons in all.

²⁶ All the persons who went to Egypt with Jacob, those who were his direct descendants, not counting the wives of Jacob's sons, numbered sixty-six persons in all. ²⁷ With the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt, numbering two persons, **the grand total of the members of Jacob's family who went to Egypt was seventy.**

²⁸ Jacob sent Judah in front of him to Joseph to show the way ahead to Goshen. So, they arrived in the region of Goshen.

Israel's reunion with Joseph

²⁹ Joseph hitched up his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel. When Joseph appeared before him, he put his arms around his father's neck and wept on his shoulder continuously. ³⁰ Israel told Joseph, “Let me die at last, since I have seen your face! For you are still alive.”

Israel's audience with Pharaoh

³¹ Joseph told his brothers and his father's family: “I shall go up that I may make a report to Pharaoh. I shall tell him, ‘My brothers and my father's family, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me.

³² The men are shepherds. For they have been looking after livestock. They have brought along their flocks and herds and everything that they have.’ ³³ When Pharaoh calls you in and asks, ‘What is your occupation?’ ³⁴ you should answer, ‘Your servants, like their fathers, have been minding livestock from their youth until now,’ that you may live in the region of Goshen! For all shepherds are disgusting to Egyptians.”

47

The relocation of Jacob’s family to Goshen

¹ Joseph went and told Pharaoh: “My father and my brothers have come from the land of Canaan with their flocks, herds and everything that they have and are now in the region of Goshen.”

² He selected five from the full number of his brothers and presented them before Pharaoh. ³ Pharaoh asked his brothers, “What is your occupation?”

They answered Pharaoh: “Your servants are shepherds, as our fathers have also been.”

⁴ They told Pharaoh: “We have come to stay as foreigners in this country, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks. For the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants live in the region of Goshen!”

⁵ Then Pharaoh told Joseph: “Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶ The land of Egypt lies before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land! Let them live in the region of Goshen! If you know of any among them who have special ability, make them the chief herdsmen over my own livestock!”

Jacob’s presentation to the Pharaoh

⁷ Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and presented him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

⁸ Pharaoh asked Jacob, “How old are you?”

⁹ Jacob told Pharaoh: “I have been **living as a foreigner** for a hundred and thirty years. The days of the years of my life have been few and disagreeable. They have not reached the amount of time that my fathers lived during their lives as foreigners.”

¹⁰ Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence.

¹¹ Joseph gave his father and his brothers a place to live and gave them property in the land of Egypt, in the best part of the land, in the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. ¹² Joseph provided his father, his brothers and his father’s entire household with food according to the size of their families.

The famine in Egypt and Joseph’s acquisition of most of the land in Egypt for the Pharaoh

¹³ There was no food anywhere in the country, because the famine was very severe and the countries of Egypt and Canaan were languishing because of the famine. ¹⁴ Joseph collected all the money that could be found in the countries of Egypt and in Canaan as payment for the grain that people were buying and Joseph deposited the money at Pharaoh’s palace.

¹⁵ When the money from the countries of Egypt and Canaan had all been spent, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, “Give us food! Why should we die here in front of you? For our money has been used up.”

¹⁶ Joseph said: “Hand over your livestock! I shall sell you food in exchange for your livestock if all your money has been spent.”

¹⁷ So, they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for their horses, for their livestock from their flocks and herds and for their donkeys. He supplied them with food during that year in exchange for all their livestock.

The enslavement of the people in Egypt to the Pharaoh in return for food

¹⁸ That year elapsed. When they came to him the next year, they told him: “We shall not hide from our master that, since all our money has been spent, our property in animals has also gone to my master, and there is nothing left to bring to our master except ourselves and our land. ¹⁹ Why should both we and our land perish before your eyes? Buy us and our land in exchange for food! Then we shall be Pharaoh’s slaves, and our land will be transferred to Pharaoh. However, give us grain, that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be deserted!”

²⁰ So, Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was severe on them. Therefore, the land became Pharaoh’s. ²¹ Joseph moved the people to the cities, from one end of the territory of Egypt to the other. ²² However, he did not buy the land of the priests, because the priests received an income from Pharaoh. They had their food from the allowance that Pharaoh gave them. That is why they did not sell their land. ²³ Joseph told the people: “Look! Because I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh today, here is seed for you, that you may sow the ground. ²⁴ At the harvest you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four-fifths shall be your own to sow the fields and to feed yourselves, those in your households and your children!”

²⁵ They answered: “You have saved our lives. May our master be kind to us, that we may be Pharaoh’s slaves!”

²⁶ So, Joseph established it as a rule that is still in force today for property in Egypt, that Pharaoh must receive one fifth. Only the property of the priests did not become Pharaoh’s.

Israel’s [Jacob’s] last days in Egypt

²⁷ So, the Israelites lived in the district of Goshen in Egypt. They settled there, had many children and became very numerous. ²⁸ Jacob lived in the land of Egypt for seventeen years. So, the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred and forty-seven years. ²⁹ The time came near for Israel to die. He called his son Joseph and told him: “If you are kindly disposed to me, please put your hand under my thigh to promise that you will treat me kindly and faithfully! Please do not

bury me in Egypt! ³⁰ Let me lie with my fathers! You shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place!”

Joseph answered, “I shall do as you have asked.”

³¹ Israel said, “Swear to me!”

So, Joseph swore to him. Then Israel **bowled down on the head of his bed.**

48

Jacob's [Israel's] blessing of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh — Hebrews 11:21

¹ Later someone told Joseph: “Look! Your father is ill.”

So, he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. ² When someone told Jacob, “Look! Your son Joseph is coming to you,” Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

³ Jacob told Joseph: “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me. ⁴ He told me, ‘Look! I shall make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I shall make you a community of peoples and **give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.**’ ⁵ Now therefore, your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh shall belong to me as Reuben and Simeon do! ⁶ Any other children whom you father after them shall belong to you! These shall be reckoned among their brothers’ names in the territory that they inherit!

⁷ When I was coming from Paddan, to my loss, Rachel died in the land of Canaan while we were travelling, and I was still a little distance from Ephrath. I buried her there on the road to Ephrath (which is Bethlehem).”

⁸ When Israel saw Joseph’s sons, he asked, “Who are these?”

⁹ Joseph told his father, “They are my sons, whom God has given me here.”

Israel answered, “Please bring them here to me, that I may bless them!”

¹⁰ Israel’s eyesight was poor because he was old, so that he could not see well. When Joseph brought his sons closer to him, he kissed them and embraced them. ¹¹ Israel told Joseph: “I had not expected to see your face again, but look! God has let me see your children as well.”

¹² Joseph removed them from Jacob’s knees and bowed with his face to the ground. ¹³ Then Joseph took both of them, Ephraim with his right hand, at Israel’s left, and Manasseh with his left hand at Israel’s right and brought them close to him. ¹⁴ However, Israel stretched out his right hand and put it on Ephraim’s head, although he was the younger. He placed his hands crosswise and put his left hand on Manasseh’s head, although Manasseh was the first-born. ¹⁵ Then Jacob blessed Joseph and said: “May God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, may God, who has been my Shepherd all my life long to

this day, ¹⁶ may the Angel, who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the young men! Let my name be carried on in them together with the names of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac! May they have very many descendants in the middle of the earth!”

¹⁷ When Joseph saw that his father had placed his right hand on Ephraim’s head, he was displeased. He took hold of his father’s hand to move it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. ¹⁸ Joseph told his father: “Not that way, my father! For this one is the first-born. Put your right hand on his head!”

¹⁹ However, his father refused. He said: “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people and he too will be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he and his descendants will become a full number of nations.”

²⁰ He blessed them that day saying: “Joseph, Israel will pronounce blessings through you: ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!’” In this way he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

²¹ Israel told Joseph: “See, I am about to die, but God will be with you people and bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²² Moreover, I myself have given one mountain-ridge to you rather than to your brothers, the one that I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow.”

49

Jacob's prophecies about his twelve sons — compare Deuteronomy 33:1-20

¹ Then Jacob called for his sons and said:

“Gather around, that I may tell you what will happen to you in the future! ² Gather and listen, sons of Jacob! Listen to your father Israel!

³ “Reuben, you are my first-born, my strength and the first child of my generative power, excellent in dignity and excellent in strength. ⁴ Undisciplined like water, you will not have the first place, because you went up on your father’s bed. Then you defiled it. He went up on my couch!

⁵ “Simeon and Levi are brothers. Their plans are violent weapons. ⁶ Let me not enter their circle of confidants! My honour, do not join their assembly! For they have murdered men in their anger and arbitrarily cut the leg-tendons of oxen. ⁷ A curse on their anger! For it was fierce. A curse on their fury! For it was harsh. I shall divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

⁸ “Judah, your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the necks of your enemies. Your father’s sons will bow down to you. ⁹ You are a **lion’s cub, Judah.** You have come up from the prey, my son. He has been crouching and lying down like a lion and, like a lioness, who will rouse him? ¹⁰ The sceptre will not pass away from Judah or a ruler’s staff from between his feet until the Man of Peace comes, and the nations will obey Him. ¹¹ He ties his donkey up to a vine, his donkey’s colt to a vine with choice grapes.

He will **wash his clothes** in wine and his garment **in the blood** of grapes. ¹² His eyes are more sparkling than wine, and his teeth are whiter than milk.

¹³ “Zebulun will live by the seashore and become a harbour for ships. His rear will adjoin Sidon.

¹⁴ “Issachar is a bony donkey, lying down between its two saddlebags. ¹⁵ When he has seen that his resting-place is good and that the land is pleasant, he will bend his shoulder to carry loads and will become completely enslaved.

¹⁶ “Dan will provide justice for his people as one of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁷ Dan will be a snake on a road, a horned snake on a path, which bites a horse’s heels, so that its rider falls off backwards.

¹⁸ “I have been eagerly waiting for Your salvation, LORD.

¹⁹ “A raiding party will attack Gad, but he will attack them at their heels.

²⁰ “From Asher will come rich food. He will provide delicacies for a king.

²¹ “Naphtali is the doe of a fallow deer, which has been set free and produced lovely young animals.

²² “Joseph is a son of a plant that bears fruit, a son of a plant that bears fruit near a spring. With its branches as daughters it has grown over a wall. ²³ Archers have provoked him and shot arrows at him with hostility.

²⁴ However, his bow has remained steady, and his arms and hands have moved nimbly because of the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob, because He is the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel. ²⁵ It has remained steady because of the God of your father, who supports you, and with the help of the Almighty, who blesses you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies below and blessings of breasts and the womb. ²⁶ These blessings of your father have been greater than the blessings of my parents and greater than the desirable things on the everlasting hills. May these be on Joseph’s head, on the crown of the head of the consecrated prince among his brothers!

²⁷ “Benjamin, like a wolf, tears his prey in pieces. In the morning he devours the prey and in the evening he divides the plunder.”

²⁸ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel and this is what their father told them when he blessed them. He gave each of them the blessing that was appropriate to him.

Jacob’s request to be buried with his fathers

²⁹ Then he gave them these instructions: “I shall soon be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is near Mamre in the land of Canaan! Abraham bought it together with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. ³¹ People buried Abraham and his wife Sarah there. People buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah there, and there I buried Leah. ³² The

field and the cave that is in it were bought from the Hittites.”

³³ When **Jacob** had finished his instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, **breathed his last** and was gathered to his people.

50

Joseph’s burial of his father Jacob in Canaan

¹ Then Joseph fell on his father’s face, wept over him and kissed him. ² Joseph ordered the doctors in his service to embalm his father. So, the doctors embalmed Israel. ³ They required a full forty days for it. That is how many days are required for the embalming. The Egyptians also mourned for him for seventy days. ⁴ When the time of mourning for him was over, Joseph told Pharaoh’s court: “Please, if you are kindly disposed to me, speak to Pharaoh and tell him, ⁵ ‘My father made me swear an oath, saying, “You see, I am about to die. Bury me in the grave that I cut out for myself in the land of Canaan!” Now therefore, please let me go up that I may bury my father! Then I shall come back.’”

⁶ Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear!”

⁷ So, Joseph went up to bury his father. All Pharaoh’s officials, the elders of his palace and all the elders of the land of Egypt went up with him. ⁸ All of Joseph’s household, his brothers and his father’s household also went up. They left only their children, their flocks and their herds in the district of Goshen. ⁹ Chariots and horsemen also went up with him. It was a very numerous company. ¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is alongside the Jordan, they made a very loud and sorrowful lamentation. Joseph observed seven days of mourning for his father. ¹¹ When the inhabitants of the land of Canaan saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “The Egyptians are having a sorrowful mourning,” and so the place was named “Abel-Mizraim”.⁵⁵ It is along the Jordan. ¹² Therefore, Jacob’s sons did for him as he had commanded them. ¹³ His sons carried him to the land of Canaan and **buried him** in the cave in the field at Machpelah. **Abraham had bought** the field as a property **for a burial place** from Ephron the Hittite. It is near Mamre. ¹⁴ After Joseph had buried his father, he, his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father, returned to Egypt.

Joseph’s forgiveness of his brothers

¹⁵ When Joseph’s brothers realised that their father was dead, they asked, “What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and actually pays us back for all the evil that we have done to him?”

¹⁶ They sent a messenger to Joseph to say: “Before your father died, he left these instructions, ¹⁷ ‘This is what you are to tell Joseph: “We are begging you, please forgive the crime and the sin that your brothers

⁵⁵ Abel-Mizraim means, “Mourning of the Egyptians.”

Genesis

committed against you, because they did evil to you!” So now, please, forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father!”

Joseph wept when their message came to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers themselves came and threw themselves down before him. They said, “See! We are your slaves.”

¹⁹ However, Joseph told them: “Do not be afraid! For am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Although you planned evil against me, God has planned good to come from it, to accomplish what is so this day, the preservation of the lives of many people. ²¹ So now, do not be afraid! I shall provide for you and your little ones.”

He reassured them with words that touched their hearts.

The death of Joseph — Hebrews 11:22

²² So, Joseph and his father’s family lived in Egypt.

Joseph lived for a hundred and ten years. ²³ Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim’s children and also the children of Machir, the son of Manasseh. They were placed at birth on Joseph’s lap.

²⁴ Joseph told his brothers: “I am about to die, but God will surely visit you and take you up out of this land to the land that He promised with an oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

²⁵ Joseph made Israel’s sons swear an oath, saying, “When God surely visits you, you shall carry my bones up from here!”

²⁶ Joseph died when he was one hundred and ten years old. They embalmed him and put him in his coffin in Egypt.

EXODUS

1

*Ex 1**The family of Israel in Egypt*

¹ These are the names of the sons of Israel (that is, Jacob), who came with him to Egypt with his family:

² Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, ³ Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, ⁴ Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher. ⁵ The total number of Jacob's descendants was seventy persons. Joseph was already in Egypt.

⁶ Joseph, all his brothers and all the rest of that generation died. ⁷ The people of Israel **had many children**. They **became very numerous**. They became exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

The enslavement of the Israelites

⁸ Then a new king, **who knew nothing of Joseph, began to rule over Egypt**. ⁹ He told his people: "Look! The people of Israel are too many and too strong for us. ¹⁰ Come! Let us **show ourselves wise in dealing with them** or they will become more numerous! Then, when a war breaks out, they will even join those who hate us, fight against us and leave the country."

¹¹ Therefore, they appointed overseers of forced labour to **make their lives miserable** with their forced labour. They built Pithom and Rameses as supply-depots for Pharaoh. ¹² However, the more they oppressed the Israelites, the more they grew and spread out. The Egyptians began to dread the Israelites.

¹³ The Egyptians forced the Israelites to work brutally hard as slaves. ¹⁴ They made their lives bitter with hard work in mortar and bricks and every kind of labour in the fields. All the work that the Israelites did for the Egyptians was brutally hard.

Pharaoh's instruction to kill all Hebrew boys

¹⁵ Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives. The name of one of them was Shiprah, and the name of the other one was Puah. ¹⁶ He said: "When you help the Hebrew women in childbirth and see them on the birth-stools, if it is a boy, kill him! If it is a girl, she may live."

¹⁷ However, the midwives feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them. They let the boys live. ¹⁸ Therefore, the king of Egypt summoned the midwives. He asked them, "Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?"

¹⁹ The midwives answered Pharaoh: "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women but are vigorous. They give birth before a midwife comes to them."

²⁰ God was good to the midwives. So, the people increased in number and became very strong.

²¹ Because the midwives feared God, He gave them families of their own. ²² Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people, "You must throw every Hebrew boy that is born into the Nile, but **let every girl live!**"

2

The birth of Moses — Hebrews 11:23

¹ A man from Levi's family proceeded to marry a Levite woman. ² The woman became pregnant and had a son. **She saw that he was a fine boy and hid him for three months**. ³ When she could not hide him any longer, she got for him a basket made of papyrus reeds and sealed it with tar and pitch. She laid the boy in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. ⁴ The child's sister stood at a distance to find out what would happen to him.

The adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter

⁵ **Pharaoh's daughter** came down to bathe at the Nile, while her maids walked along the bank of the Nile. She noticed the basket among the reeds and sent her maid, and she brought it out.

⁶ When Pharaoh's daughter opened the basket, she looked at the baby and saw that it was a boy. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. She said, "This is one of the Hebrews' babies."

⁷ Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Should I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, to suckle the baby for you?"

⁸ Pharaoh's daughter told her, "Go!"

So, the maiden went and called the baby's mother.

⁹ Pharaoh's daughter told the woman: "Take this baby! Suckle him for me! I shall pay you for it myself."

The woman took the baby and fed him. ¹⁰ When the child had become old enough, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became **her son**. Pharaoh's daughter named him "Moses,"^{*56} saying, "It is because I pulled him out of the water."

Moses' murder of an Egyptian and his flight from Egypt — Hebrews 11:24-25

¹¹ One day, after **Moses had grown up**, he went out **to his own** people and watched their forced labour. He saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man, one of his own people. ¹² He looked this way and that, and, when he saw no one else present, he **killed the Egyptian** and hid him in the sand. ¹³ When he went out **the next day**, he saw two Hebrew men **quarrelling**. He asked the man who was **in the wrong**, "Why are you hitting your comrade?"

¹⁴ The man replied: "**Who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?**"

Moses was alarmed and thought, "This thing has certainly become known."

¹⁵ When Pharaoh heard about this, he tried to kill Moses. However, Moses **fled** from Pharaoh and **went to live in the land of Midian**. There he sat down beside a well.

Moses' marriage to Zipporah

¹⁶ The priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water and fill the watering troughs, to

⁵⁶ Moses means, either "Son" or "Pulled out."

give their father's flock a drink. ¹⁷ However, some shepherds came and drove them away. Then Moses got up, came to the girls' rescue and gave their flock a drink. ¹⁸ When the girls returned to their father, Reuel, he asked them, "Why have you returned so soon today?"

¹⁹ They answered: "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and gave the flock a drink."

²⁰ He asked his daughters: "Where is he? Why is it that you have left the man there? Invite him to eat a meal!"

²¹ Moses agreed to stay with the man. He gave Moses his daughter Zipporah to be his wife. ²² She gave birth to a son, and Moses named him "Gershom."⁵⁷ For he said, "**I have become a stranger in a foreign land.**"

The Israelites' prayer to God because of their suffering

²³ During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites continued to groan because of their slavery. They cried out, and **their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God.** ²⁴ **God heard their groaning and** remembered His Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ²⁵ God saw the Israelites and cared about them.

3

God's meeting with Moses at the burning bush

¹ Moses was looking after the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² The **Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush.** He noticed that, although the bush was on fire, it was not being burnt up. ³ Then Moses said, "I shall go over there and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn up."

⁴ When the LORD saw that Moses had turned aside to look, God called to him from inside the bush. He said: "Moses, Moses!"

Moses answered, "Here I am!"

⁵ God said: "Do not come close to here! **Take your sandals off your feet! For the place where you are standing is holy ground.**" ⁶ Then God said, "**I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.**"

Then Moses covered his face, because **he was afraid to look** at God. ⁷ The LORD said: "I have certainly seen the misery of My people, who are in Egypt. I have heard their cry because of their slave-drivers. Yes, I know about their suffering. ⁸ So, I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land to a fine, spacious land. It is a land flowing with milk and honey, the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ⁹ Now, you see, **the cry** of the people of Israel **has reached Me**, and I have seen how

the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ Therefore, **go now! I am sending you to Pharaoh**, that you may bring My people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

¹¹ However, Moses asked God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the people of Israel out of Egypt?"

¹² God said: "**I shall certainly be with you**, and this will be the sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, **you will all worship God here on this mountain.**"

God's revelation to Moses as "I AM" — John 5:58

¹³ Moses said to God: "Look! Suppose I have gone to the people of Israel and have told them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is His name?' what shall I tell them?"

¹⁴ God answered Moses: "**I AM WHO I AM.**" He also said: "This is what you shall tell the people of Israel, '**I AM** has sent me to you!'"⁵⁸ ¹⁵ God also instructed Moses: "This is what you shall tell the people of Israel: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you!' This is My name for ever, by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation. ¹⁶ Go and gather the elders of Israel together! Tell them: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me! He said: "I have certainly taken up your cause and have looked at what has been done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷ I have also promised that I shall take you up away from your misery in Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.'" "

¹⁸ "The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and tell him: 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us! Now, please, we should like to go on a three-day journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the LORD, our God!' ¹⁹ Nevertheless, I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go unless a strong hand compels him. ²⁰ Therefore, I shall stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders, which I shall perform among them. After that he will let you go. ²¹ I shall move the Egyptians to be kind to this people, so that, when you leave, you will not leave empty-handed. ²² Each Hebrew woman shall ask her Egyptian neighbour and any woman who lives at her house for silver and gold jewellery and clothes! You shall put them on your sons and daughters! In this way you will strip the Egyptians of their wealth."

4

God's use of miraculous signs with Moses and Moses' reluctance to go to Egypt

¹ Moses answered, "What if they do not believe Me or listen to me but say, 'The LORD has not appeared to

⁵⁷ Gershom means, "Resident-foreigner there."

⁵⁸ "I am" explains the origin of the Hebrew name for the LORD, which means, "He is," or "He causes existence."

you'?"

² The LORD asked him, "What is that in your hand?" Moses answered, "A shepherd's staff."

³ He said, "Throw it down on the ground!" He threw it down on the ground, and it became a snake. Moses ran away from it. ⁴ However, the LORD told Moses, "Put your hand out and take hold of it by its tail!"

He reached out his hand and took hold of it, and it turned back into a staff in his hand. ⁵ He said: "This is to convince them to believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

⁶ The LORD spoke to him again, "Now, put your hand inside your cloak!"

Moses put his hand inside and, when he drew it back out, he saw that his hand was infected by a skin-disease, as white as snow. ⁷ God said, "Put your hand back inside your cloak!"

Moses put his hand back inside and, when he drew it back out of his cloak, he saw that it had been restored, as healthy as the rest of his body. ⁸ God said: "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the former miraculous sign, they may believe the latter miraculous sign. ⁹ However, if they do not believe even these two miraculous signs or listen to you, you shall fetch some water from the Nile and pour it out on the dry ground! Then the water that you have taken from the Nile will turn to blood on the dry ground."

¹⁰ Nevertheless, Moses said to the LORD: "With Your permission, Lord, I am not a good speaker, neither in the past nor since You began to speak to Your servant. For My speech is slow, and my tongue is clumsy."

¹¹ However, the LORD asked him: "Who has made a man's mouth? Who makes a person dumb or a person deaf, a person who can see or a person who is blind? Do not I, the LORD? ¹² Now, therefore, go! I shall help your speech and teach you what to say."

¹³ However, Moses said, "With Your permission, Lord, please send Your Message through some other messenger!"

¹⁴ Then the anger of the LORD flared against Moses. He asked: "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can certainly speak well. Look! He is already coming out to meet you. He will certainly be glad to see you. ¹⁵ You shall speak to him and put in his mouth what he is to say! I shall also help both of you to speak and instruct both of you what you must do. ¹⁶ He will be your spokesman to the people. He himself will become your mouthpiece, and you will become like God to him. ¹⁷ You must take that staff in your hand, that you may perform the miraculous signs with it!"

The return of Moses to Egypt

¹⁸ Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law. He told him, "I should like to go back to my relatives,

who are in Egypt, that I may see if they are still alive." Jethro told Moses, "Go! I wish you well."

¹⁹ The LORD had told Moses in Midian: "**Go back to Egypt!** For all the men who tried to kill you are dead."

²⁰ So, Moses took his wife and his sons, put them on a donkey and returned to the land of Egypt. Moses also took the staff of God in his hand. ²¹ The LORD told Moses: "When you go back to Egypt, see that you perform in Pharaoh's presence all the wonders that I have given you the power to do! Nevertheless, I **shall make him stubborn**, so that he will not let the people go. ²² You shall tell Pharaoh: 'This is what the LORD has said: "Israel is My first-born son! ²³ Therefore, I have told you: 'Let My son go that he may worship Me! However, if you refuse to let him go, I shall certainly kill your first-born son.''"

²⁴ On the way, while they were at a camping-ground for the night, the LORD met Moses and tried to kill him. ²⁵ Then Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and threw it at Moses' feet. She said, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!"

²⁶ So, God withdrew from him. At that time she said, "A bridegroom of blood" with reference to circumcision.

Moses and Aaron's report to the people about what God had said

²⁷ "The LORD had told Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses!"

Aaron went and met Moses at the mountain of God and kissed him. ²⁸ Moses told Aaron everything that the LORD, who had sent him, had said and about all the miraculous signs that He had commanded him to perform. ²⁹ Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered all the elders of the Israelites. ³⁰ Aaron told them everything that the LORD had told Moses and performed the miraculous signs before the people. ³¹ The people believed and, when they heard that the LORD had shown His concern for Israel and that He had seen their misery, they knelt and worshipped.

5

Moses and Aaron's first confrontation with Pharaoh

¹ After this, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said: "The LORD, the God of Israel, has said this: 'Let My people go, that they may celebrate a festival in My honour in the wilderness!'"

² However, Pharaoh asked: "Who is the LORD, that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and shall also not let Israel go."

³ They said: "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three-day journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the LORD, our God, that He may not attack us with a plague or a sword!"

⁴ However, the king of Egypt asked: "Moses and Aaron, why are you letting the people neglect their work? Go back and carry your burdens!" ⁵ Pharaoh added: "Look! Although the people of the land are now numerous, you are stopping them from working

at their burdens.”

The increase in the Israelites' labour

⁶ The same day Pharaoh ordered the slave-drivers of the people and their foremen: ⁷ “You shall no longer supply the people with straw to make bricks, as you have been doing in the past! They must go and gather their own straw! ⁸ You shall require them to make the same number of bricks as they were making before! You shall not reduce the quota! For they are lazy. That is why they are clamouring: ‘Let us go! Let us sacrifice to our God!’ ⁹ Let the forced labour required of the men be harsh and let them attend to that! They should take no notice of deceptive words!”

¹⁰ The slave-drivers of the people and their foremen went out and told the people: “This is what Pharaoh has said: ‘I am not going to supply you with straw.

¹¹ Go yourselves and get your own straw wherever you can find it! Nevertheless, your output must not be reduced at all!”

¹² So, the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for straw. ¹³ The slave-drivers kept urging them. They said, “Complete the work required of you for each day, the same quota as when the straw was supplied!”

¹⁴ Then the Israelite foremen whom Pharaoh’s slave-drivers had appointed over the Israelites were flogged. The slave-drivers asked, “Why have you not met your quota of bricks both yesterday and today, as in the past?”

¹⁵ The Israelite foremen went and appealed to Pharaoh. They asked: “Why are you treating your servants like this? ¹⁶ Your servants are not being supplied with any straw, and yet they keep telling us, ‘Make bricks!’ Look! Your servants are being flogged, although your own people are at fault.”

¹⁷ However, Pharaoh told them: “You are lazy! Lazy! That is why you are saying, ‘Let us go! Let us sacrifice to the LORD!’ ¹⁸ Now, therefore, get to work! No straw will be supplied to you, but you shall deliver the same number of bricks!”

¹⁹ The Israelite foremen saw that they were in trouble when they were told, “You shall not reduce the number of bricks required of you for each day!”

²⁰ They met Moses and Aaron, who were standing there to meet them when they came out from Pharaoh’s presence. ²¹ The foremen told them: “May the LORD look on you and judge! For you have made Pharaoh and his officials regard us as a stench and put a sword in their hands to kill us.”

²² Moses went back to the LORD and asked: “O Lord, why have You treated this people so badly? Just why have You sent me? ²³ Since I first went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has been mistreating this people, and You have not delivered Your people at all!”

6

¹ The LORD told Moses: “Now you will see what I

shall do to Pharaoh. For because of My strong hand he will let them go and because of My strong hand he will drive them out of his land.”

God's instruction to speak to Pharaoh again

² God spoke to Moses and told him: “I am the LORD.

³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, in the character of God Almighty but did not make My character known to them by My name, the LORD.^{*59} ⁴ I also established My Covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land where they lived for a time as foreigners. ⁵ I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are keeping as slaves, and have remembered My Covenant.

⁶ Therefore, tell the Israelites, ‘I am the LORD. I shall **bring you out** from under the heavy labours imposed by the Egyptians and rescue you from being slaves to them. I shall redeem you **with an outstretched arm and** with mighty acts of judgment. ⁷ Then I shall take you **as My people and shall be your God**. You will know that I am the LORD, your God, and that I have brought you out from under the heavy labours imposed by the Egyptians. ⁸ I shall bring you into the land that I swore with My raised hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I shall give it to you as your possession. I am the LORD.”

⁹ Moses repeated this Message to the Israelites, but they did not listen to him. They had become despondent, because of their difficult forced labour. ¹⁰ Then the LORD spoke to Moses. He said, ¹¹ “Go and tell Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to let the Israelites leave his land!”

¹² Moses said before the LORD: “Look! The Israelites have not listened to me. How, then, will Pharaoh listen to me when I am such an unskilled speaker?”

¹³ However, the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them their commission concerning the Israelites and Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, namely, that they should bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt.

The genealogy of Moses and Aaron — Genesis 46:8-27

¹⁴ These were the heads of their fathers’ families: The sons of Reuben, the first-born son of Israel, were Hanoah, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. These were the clans of Reuben. ¹⁵ The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar and Shaul, who was the son of a Canaanite woman. These were the clans of Simeon. ¹⁶ These were the names of the sons of Levi according to their family records: Gershon, Kohath and Merari. Levi lived for one hundred and thirty-seven years. ¹⁷ The sons of Gershon, by their clans, were Libni and Shimei. ¹⁸ The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. Kohath lived for one hundred and thirty-three years. ¹⁹ The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These were the clans of Levi according to their family records. ²⁰ Amram married

⁵⁹ The Hebrew for the LORD means, “He is,” or “He causes existence.” It is the third person form of “I am” (compare Ex 3:14).

his father's sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived for one hundred and thirty-seven years. ²¹ The sons of Izhar were Korah, Nepheg and Zichri. ²² The sons of Uzziel were Mishael, Elzaphan and Sithri. ²³ Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and the sister of Nahshon. She bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ²⁴ The sons of Korah were Assir, Elkanah and Abiasaph. These were the clans descended from Korah. ²⁵ Aaron's son Eleazar married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These were the heads of the Levite families, clan by clan. ²⁶ It was this Aaron and this Moses to whom the LORD said: "Bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt according to their military divisions!"

²⁷ These were the men who told Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to let the Israelites leave Egypt. These were the same Moses and Aaron.

²⁸ On the day when the LORD had spoken to Moses in the land of Egypt, ²⁹ the LORD told Moses: "I am the LORD. Tell Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, everything that I tell you!"

³⁰ However, Moses had said before the LORD: "You see, I am an unskilful speaker. How, then, would Pharaoh listen to me?"

7

¹ The LORD answered Moses: "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet! ² You shall say everything that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh that he should let the Israelites leave his land!

³ Nevertheless, I shall **make** Pharaoh **stubborn**. **I shall** cause My miraculous **signs and wonders** to be numerous **in** the land of **Egypt**. ⁴ However, Pharaoh will refuse to listen to you. Then I shall lay My hand on Egypt and bring My army, My people, the Israelites, out of the land of Egypt by mighty acts of judgment. ⁵ The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I stretch out My hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them."

⁶ Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded them to do. ⁷ Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron was eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh.

The miraculous turning of Aaron's rod into a snake — Exodus 4:1-5

⁸ The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron: ⁹ "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Provide a sign for yourselves!' then, Moses, you shall tell Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh,' that it may become a large snake!"

¹⁰ When Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, they did just as the LORD had commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a large snake. ¹¹ Pharaoh also called his wise men and sorcerers, and these soothsayer-priests of Egypt also did the same thing by their secret arts.

¹² Each of them threw his staff down, and each of

their staffs changed into large snakes. However, Aaron's staff swallowed their staffs. ¹³ Nevertheless, Pharaoh became stubborn and would not listen to them, as the LORD had foretold.

The first plague, the turning of the Nile into blood

¹⁴ The LORD told Moses: "Pharaoh is stubborn. He has refused to let the people go. ¹⁵ Go to Pharaoh in the morning! Look! He will be going out to the river. You shall stand and wait on the bank of the Nile to meet him! Take in your hand the staff that turned into a snake! ¹⁶ You shall tell him: 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you to say: "Let My people go that they may worship Me in the wilderness! However, until now you have not listened. ¹⁷ This is what the LORD has said: "By this you will know that I am the LORD. Look! I am going to strike **the water** in the river with the staff in my hand, and it will **turn to blood**. ¹⁸ The fish in the river will die, the river will stink, and the Egyptians will no longer be able to drink any water from the Nile.'""

¹⁹ The LORD instructed Moses: "Tell Aaron: 'Take your staff and stretch out your arm over the waters of Egypt, over their streams, over their branches and canals, over their reed-pools and over every reservoir of their water! They will become blood, and there will be blood all over the land of Egypt, even in the wooden buckets and stone jars.'"

²⁰ Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD had commanded. Aaron raised the staff and struck the water in the Nile while Pharaoh and his officials watched, and all **the water** in the river **turned to blood**. ²¹ The fish in the Nile **died**, and the Nile smelled so bad that the Egyptians could not drink any water from it. There was blood everywhere in the land of Egypt. ²² However, the soothsayer-priests of Egypt used their secret arts to do the same, and so Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and did not listen to Moses and Aaron, as the LORD had foretold. ²³ Rather, Pharaoh turned, went home and dismissed the matter from his mind. ²⁴ All the Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink, because they could not drink any water from the Nile. ²⁹ Seven days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile.

8

The second plague, frogs

¹ The LORD told Moses: "Go to Pharaoh and tell him: 'This is what the LORD has said: "Let My people go that they may worship Me! ² However, if you refuse to let them go, look! I shall bring a plague of frogs on your whole territory. ³ The Nile will teem with frogs. They will come up and get into your palace, into your bedroom, onto your bed, into the houses of your officials, on your people and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. ⁴ The frogs will jump up on you, on your people and on all your officials.'""

⁵ The LORD instructed Moses: "Tell Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the streams, over

the canals and over the ponds, to bring up frogs over the land of Egypt!”

⁶ Aaron stretched out his arm over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. ⁷ However, the soothsayer-priests used their secret powers to do the same. They too made frogs come up over the land of Egypt. ⁸ Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. He said: “Plead with the LORD, to take the frogs away from me and from my people! I shall let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.”

⁹ Moses answered Pharaoh: “Please determine for me when I should intercede for you, for your officials and for your people, to rid you and your houses of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile!”

¹⁰ Pharaoh answered, “Tomorrow.”

Moses said: “It will be as you say, that you may know there is no one like the LORD, our God. ¹¹ The frogs will leave you, your houses, your officials and your people. They will remain only in the Nile.”

¹² When Moses and Aaron had left Pharaoh, Moses appealed to the LORD about the frogs, which He had brought on Pharaoh. ¹³ The LORD did what Moses had asked. The frogs died in the houses, the courtyards and the fields. ¹⁴ The people piled them up in many heaps, and the land stank. ¹⁵ However, when Pharaoh saw that there had been relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to Moses and Aaron, as the LORD had foretold.

The third plague, gnats

¹⁶ The LORD instructed Moses: “Tell Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground! It will become gnats all over the land of Egypt.’”

¹⁷ They did that. Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, and it became gnats on human beings and on animals. All the dust of the ground became gnats throughout the land of Egypt. ¹⁸ However, when the soothsayer-priests tried likewise to produce gnats with their secret arts, they could not do it. The gnats were on human beings and on animals. ¹⁹ The soothsayer-priests told Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God!”

Nevertheless, Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and did not listen to Moses and Aaron, as the LORD had foretold.

The fourth plague, flies

²⁰ The LORD told Moses: “Get up early in the morning and take your position before Pharaoh! He will come out to the river. Tell him: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Let My people go that they may worship Me! ²¹ Otherwise, if you do not let My people go, I shall send swarms of flies on you, on your officials, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians and even the ground where they are standing will be full of flies. ²² On that day I shall treat the region of Goshen, where My people live, differently, so that no swarms of flies will be there. In this way you will know that I, the LORD, am here in the middle of the land. ²³ I shall make a liber-

ating exception with My people compared with your people. This miraculous sign will take place tomorrow.’”

²⁴ The LORD did this. Dense swarms of flies came into Pharaoh’s palace and the houses of his officials and over the entire land of Egypt. The land was being ruined because of the swarms of flies. ²⁵ Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Go and sacrifice to your God but here in this land!”

²⁶ However, Moses answered: “It would not be legitimate to do that. For the Egyptians think that our sacrifices to the LORD, our God, are disgusting. Look! If we offered sacrifices that they thought disgusting in their presence, would they not stone us? ²⁷ We must go on a three-day’s journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD, our God, as He is commanding us.”

²⁸ Pharaoh said: “I shall let you go, and you will sacrifice to the LORD, your God, in the wilderness, except that you must not go very far. Now intercede for me!”

²⁹ Moses answered: “Look! I am going out from your presence. I shall plead to the LORD, and tomorrow the swarms of flies will leave Pharaoh, his officials and his people. Only let Pharaoh not cheat us again by preventing the people from going to sacrifice to the LORD!”

³⁰ Then Moses left Pharaoh and interceded with the LORD. ³¹ The LORD did what Moses asked. The swarms of flies left Pharaoh, his officials and his people. Not one was left. ³² However, Pharaoh hardened his heart once again and did not let the people go.

9

The fifth plague, disease in livestock

¹ The LORD told Moses: “Go to Pharaoh and tell him, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has said: “Let My people go that they may worship Me!

² For if you refuse to let them go and keep your hold on them, ³ be sure that the hand of the LORD will strike your livestock in the fields, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the cattle and the sheep! It will be a very severe plague. ⁴ However, the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt. No animal belonging to the Israelites will die. ⁵ The LORD has fixed a definite time, saying, ‘Tomorrow the LORD will do this in the land.’”

⁶ On the next day the LORD did that. All the livestock of Egypt died, but not one animal of the Israelites died. ⁷ Pharaoh sent some men, and they found out that not even one animal of the Israelites had died. However, Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and did not let the people go.

The sixth plague, boils

⁸ Then the LORD told Moses and Aaron: “Take both hands full of soot from a furnace for yourselves, and Moses shall scatter it toward the sky while Pharaoh is watching! ⁹ It will become fine dust over the whole

land of Egypt and will become boils that break open on human beings and on animals throughout the land of Egypt.”

¹⁰ They took soot from a furnace and stood before Pharaoh. Moses scattered it into the air, and it **became boils** in the form of blisters that kept breaking open **on human beings** and on animals. ¹¹ The soothsayer-priests could not stand before Moses because of the boils, because the **boils affected** the soothsayer-priests as well as all the other Egyptians. ¹² Nevertheless, the LORD **hardened Pharaoh’s heart** and did not listen to them, as the LORD had foretold to Moses.

The seventh plague, hail

¹³ The LORD told Moses: “Get up early in the morning, take up your positions before Pharaoh and tell him, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has said: “Let My people go that they may worship me! ¹⁴ For this time I am letting you, all your officials and all your people suffer from all My plagues, that you may know that that there is no one like Me in all the earth. ¹⁵ For by now I could have stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with the plague, and you would have been destroyed from the earth. ¹⁶ However, **I have raised you up for this very purpose, to show you My power and to make My name famous in all the earth.** ¹⁷ You are still behaving haughtily against My people by not letting them go. ¹⁸ Therefore, tomorrow at this time I shall send **a very severe hailstorm**, such as has never been in Egypt from the day when it first began until now. ¹⁹ Now, therefore, send a Message and bring under shelter your livestock and everything else that you have in the open fields. All human beings or animals that are found outside and are not gathered in under shelter will die when the hail falls on them.””

²⁰ Any of Pharaoh’s officials who feared the Word of the LORD brought their servants and their livestock to safety indoors. ²¹ However, those who did not take the Word of the LORD seriously left their slaves and their livestock out in the fields. ²² The LORD told Moses: “Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that **hail may fall** all over the land of Egypt, **on human beings**, on animals and on every plant in the field throughout the land of Egypt!”

²³ Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, and the LORD sent **thunder and hail**, with **fire flashing down to the ground**. So, the LORD rained hail down on the land of Egypt. ²⁴ There was **hail, and fire** kept on flashing here and there in the middle of the hail. It was so very severe that there had been nothing like it in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation. ²⁵ All over the land of Egypt the hail struck everything that was out of doors. It **struck human beings** and animals and every plant in the field and shattered every tree in the field. ²⁶ Only in the region of Goshen, where the Israelites lived, there was no hail.

²⁷ Pharaoh sent messengers and summoned Moses and Aaron. He told them: “This time I have sinned. The LORD is in the right, and my people and I are in the wrong. ²⁸ Intercede with the LORD! There has been enough of God’s thunder and hail. I shall let you go. You need not wait any longer.”

²⁹ Moses told him: “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I shall spread out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will stop, and there will be no more hail, that you may know that the earth belongs to the LORD.

³⁰ However, I know that you and your officials do not yet fear the LORD God.”

³¹ The flax and the barley were destroyed, because the barley had formed heads, and the flax was in bud.

³² The wheat and the spelt were not destroyed, because they ripened later. ³³ Then Moses left Pharaoh and went out of the city. He spread out his hands to the LORD. The thunder and the hail stopped, and no more rain poured down on the ground. ³⁴ When Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail and the thunder had stopped, he sinned again, He and his officials hardened their hearts. ³⁵ Pharaoh’s heart remained stubborn and he did not let the Israelites go, as the LORD had foretold through Moses.

10

The eighth plague, locusts

¹ The LORD told Moses, “Go to Pharaoh. For I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials, that I may send these miraculous signs of Mine among them. ² I have also sent them that you may personally inform your children and grandchildren about how I made fools of the Egyptians and what miraculous signs I have sent among them, that you all may know that I am the LORD.”

³ So, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and told him: “This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has asked: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may worship Me! ⁴ Otherwise, if you refuse to let My people go, be sure that tomorrow I shall bring locusts into your territory! ⁵ They will cover the surface of the land so that no one will be able to see the ground. They will eat every last bit of what you have left, which has survived after the hail. They will eat every tree that you have growing in the fields. ⁶ They will fill your houses, the houses of all your officials and the houses of all the other Egyptians. Your fathers and forefathers have not seen anything like this since they have been in this land until today.’”

Then Moses turned and left Pharaoh. ⁷ Pharaoh’s officials asked him: “How long will this man be a snare for us? Let their men-folk go and worship the LORD, their God! Do you not know yet that Egypt has been ruined?”

⁸ So, Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. He told them: “Go, worship the LORD, your God. Precisely who are the ones who will be going?”

⁹ Moses answered: “We shall go with our young people and our old people. We shall go with our sons and our daughters and with our flocks and our herds, because we are observing the festival of the LORD.”

¹⁰ Pharaoh told them: “The LORD would have to be with you if I ever let you and your children go like this! Beware! For there is trouble in store for you.

¹¹ No! Go now, you strong young men, and worship the LORD, since that is what you have been asking for!”

Then Pharaoh drove Moses and Aaron away from his presence.

¹² The LORD told Moses: “Stretch your hand out over the land of Egypt, that the **locusts may come over the land** of Egypt! Let them eat up every plant in the land, everything that the hail has left!”

¹³ Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought a wind roaring in from the east across the land all that day and all that night. When morning came, the east wind had carried in the locusts. ¹⁴ The locusts invaded all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole territory of Egypt. There had never been such a very severe locust plague like that before, and there will never be any like it again.

¹⁵ They covered the surface of the whole land until the land was black. They ate up all the plants of the land and all the fruit on the trees that the hail had spared. Nothing green remained on trees or plants in the fields in the whole land of Egypt. ¹⁶ Then Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron. He said: “I have sinned against the LORD, your God, and against you. ¹⁷ Now therefore, please forgive my sin just once more! Intercede with the LORD, your God, that He may only remove this deadly plague from me!”

¹⁸ Moses left Pharaoh and interceded with the LORD.

¹⁹ The LORD changed the wind to a westerly gale. It caught up the locusts and blew them into the Red Sea. Not a single locust was left anywhere in the territory of Egypt. ²⁰ However, the LORD **hardened Pharaoh’s heart**, and he did not let the Israelites go.

The ninth plague, darkness

²¹ The LORD told Moses: “Stretch out your hand towards the sky, that **there may be darkness** over the land of Egypt, darkness that people can feel!”

²² Moses stretched out his hand towards the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. ²³ No one could see anyone else and no one got up from where he was for three days. However, all the Israelites had light where they lived.

²⁴ Then Pharaoh summoned Moses. He said: “Go and worship the LORD! Even your women and children may go with you. Only your flocks and your herds must be left behind!”

²⁵ However, Moses said: “You must also provide us with sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may offer them to the LORD, our God! ²⁶ Our livestock must also go with us! Not a hoof must be left behind! For

we must take some of them for the worship of the LORD, our God. We do not know what service we must do to the LORD until we arrive there.”

²⁷ However, the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he refused to let them go. ²⁸ He told Moses: “Get away from me! Be careful that you do not see my face again! For on the day when you see my face again you will die.”

²⁹ Moses replied, “Yes, it will be as you have said. I shall never see your face again.”

11

A warning about a tenth plague, the death of all first-born — Exodus 3:21-22, 12:35-36

¹ The LORD had told Moses: “I shall bring one more plague against Pharaoh and Egypt. After that he will let you all leave from here. When he lets you go he will certainly drive you out from here like one who sends destruction. ² Now tell the people personally that each man should ask his neighbour, and each woman should ask her friend for silver and gold jewellery!”

³ The LORD made the Egyptians favourably disposed to the people. Besides, Moses was very highly respected in the land of Egypt by Pharaoh’s officials and by the people. ⁴ Moses said: “This is what the LORD has said: ‘About midnight I shall go out among the Egyptians. ⁵ Every first-born creature in the land of Egypt will die, from the first-born of Pharaoh, who sits on his throne, to the first-born of the slave girl who is using her hand-mill and also all the first-born among the animals. ⁶ There will be loud wailing all over the land of Egypt, such as has never been heard before or will ever be again. ⁷ However, among all the Israelites not even a dog will bark at a man or an animal, that you may know that the LORD treats Egyptians and Israelites differently.’ ⁸ Then all these officials of yours will come down to me, bow down before me and say, ‘Get out, you and all the people who follow you!’ After that I shall go out.”

Moses left Pharaoh hot with anger.

⁹ The LORD had told Moses, “Pharaoh will not listen to you, that I may do My many wonders in the land of Egypt.”

¹⁰ Although Moses and Aaron had performed all these wonders before Pharaoh, the LORD **had hardened Pharaoh’s heart**, and he had not let the Israelites go out of his land.

12

The institution about the Passover — Leviticus 23:4-8, Numbers 9:1-14, 28:16-25, Deuteronomy 16:1-8, Ezekiel 45:21-25

¹ The LORD told Moses and Aaron in Egypt, ² “This month shall be the first month for you, the first month of your year! ³ Tell the whole congregation of Israel, ‘On the tenth day of this month each man shall take a lamb or kid for himself, according to the household of his father, one lamb for each household! ⁴ However, if any household is too small for one lamb or one kid, he

and the neighbour next to his house shall take one between them, depending on the number of people! You shall determine your count for the lamb by how much each person eats! ⁵ The lamb or kid shall be a one-year-old male without defect! You may take it from the sheep or the goats. ⁶ Take care of it until the fourteenth day of this month! Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight! ⁷ They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two sides and the tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs! ⁸ That same night they shall eat the meat roasted on a fire! They shall eat it together with bread made without yeast and with bitter herbs! ⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water but roasted on a fire, with its head, legs and internal organs! ¹⁰ You shall not leave any of it until the next morning but burn up whatever remains of it until morning! ¹¹ This is how you shall eat it: You shall have your cloaks tucked into your belts, your sandals on your feet and your staffs in your hands! You shall eat it quickly! It is the **Passover** of the LORD. ¹² On that night I shall pass through Egypt and strike down every first-born in Egypt, both human beings and animals. I shall bring judgment against all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. ¹³ **The blood** will be a sign for you on the houses where you are. When I see **the blood**, I shall **pass over** you. The plague will **not** strike you to **destroy** you when I strike the land of Egypt.'

¹⁴ "You shall commemorate this day! You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD throughout your generations! You and your descendants shall celebrate it as a festival by a permanent Statute! ¹⁵ You shall eat bread without yeast for seven days! On the first day you shall be sure to remove any yeast from your houses! For any person who eats anything made with yeast from the first day to the seventh day shall be excluded from Israel! ¹⁶ You shall have a holy assembly on the first day and another holy assembly on the seventh day! You shall not do any work on them except to prepare food for everyone! That is the only thing that you may do. ¹⁷ You shall observe the festival of bread without yeast! For this was the very day when I brought your great numbers out of the land of Egypt. You shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent Statute! ¹⁸ From the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month you shall eat bread without yeast until the evening of the twenty-first day of the month! ¹⁹ For seven days no yeast shall be found in your houses! For any person who eats anything made with yeast shall be excluded from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a foreigner or a native of the land! ²⁰ You shall not eat anything made with yeast! You shall eat bread without yeast wherever you live!"

²¹ Moses summoned all the elders of Israel. He told them: "Go off, select lambs for your families and **kill**

the Passover lamb! ²² You shall take a sprinkling brush of hyssop, dip it into the blood, which is in the basin, and brush the upper crosspiece and the two posts of the door with the blood from the basin! None of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning! ²³ The LORD will pass through to strike down the Egyptians. When the LORD sees **the blood** on the upper crosspiece and the two doorposts, He will **pass over** the entrance and will not permit the destroyer to come into your homes to strike you down. ²⁴ You shall observe this as a Prescription for yourself and for your children for ever! ²⁵ When you enter the land that the LORD will give you as He has promised, you shall observe this ceremony! ²⁶ When your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this ceremony?' ²⁷ you shall answer, 'This is the sacrifice of **the Passover** to the LORD, who **passed over** the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and rescued our families when He struck down the Egyptians!"'

The people bowed down and worshipped.

The tenth plague, the death of the first-born — Exodus 11:1-10

²⁸ The Israelites went and did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. ²⁹ At midnight the LORD struck down every first-born male in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh, who was sitting on his throne, to the first-born of the prisoner in the dungeon and also every first-born animal. ³⁰ Pharaoh and all his officials and all the other Egyptians got up at night, and there was loud wailing in Egypt, because there was not a house without someone dead.

Pharaoh's order to the Israelites to leave Egypt

³¹ Pharaoh sent a message to Moses and Aaron at night. He said: "Go away from my people immediately, both you and the Israelites! Go and worship the LORD, as you have been asking! ³² Take your flocks and herds too, as you have been asking and go! You should also bless me!"

³³ The Egyptians urged on the people, to send them out of the land quickly. For they said, "We shall all be dead!"

³⁴ The people took up their dough before yeast was added and carried their kneading troughs on their shoulders, wrapped up in their garments. ³⁵ The Israelites had done what Moses had told them and had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewellery and for clothing. ³⁶ The LORD had made the Egyptians favourably disposed toward the people, and they had let them have what they asked for. So, they had plundered the Egyptians.

The exodus of the Israelites from Egypt

³⁷ The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand strong men on foot, besides the women and children. ³⁸ A numerous mixed race of people also went up with them, as well as a very large number of livestock, in both flocks and herds. ³⁹ They baked the dough that they brought from Egypt into bread-cakes without yeast, because

there was no food with yeast. For they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay. They had also not prepared any provisions for their journey.

⁴⁰ The length of time the Israelite people had been **living** in Egypt was **four hundred and thirty years**.

⁴¹ At the end of **the four hundred and thirty years**, on that very day, all the great numbers of the LORD marched out of the land of Egypt. ⁴² It was a night when the LORD kept vigil to take them out of the land of Egypt. It is this night, which belongs to the LORD, in which all the Israelites keep vigil throughout their generations.

Regulations for the Passover — Exodus 12:1-13

⁴³ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: “This is the Statute for the Passover: ‘No foreigner shall eat of it!

⁴⁴ However, any slave who has been bought with money may eat of it after you have circumcised him.

⁴⁵ No temporary resident or hired worker shall eat of it! ⁴⁶ Each lamb shall be eaten in one house! You shall not take any of the meat outside! **You shall not break any bone of it!** ⁴⁷ The whole congregation of Israel shall celebrate this festival! ⁴⁸ When a foreigner is living with you and wants to celebrate the Passover of the LORD, all his males shall be circumcised! Then he may approach to celebrate it and shall be like any citizen who has full rights in the land! However, no uncircumcised person shall eat of it! ⁴⁹ The same Law shall apply to the citizen with full rights and to the foreigner who is living among you!”

⁵⁰ All the Israelites did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ On that same day the LORD brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt in their military divisions.

13

The provision to dedicate first-born males — Deuteronomy 15:19-23

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses: ² “Consecrate to Me every first-born male! The **first offspring of every womb** among the Israelites, both human beings and animals, **belongs to Me.**”

Regulations for the annual festival of bread without yeast — Exodus 12:14-20

³ Moses told the people: “Remember this day, on which you have come out of slave-quarters in Egypt! For the LORD has brought you out from this place with His mighty hand. You shall eat nothing containing yeast! ⁴ Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. ⁵ When the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall observe this ceremony in this month!

⁶ You shall eat bread without yeast for seven days, and there shall be a festival to the LORD on the seventh day! ⁷ Only bread without yeast shall be eaten for the seven days! No yeast or any fermented dough shall be seen among you anywhere in your territory!

⁸ On that day you shall tell your son, ‘I am doing this

because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt!’ ⁹ You shall have a record of it like a sign on your hand and a memorial on your forehead, that you may keep talking about the Law of the LORD! For the LORD has brought you out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ¹⁰ You shall keep this Statute at the appointed time every year!

Regulations about first-born male children

¹¹ “After the LORD has brought you to the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers and given it to you, ¹² you shall **set apart to the LORD the first offspring** of every womb and every first-born offspring of the animals that you have! If they are **males**, they **belong to the LORD**. ¹³ However, you shall redeem every first-born male donkey with a lamb or a kid and, if you do not redeem it, you shall break its neck! Of human beings, you shall redeem every first-born among your sons! ¹⁴ When in the future your son asks you, ‘What does this mean?’ you shall tell him, ‘With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of slave-quarters in Egypt! ¹⁵ When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed every first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of human beings and the first-born of animals. This is the reason why I am sacrificing **to the LORD the first male offspring** of every womb and am redeeming **every first-born** of my sons.’ ¹⁶ It shall be a sign on your hand and a mark on your forehead! For the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.”

God’s leading the Israelites on their journey out of Egypt with pillars of cloud and fire — Exodus 40:34-38, Numbers 9:15-23, 1 Kings 8:10-11

¹⁷ When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road that goes to the land of the Philistines, although that was the shortest way. For God said, “It is to avoid having the people change their minds and go back to Egypt when they face war.”

¹⁸ Therefore, God led the people around by way of the wilderness to the Red Sea. The Israelites were organised for war when they came up out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁹ Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, because Joseph had made the Israelites swear a solemn oath. He had said, “God will certainly take up your cause. Then you shall carry my bones up from here with you!”

²⁰ They journeyed from Succoth and camped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. ²¹ The LORD kept going ahead of them in a pillar of cloud during the day to lead them on their way and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, so they could travel by day and by night. ²² Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night failed to be present as it went ahead of the people.

14

The Israelites’ journey to the Red Sea

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Tell the Israelites that they should turn back and camp in front of Pi-Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-Zephon! Camp opposite it, beside the sea!

³ Pharaoh will say, about the Israelites, ‘They are wandering aimlessly in the land. The wilderness has hemmed them in!’ ⁴ **I shall harden** Pharaoh’s **heart**, and he will pursue them. Then I shall appear in My glory at the expense of Pharaoh and his whole army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.”

Then the Israelites did this. ⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about the people. They asked, “What have we done here? For we have let Israel go and lost our slaves.”

Pharaoh’s pursuit of the Israelites

⁶ So, Pharaoh harnessed his chariot and took his troops with him. ⁷ He took six hundred of the best chariots as well as the other chariots of Egypt, with adjutant chariot-officers in all of them. ⁸ The LORD **hardened the heart** of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were leaving defiantly. ⁹ The Egyptians pursued them and all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots, his horsemen and his other fighting forces, overtook them as they were camping for the night beside the sea near Pi-Hahiroth, in front of Baal-Zephon.

¹⁰ When Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and saw the Egyptians marching behind them. The Israelites were terrified and cried out to the LORD.

¹¹ They asked Moses: “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have brought us to die in the wilderness? What is this that you have done to us, by bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is this not what we told you in Egypt: ‘Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than for us to die in the wilderness.”

God’s miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea

¹³ Moses told the people: “Do not be afraid! Stand still and see what the LORD will do to save you today! For you will never see again the Egyptians whom you have seen today. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you. Therefore, you yourselves must be silent!”

¹⁵ The LORD asked Moses: “Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the Israelites to go forward! ¹⁶ As for you, raise your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea and divide the sea, that the Israelites may go through the sea on dry ground! ¹⁷ Look! I am **making the hearts** of the Egyptians **stubborn**, that they may go in after the Israelites, and that I may be glorified at the expense of Pharaoh, all his army, his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD, when I am glorified at the expense of Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.”

¹⁹ Then the Angel of God, who had been going ahead of the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them. The column of cloud also moved away from in front of them and took its place behind them. ²⁰ It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud brought darkness for the one side and lit up the night for the other. Neither side went

near the other all night long. ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD pushed back the sea with a strong east wind all that night and turned the sea into dry land. The water was divided.

²² Therefore, the Israelites went through the middle of the sea on dry ground. The water was like a wall for them on their right side and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians, all of Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen, pursued them and followed them into the middle of the sea. ²⁴ In the watch before dawn the LORD looked down through the column of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into a panic. ²⁵ He made the wheels of their chariots come off, so that they had difficulty driving them. The Egyptians said: “Let us flee from the Israelites! For the LORD is fighting for Israel and against Egypt.”

The destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea

²⁶ The LORD told Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may flow back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and over their horsemen!”

²⁷ Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, at daybreak, the sea flowed back to its normal depth. The Egyptians were fleeing to meet it, but the LORD shook them off into the middle of the sea. ²⁸ The water flowed back and covered the chariots, the horsemen and all the army of Pharaoh, which had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not even one of them remained. ²⁹ The Israelites had walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground while the water was a wall for them on their right side and on their left. ³⁰ Therefore, the LORD saved Israel that day from the power of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ When the Israelites saw the great power that the LORD had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in the LORD and in His servant Moses.

15

The song of Moses after the deliverance at the Red Sea — Exodus 14:13-14, Psalm 78:12-14, Revelation 15:3-4

¹ Then **Moses** and the people of Israel **sang this song** to the LORD:

“I shall sing to the LORD. For He has been highly exalted. The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea.

² “The LORD is my Strength and my Song. He has become my Salvation. This is my God, and I shall praise Him, my father’s God, and I shall exalt Him.

³ “The LORD is a warrior. The LORD is His name.

⁴ “He has thrown Pharaoh’s chariots and his army into the sea. His chosen captains have been engulfed in the Red Sea.

⁵ “The deep waters have covered them. They have gone down to the depths like a stone.

⁶ “Your right hand, O LORD, was glorious in power. Your right hand, O LORD, was shattering the enemy.

⁷ “By Your great Majesty You were destroying those who rebelled against You. You were sending out Your

blazing anger. It was consuming them like stubble.

⁸ “At the blast of Your nostrils the waters rose. The waves stood upright like a dam. The depths congealed in the heart of the sea.

⁹ “The enemy said, ‘I shall pursue, I shall overtake, I shall divide the spoil. I shall glut my appetite on them. I shall draw my sword. I shall rid myself of them.’

¹⁰ “You blew with Your breath: the sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹ “Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, worthy of awe and praise, and working wonders?

¹² “You stretched out Your right hand: the earth swallowed them.

¹³ “You in Your mercy have led forth the people whom You have redeemed. You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy dwelling.

¹⁴ “The peoples have heard and will tremble in fear. Anguish will take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia.

¹⁵ “Next the chiefs of Edom will be terrified. Trembling will take hold of the powerful men of Moab. All the inhabitants of Canaan will be disheartened.

¹⁶ “Terror and dread will fall on them. Because of the greatness of Your arm, they will be rigid like a stone, until Your people pass over, O LORD, until the people whom You have purchased pass over.

¹⁷ “You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of Your inheritance, in the place that You have made, O LORD, for Your dwelling, the sanctuary, O LORD, that Your own hands have established.

¹⁸ “The LORD will reign for ever and ever.”

¹⁹ For Pharaoh’s horses, with his chariots and horsemen had gone into the sea, and the LORD had made the water of the sea flow back over them. However, the Israelites had walked on dry ground through the middle of the sea.

The refrain of Miriam — Numbers 26:59

²⁰ Then the prophetess Miriam, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her with tambourines and dancing. ²¹ Miriam sang this refrain to them:

“Sing to the LORD! For He has been highly exalted. The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea.”

God’s provision of sweet water for the Israelites

²² Then Moses made Israel start out away from the Red Sea. They went out into the wilderness of Shur. They travelled in the wilderness for three days without finding water. ²³ They came to Marah but could not drink the water at Marah, because it was bitter. That was the reason why the place was named “Marah.”⁶⁰

²⁴ The people grumbled against Moses. They asked, “What shall we drink?”

²⁵ Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD directed him to a tree. He threw it into the water, and then the water became sweet. There God laid down a Prescription and a Decision for the people and there

He tested them. ²⁶ He said: “If you carefully obey the LORD, your God, if you do what He considers right, if you listen to His Commands, and, if you keep all His Prescriptions, I shall not bring on you any of the sickness that I inflicted on Egypt. For I am the LORD, your Healer.”

²⁷ Then they arrived at Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm-trees and camped there beside the water.

16

God’s provision of manna and quails for the Israelites to eat

¹ The whole congregation of the Israelites moved from Elim and on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left the land of Egypt they came into the wilderness of Sin, which lies between Elim and Sinai. ² The whole congregation of the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

³ The Israelites said to them: “If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt! Then we sat around the pots of meat and ate all the food that we wanted! However, You have brought us into this wilderness to starve this whole assembly to death!”

⁴ Then the LORD told Moses: “Look! **I shall rain bread down from heaven** for you. Then each day the people shall go out and gather a daily quantity for that day, that I may test them, to see whether they will live according to My Instructions or not! ⁵ However, on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it shall be twice as much as they gather on every other day!”

⁶ So, Moses and Aaron spoke to all the Israelites: “In the evening, you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt ⁷ and in the morning, you will see the glory of the LORD. For He has heard your grumbling against the LORD. Who are we, that you are grumbling against us?” ⁸ Moses also said: “You will know this when He gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you need to satisfy yourselves in the morning. For the LORD has heard your grumbling against Him. Who are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”

⁹ Then Moses told Aaron: “Tell the whole congregation of the Israelites: ‘Come near before the LORD! For He has heard your grumbling.’”

¹⁰ While Aaron was speaking to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they turned toward the wilderness, and there was **the glory of the LORD** appearing in the cloud. ¹¹ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, ¹² “I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, ‘At twilight, you will eat meat, and, in the morning, you will have all the bread you need to satisfy you! Then you will know that I am the LORD, your God.’”

¹³ That evening quails came up and settled over the camp, and the next morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴ When the layer of dew evaporated, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was something fine and scale-like, as fine as frost, on the

⁶⁰ Marah means, “Bitterness.”

ground. ¹⁵ When the Israelites saw it, they asked one another, “What is that?”

For they did not know what it was. Moses told them: “That is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

¹⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Everyone should gather as much of it as he can eat! Collect two litres for each person as you count the persons that each of you has in his tent!’”

¹⁷ That is what the Israelites did. Some gathered much, and others gathered little. ¹⁸ However, when they measured it with a two-litre measure, **the one who had gathered much did not have a surplus, and the one who had gathered little did not have too little.** Each had gathered as much as he could eat.

¹⁹ Moses told them, “No one shall keep any of it until morning!”

²⁰ However, some did not listen to Moses. These people kept part of it until morning, and it swelled up with maggots and stank. So, Moses was angry with them. ²¹ Every morning each one gathered as much as he could eat. However, when the sun became hot, it melted away. ²² On the sixth day they gathered twice as much food, four litres for each person, and all the leaders of the congregation came and reported this to Moses. ²³ He told them: “This is what the LORD has said, ‘Tomorrow is a Sabbath observance, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil! Save for yourselves everything that is left over and store it until the morning!’”

²⁴ So, they saved it until the morning, as Moses had commanded, and it did not stink or have maggots in it.

²⁵ Moses said: “Eat it today! For today is a Sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any in the open today.

²⁶ You shall gather it for six days! However, on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any.”

²⁷ Nevertheless, on the seventh day some of the people went out to gather it but did not find anything.

²⁸ The LORD asked Moses: “How long do you people refuse to keep My Commandments and My Laws?

²⁹ Realise that the LORD has given you the Sabbath! That is the reason why He is giving you enough food on the sixth day for two days. Everyone should stay in his place! No one shall go out from where he is on the seventh day!”

³⁰ So, the people observed the Sabbath on the seventh day. ³¹ The people of Israel called it “manna.” It was white like coriander seed and tasted like a flat cake made with honey. ³² Moses said: “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Take two litres of it and store it for your coming generations, that they may see **the food that I gave you to eat** in the wilderness when I brought you out of the land of Egypt!’”

³³ Moses told Aaron: “Take a jar, put two litres of manna in it and save it in the presence of the LORD, to store it for your coming generations!”

³⁴ As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron stored it in front of the Testimony, for safe-keeping. ³⁵ The

Israelites ate the manna for forty years until they came to a land where they could settle. They ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

³⁶ (A two-litre omer is one tenth of an ephah).

17

God’s provision of water for the Israelites from a rock — compare Numbers 20:1-13

¹ The whole assembly of the Israelites broke camp from the Wilderness of Sin to travel by stages, as the LORD directed. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² The people quarrelled with Moses. They said, “Give us water, that we may drink it!”

Moses asked them, “Why are you quarrelling with me? Why are you testing the LORD?”

³ There the people were so thirsty for water that they grumbled against Moses. They asked: “Why have you brought us up here out of Egypt? Was it to kill me, my children and my cattle with thirst?”

⁴ Moses cried out to the LORD. He asked: “What should I do with this people? They are almost stoning me.”

⁵ The LORD told Moses: “Go in front of the people and walk past them! Take with you some of the elders of Israel! Take also in your hand your staff, with which you struck the Nile, and go! ⁶ Look! I shall stand before you there on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock! Water will come out of it, and the people will drink it.”

Moses did this while the elders of Israel were watching him. ⁷ Moses named the place “Massah”^{*61} and “Meribah,”^{**62} because the Israelites had quarrelled and because they had tested the LORD, by asking, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

The battle between the Israelites and the Amalekites — Genesis 14:7, Numbers 13:29, 14:25

⁸ The Amalekites came and fought with the Israelites at Rephidim. ⁹ Moses told Joshua,^{*63} “Choose men for us and go out to fight against the Amalekites! Tomorrow I shall be standing on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.”

¹⁰ Joshua followed Moses’ instructions about fighting with the Amalekites, but Moses, Aaron and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ When Moses kept holding up his hand, the Israelites kept winning, but when he lowered his hand, the Amalekites kept winning. ¹² However, Moses’ hands began to feel heavy. So, they took a rock and put it under him, and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur took hold of his hands, one on each side. His hands were supported in this way until the sun went down. ¹³ So, Joshua defeated the Amalekite army with the edge of the sword. ¹⁴ The LORD told Moses: “Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and impress it on Joshua as he listens to

⁶¹ Massah means, “Testing.”

⁶² Meribah means, “Quarrel.”

⁶³ Joshua means, “The LORD saves.” A later Hebrew form of it was Jeshua and is the origin of the name “Jesus.”

you: ‘I shall certainly blot out all the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven!’”

¹⁵ Moses built an altar and named it “YAHWEH-Nissi.”^{*64} ¹⁶ He said: “A hand is lifted in an oath to the throne of the LORD. The LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation.”

18

The visit of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, to the Israelite camp — Deuteronomy 1:9-18

¹ Jethro, the priest of Midian and the father-in-law of Moses, heard about everything that God had done for Moses and for His people Israel and that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. ² Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had taken back Moses' wife, Zipporah, after Moses had dismissed her. ³ He had also taken back her two sons. The name of the one was “Gershom,”^{*65} because Moses had said, “**I have become a stranger in a foreign land.**” ⁴ The name of the other was “Eliezer,”^{*66} because Moses had said, “The God of my father has helped me and has rescued me from the sword of Pharaoh.”

⁵ Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, his sons and his wife came to Moses in the wilderness where he was camping at the mountain of God. ⁶ He had someone tell Moses, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you, bringing your wife and her two sons with her.”

⁷ Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down and kissed him. After they had greeted one another and had gone into the tent, ⁸ Moses reported to his father-in-law everything that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians because of Israel, all the hardship that had happened to them on the way and how the LORD had rescued them. ⁹ Jethro was glad about all the good things that the LORD had done for Israel, whom He had rescued from the control of the Egyptians. ¹⁰ Jethro said: “Blessed be the LORD, who has rescued you all from the power of the Egyptians and from the power of Pharaoh! He has rescued the people from the power of the Egyptians. ¹¹ Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the other gods are. For He has done this to those who had been treating Israel so insolently.”

¹² Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, offered a burnt offering and other sacrifices to God. Aaron and all the elders of Israel also came to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law in the presence of God. ¹³ The next day Moses took his seat to settle disputes among the people, and the people stood beside Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴ When Moses' father-in-law watched everything that Moses was doing for the people, he asked: “What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit here alone, with all the people standing beside you from morning until evening?”

¹⁵ Moses answered his father-in-law: “Because the people are coming to me to ask for God's guidance.

¹⁶ When they have a dispute, it is brought to me, that I may decide between one man and another and that I may inform them about God's Prescriptions and Laws.”

¹⁷ However, Moses' father-in-law told him: “This is not a good way to do it. ¹⁸ Both you and these people who are with you will certainly wear yourselves out. For this is too difficult for you. You cannot do it alone. ¹⁹ Now listen to what I say! I shall give you some advice, and may God be with you! You should be the people's representative before God and present their problems before God! ²⁰ Then you should warn them about the Prescriptions and Laws and teach them how they should behave and what they should do! ²¹ Therefore, you should select capable men from all the people, men who fear God, reliable men, who hate corruption! You should appoint them as officials over units of a thousand, of a hundred, of fifty and of ten! ²² They should judge the people at all times! Although they should refer every important matter to you, they should decide every minor matter themselves! Take off some of your burden to make it lighter, and let them help you carry it! ²³ If you do this, and, if God so commands, you will be able to survive, and all these people will go home well treated.”

²⁴ Moses listened to his father-in-law's advice and did everything that he suggested. ²⁵ Moses chose capable men from all Israel and appointed them as leaders over the people, officials over units of a thousand, of a hundred, of fifty and of ten. ²⁶ These men kept judging the people at all times. They used to refer the difficult cases to Moses but decide every minor matter themselves. ²⁷ Then Moses let his father-in-law leave, and Jethro returned to his own country.

19

The Israelites' arrival at Sinai and God's instructions to Moses at Mount Sinai

¹ In the third month, after the people of Israel had left Egypt, on the very day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. ² After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Wilderness of Sinai and set up camp in the wilderness. Therefore, Israel camped there in front of the mountain. ³ Then Moses went up the mountain to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain. He said: “This is what you shall inform the family of Jacob and what you shall tell the people of Israel: ⁴ ‘You have seen for yourselves what I have done to the Egyptians and how I have carried you on the wings of eagles and have brought you here to Myself! ⁵ Now, if you strictly obey Me and keep My Covenant, then out of all nations you will be **a special treasure to Me**, because the whole earth is Mine. ⁶ You will be My **kingdom of priests and My holy nation.**’ These are the Words that you shall speak to the people of Israel!”

⁶⁴ YAHWEH-Nissi means, “The LORD is my flag.”

⁶⁵ Gershom means, “A resident-foreigner there.”

⁶⁶ Eliezer means, “My God is a help.”

⁷ Moses came back, summoned the elders of the people and laid before them all these things, which the LORD had commanded him. ⁸ All the people answered together and said, “We shall do everything that the LORD has said.”

Then Moses took the answer of the people back to the LORD. ⁹ The LORD told Moses: “Look! I am coming to you in a dense cloud, that the people may hear Me speaking with you and that their trust in you may never fail.”

Then Moses reported the response of the people to the LORD.

The consecration of the people

¹⁰ The LORD told Moses: “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow! They should wash their clothes, ¹¹ and be ready for the day after tomorrow! For on the day after tomorrow the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai while all the people are watching. ¹² You shall set a barrier around the mountain for the people and tell them that they must be careful not to come up the mountain or touch the foot of it! **Anyone who touches the mountain** shall certainly be **put to death!** ¹³ No hand shall touch him, but **he shall** certainly **be stoned** or shall certainly be shot with an arrow! Whether an **animal** or a man, he shall not live! However, when a ram’s horn sounds a long blast, they should come up near the mountain!”

¹⁴ After Moses had gone down the mountain to the people, he consecrated them, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵ He told the people: “Be ready for the day after tomorrow! Abstain from sexual relations!”

¹⁶ On the morning of the third day there were peals of **thunder** and flashes of **lightning, a dense cloud** over the mountain and a **very loud trumpet-blast**. All the people who were in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ All of Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD had come down on it in **fire**. The smoke went up from it **like the smoke from a furnace**, and the whole mountain **quaked** violently. ¹⁹ The **blast of the trumpet** kept growing louder and louder. Moses spoke, and God answered him with a voice. ²⁰ The LORD came down over Mount Sinai to the top of the mountain and the LORD summoned Moses to the top of the mountain. So, Moses went up.

²¹ The LORD told Moses: “Go down and warn the people not to break through to the LORD to see Him! Otherwise many of them will perish. ²² Even the priests, who have access to the LORD, should consecrate themselves, that the LORD may not break out against them!”

²³ Moses told the LORD: “The people cannot come up onto Mount Sinai, because You Yourself have warned us, ‘Set a barrier around the mountain, to keep it holy!’”

²⁴ The LORD told him: “Go down and **bring** Aaron

back **up** with you! However, the priests and the people should not break through to come up to the LORD, that He may not break out against them!”

²⁵ So, Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

20

The giving of the Ten Commandments — Deuteronomy 5:6-21

¹ Then God spoke all these Words: ² “I am the LORD, your God, and have brought you out of slave-quarters in the land of Egypt. ³ You shall have no other gods before Me! ⁴ You shall not make a carved image for yourself or any likeness of anything that is in the heavens above or that is on the earth below or that is in the water under the earth! ⁵ You shall not worship them or serve them! For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God. I punish the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me. ⁶ However, I show mercy for a thousand generations to those who love Me and keep My Commandments. ⁷ You shall not use the name of the LORD, your God, in a wrong way! For the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who uses His name wrongly. ⁸ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy!

⁹ For six days you shall labour and do all your work! ¹⁰ However, the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD, your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, your cattle or your foreign resident, who is inside your gates! ¹¹ For in six days **the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and everything that is in them** but rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD has blessed the Sabbath day and has declared it holy. ¹² **Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land** that the LORD, your God, is giving you! ¹³ **You shall not murder!** ¹⁴ **You shall not commit adultery!** ¹⁵ **You shall not steal!** ¹⁶ **You shall not give false evidence against your neighbour!** ¹⁷ **You shall not desire** your neighbour’s house! **You shall not desire** your neighbour’s wife or his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey or anything else that belongs to your neighbour!”

The reaction of the people to the giving of the commandments

¹⁸ All the people were witnessing the thundering, the lightning flashes, **the blast of the ram’s horn** and the mountain smoking. When the people saw them, they trembled and stood at a distance. ¹⁹ They told Moses: “Speak to us yourself, that we may listen! However, let God not speak to us or we shall die!”

²⁰ Moses told the people: “Do not be afraid! For God has come to test you and that there may be fear of Him on your faces, that you may not sin.”

²¹ The people stood at a distance, while Moses went closer, into the darkness where God was.

General regulations for worship

²² The LORD instructed Moses: “This is what you shall tell the Israelites: ‘You yourselves have wit-

nessed that I have spoken to you from heaven! ²³ You shall not make any gods alongside of Me! You shall not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold!

²⁴ “You shall make an altar of earth for Me and shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace-offerings, your flocks and your cattle! In every place where I make My name known I shall come to you and bless you. ²⁵ If you make an altar of stones for Me, you shall not build it with hewn stones! For, if you move your chisel back and forth over it, you have made it unholy. ²⁶ You shall not go up to My altar on steps, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it!

21

Legislation about the rights of Hebrew slaves – Leviticus 25:39-55, Deuteronomy 15:12-18

¹ “These are the Decisions that you shall set before them: ² When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall be your slave for six years but in the seventh year he shall go free without paying anything! ³ If he comes in alone, he shall leave alone! If he comes in as a married man, his wife shall leave with him! ⁴ If his master gives him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the woman and her children shall belong to her master, and the man shall leave alone! ⁵ However, if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife and my children, I shall not go out free,’ ⁶ his master shall bring him before God! Then his master shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl! Then he shall be his slave for life!

⁷ “When a man sells his daughter to be a slave, she shall not go free as male slaves go free! ⁸ If she does not please her master after he has assigned her to himself, he shall let her be ransomed! He shall not be entitled to sell her to strangers! For he has treated her unfairly. ⁹ If he assigns her to be his son’s wife, he shall treat her as daughters may legally claim! ¹⁰ If he marries another woman, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing or her marital rights! ¹¹ If he does not do these three things for her, she shall go free without any payment of money!

Legislation about responsibility for bodily injuries

¹² “If anyone strikes another, so that he dies, he shall certainly be put to death! ¹³ However, if he has not killed him deliberately, but God has let him fall into his hand, I shall designate a place for you to which he may flee. ¹⁴ However, when a man treats another man insolently, by scheming to kill him, you shall take him away from My altar to be put to death!

¹⁵ “If anyone strikes his father or his mother, he shall certainly be put to death!

¹⁶ “If one man kidnaps another, whether he sells him or he is found in the man’s possession, he shall certainly be put to death!

¹⁷ “**If anyone curses his father or his mother, he shall certainly be put to death!**

¹⁸ “When men quarrel, and one man strikes the other

man with a stone or with his fist, and the man does not die but becomes confined to his bed, ¹⁹ if he recovers so as to walk around outside with his walking-stick, the one who hit him shall not be punished. Nevertheless, he shall pay for his loss of work and shall pay for him to get completely well again!

²⁰ “When a man strikes his male slave or female slave with a stick, so that he dies as a direct result, he shall certainly be punished! ²¹ However, if the slave gets up in one day or two days, the man shall not be punished! For he is his property.

²² “When men who are quarrelling injure a pregnant woman so that she gives birth prematurely, but there is no mortal harm, the man shall certainly pay the fine that the woman’s husband imposes on him and pay as the judges determine! ²³ However, if any mortal harm follows, you shall give a life for a life, ²⁴ **an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth**, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, ²⁵ a scar for a scar, a bruise for a bruise, a wound for a wound!

²⁶ “When a man strikes his male slave or female slave in the eye and destroys it, he shall let him go free to compensate for his eye! ²⁷ If he knocks out a tooth of his male slave or female slave, he shall let the slave go free to compensate for his tooth!

²⁸ “When a bull gores a man or a woman to death, the bull shall be stoned to death! Its meat shall not be eaten! However, the bull’s owner shall not be held responsible! ²⁹ However, if the bull was likely to gore in the past, and his owner has been warned and has not kept him in an enclosure, and the bull kills a man or a woman, the bull shall be stoned, and his owner shall also be put to death! ³⁰ If only money as a ransom is demanded from him, he shall redeem his life by paying exactly what is imposed on him! ³¹ If the bull gores a son or a daughter, this same Decision shall be applied to the owner! ³² If the bull gores a male slave or a female slave, the owner shall pay three hundred and sixty grams of silver to the slave’s master, and the bull shall be stoned!

Regulations about injury through negligence

³³ “When a man opens a cistern or digs a cistern and fails to cover it, and a bull or a donkey falls into it, ³⁴ the owner of the cistern shall make amends with money! He shall make restitution to its owner but the dead animal shall be his!

³⁵ “When someone’s bull injures another man’s bull so that it dies, they shall sell the live bull and shall divide both the money and the dead bull! ³⁶ If it was known in the past that the bull was likely to gore, and his owner had not been keeping him in an enclosure, he shall certainly make amends for the bull with another bull, but the dead animal shall be his!”

22

Legislation about stealing, loss of property and restitution

¹ “When a man steals a bull or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he shall make amends with five cattle for

the one bull and with four sheep for the one sheep!

² “If a thief is caught while he is breaking into a house and is struck so that he dies, the defender is not guilty of murder. ³ If it has happened after sunrise, then it has been murder.

“A thief shall certainly make amends! If he has no means, he shall be sold because of what he has stolen!

⁴ If a stolen animal is actually found alive in his possession, whether a bull, a donkey or a sheep, he shall repay double!

⁵ “When a man uses a field or a vineyard for grazing and allows his animal to stray, and it grazes in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from the best part of his own field or vineyard!

⁶ “When a fire breaks out and spreads into thorn-bushes, so that a stack of grain or standing grain or a field is burnt, the one who set fire to the field shall certainly make restitution for what the fire has damaged!

⁷ “When a man gives his neighbour some money or articles for safekeeping, and they are stolen from that man’s house, if the thief is caught, the thief shall pay back double! ⁸ If the thief is not caught, the owner of the house shall be brought before God to see whether he has not laid his hand on his neighbour’s goods! ⁹ In every case of contested ownership of a bull, a donkey, a sheep, a mantle or of any other lost property, about which somebody claims: ‘This is it,’ the case of both persons shall be brought before God! The one whom God pronounces guilty shall repay double to his neighbour!

¹⁰ “When anyone gives a donkey, a bull, a sheep or any other animal to his neighbour for safekeeping, and it dies, is injured or is captured, and no one has seen what has happened, ¹¹ the two of them shall swear by the LORD! If the one has not laid his hand on his neighbour’s goods, then the owner shall accept this, without being paid for the loss! ¹² However, if it has indeed been stolen from the neighbour, he shall make restitution to the owner! ¹³ If a wild animal has indeed torn it in pieces, the man shall bring the remains as evidence! He shall not make restitution for what a wild animal has torn in pieces!

¹⁴ “When anyone borrows an animal from his neighbour, and it is injured or dies while its owner is not with it, the borrower shall make full restitution! ¹⁵ If the owner is with it, the borrower shall not make restitution! If it has been hired, it shall be reckoned in the money paid to hire it.”

Regulations for living as God’s holy people

¹⁶ “When a man seduces a virgin who has not become engaged and sleeps with her, he shall certainly acquire her as his wife by paying the bridal money! ¹⁷ If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he shall pay in silver the amount of bridal money for a virgin!

¹⁸ “You shall not permit a sorceress to live!

¹⁹ “Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal

shall certainly be put to death!

²⁰ “Anyone who sacrifices to any god except the LORD alone shall be put to death under solemn ban!

²¹ “You shall not oppress a foreigner or torment him! For you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.

²² “You shall not oppress any widow or a child who is fatherless! ²³ If, on the contrary, you oppress such a person, and he actually cries to Me for help, I shall certainly hear his cry for help. ²⁴ I shall become very angry and shall kill you with the sword, and then your own wives will be widows, and your own children will be fatherless.

²⁵ “If you lend money to any poor person among you who belongs to My people, you shall not act like a money-lender toward him! You shall not charge him any interest! ²⁶ If you indeed take your neighbour’s cloak as security, you shall give it back to him before the sun goes down! ²⁷ For that is his only covering in which to wrap his skin. In what else can he sleep? When he cries to Me for help, I shall listen, because I am compassionate.

²⁸ “You shall not blaspheme God and **you shall not curse a leader of your people!**

²⁹ “You shall not hold back offerings from the full yield of your crop or from the juice in your wine-vat!

“You shall give the first-born of your sons to Me!

³⁰ You shall do the same with your cattle and your sheep! The young one shall stay with its mother for seven days! On the eighth day you shall give it to Me!

³¹ “You shall be My holy people! You shall not eat meat from an animal torn to pieces by a wild animal in the open field! You shall throw it to the dog!

23

¹ “You shall not spread a false report! Do not make common cause with a wicked person by giving false evidence! ² Do not follow a crowd in doing wrong! When you give evidence in a lawsuit you shall not side with the majority to pervert justice! ³ You shall not give special favours to a powerless man in his lawsuit!

⁴ “When you happen to find your enemy’s ox or donkey going astray, you shall certainly take it back to him!

⁵ “When you see the donkey of someone who hates you lying exhausted under its load, you shall not leave him alone with it! You shall certainly help him set it free!

⁶ “You shall not pervert justice when a poor person among you has a public dispute! ⁷ Have nothing to do with anything false! Do not put an innocent and righteous person to death! For I shall not acquit a wicked person. ⁸ You shall not accept a bribe! For a bribe blinds clear-sighted persons and distorts the cases of righteous people.

⁹ “You shall not oppress a foreigner! You know a foreigner’s state of mind, because you were foreigners in

the land of Egypt.

The sabbatical year — Leviticus 25:1-7

10 “For six years you may sow your land and gather what it yields. 11 However, in the seventh year you shall leave the land unploughed and fallow, that those who are poor among your people may eat, and the wild animals may eat what the poor people leave! You shall do the same with your vineyard and your olive orchard! 12 You shall do your work in six days but shall rest on the seventh day, that your ox and your donkey may rest, and your home-born person and the foreigner may be refreshed!

13 “Pay careful attention to everything that I have told you!

“You shall not mention the names of other gods! They shall not be heard on your lips!

Legislation about three festivals — Exodus 34:18-26, Leviticus 23:4-44, Numbers 28:16-29:40, Deuteronomy 16:1-17

14 “Three times a year you shall celebrate a festival to Me! 15 You shall keep the Festival of Bread without Yeast: You shall eat bread without yeast for seven days at the right time in the month of Abib, as I commanded you! For you left Egypt in that month. You shall not come into My presence without an offering!

16 You shall also keep the Festival of the Harvest with the first-fruits of your labour when you have sown the field, as well as the Festival of In-Gathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered from the field what your labour has produced! 17 Three times a year all your males shall come into the presence of the Lord GOD!

18 “You shall not offer the blood of a sacrifice to Me together with anything that contains yeast!

“The fat sacrificed at My festival shall not remain overnight until morning!

19 “You shall bring the best of the first-fruits of your soil to the house of the LORD, your God!

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk!

The promise about God’s Messenger, who will lead the Israelites to Canaan

20 “**See! I am sending an Angel ahead of you**, to protect you **on the way and** to bring you to the place that I have prepared. 21 Be on your guard before Him and listen to what He says! Do not cause trouble for Him! For He will not forgive your rebellion. For My name is in Him. 22 Rather, if you indeed listen to Him and do everything that I say, I shall be an enemy to your enemies and shall be hostile toward those who are hostile to you. 23 When My Angel goes ahead of you and brings you to the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, I shall destroy them. 24 You shall not bow down before their gods, you shall not serve them and shall not follow their practices! Rather, you shall certainly destroy their images! You shall certainly break their sacred stones in pieces! 25 You shall serve the LORD, your God! Then He will bless your food and water. I shall take sickness away from among you. 26 No

woman in your land will have a miscarriage or be barren. I shall give you a full life span. 27 I shall send terror of Me ahead of you. I shall throw into confusion all the people whom you encounter. I shall make all your enemies turn their backs to you. 28 I shall send discouragement ahead of you to drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites and the Hittites as you advance. 29 I shall not drive them out before you in one year, that the land may not become deserted, and that the wild animals may not become too numerous for you. 30 I shall drive them out ahead of you gradually until you increase enough to take possession of the land. 31 I shall establish your borders from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines and from the wilderness to the Euphrates. For I shall hand the people who live in the land into your power, so that you will drive them out as you advance. 32 You shall not make a covenant with them or with their gods! 33 They must not live in your land, that they may not cause you to sin against Me! For the worship of their gods will surely be a snare to you.”

24

The ratification of the Covenant with blood

1 God told Moses: “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel! While you are still at a distance you shall worship! 2 Then Moses alone shall approach the LORD! The others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him!”

3 When Moses came and recounted to all the people all the Words of the LORD and all the Ordinances, all the people answered with one voice: “We shall do all the things that the LORD has spoken.”

4 Then Moses wrote down all the Words of the LORD. He got up early in the morning, built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. 5 Then he sent the young Israelite men, and they offered whole burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the LORD. 6 Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls and poured the other half out on the altar. 7 Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it aloud for the people to hear. They said, “We shall do all that the LORD has spoken, that we may be obedient.”

8 **Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, “Look! The blood of the Covenant, which the LORD has made with you** in accordance with all these Words.”

9 Then Moses went up, together with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the seventy elders of Israel, 10 and they saw the God of Israel. Under His feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself. 11 However, God did not stretch out His hand against the eminent men of Israel. They saw God and ate and drank.

Moses’ ascent of the mountain to receive God’s Words written on stone —

compare Exodus 34:1-4

¹² Then the LORD told Moses: “Come up to Me on the mountain! Wait there, that I may give you **the tablets of stone** with the Law and the Commandments that I have written, to instruct them!”

¹³ Moses and Joshua, his assistant, set out, and Moses went up onto the mountain of God. ¹⁴ He told the elders: “Wait here for us until we come back to you! Look! Aaron and Hur are here with you. Anyone who is involved in a dispute should go to them!”

¹⁵ When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶ The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered it and, on the seventh, He called to Moses from inside the cloud. ¹⁷ **The glory of the LORD** appeared to the Israelites like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain. ¹⁸ Moses entered the cloud as he went up onto the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

25

Instructions about freewill contributions for the Tent of Meeting — Exodus 35:4-9

¹ The LORD instructed Moses: ² “Tell the Israelites to take a contribution for Me. You shall take the contribution to Me from everyone whose heart makes him willing! ³ This is the contribution that you shall take from them: gold, silver, bronze, ⁴ purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material, fine linen, goat hair, ⁵ ram skins dyed red, dolphin skins and acacia wood, ⁶ olive-oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant perfumes, ⁷ onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the priestly garment and the priestly breast-piece!

⁸ “Then they shall make a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them! ⁹ **You shall make it exactly like the pattern** of the Tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings **that I am showing you!**”

Instructions about the Ark of the Testimony — Exodus 37:1-5

¹⁰ “They shall also make an Ark of acacia wood, one hundred and twenty-five centimetres long, seventy-five centimetres wide and seventy-five centimetres high! ¹¹ You shall plate it with pure gold! You shall plate it inside and outside! You shall make a moulding of gold all around on it! ¹² You shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four lower corners, two rings on one side and two rings on the other side! ¹³ You shall also make carrying-poles of acacia wood and plate them with gold! ¹⁴ You shall insert the poles through the rings on the sides of the Ark, that they may carry the Ark! ¹⁵ The poles shall remain in the rings of the Ark and shall not be removed from it! ¹⁶ Then you shall put the Testimony that I shall give you into the Ark!

Instructions about the propitiatory cover — Exodus 37:6-9

¹⁷ “You shall make a propitiatory cover of pure gold, one hundred and twenty-five centimetres long and seventy-five centimetres wide! ¹⁸ You shall also make

two cherubim! You shall make them by hammering them out of gold on the two ends of the propitiatory cover! ¹⁹ Make one cherub on one end and the other cherub on the other end! You shall make the two cherubim at the two ends, to form one whole with the propitiatory cover! ²⁰ The cherubim shall have wings that spread out upwards, screening the propitiatory cover with their wings as they face each other! The faces of the cherubim shall look towards the propitiatory cover! ²¹ You shall put the propitiatory cover on top of the Ark and put the Testimony, which I shall give you, into the Ark! ²² I shall make Myself known to you there and shall speak to you from above the propitiatory cover, from between the two cherubim that are over the Ark of the Testimony. There I shall speak about everything that I shall command you for the Israelites.

Instructions about the table for the Holy Place — Exodus 37:10-16

²³ “You shall also make a table of acacia wood one metre long, fifty centimetres wide and seventy-five centimetres high! ²⁴ You shall plate it with pure gold and make a moulding of gold for it all around! ²⁵ You shall make a rim for it all around, a handbreadth wide, and make a moulding of gold for the rim all around! ²⁶ You shall make four rings of gold for it and fasten the rings to the four edges that are on the table’s legs! ²⁷ The rings shall be close to the rim as sockets for the poles to carry the table! ²⁸ You shall make the poles of acacia wood and plate them with gold, that the table may be carried with them! ²⁹ You shall also make its dishes, its basins, its jars and its bowls with which to pour drink offerings and shall make them of pure gold! ³⁰ You shall always set the bread of the Presence on the table before Me!”

Instructions about the lampstand — Exodus 37:17-24

³¹ “You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold! The lampstand shall be made as hammered metalwork! Its base and its shaft, its cups, its buds and its flower-shaped ornaments shall be of one piece with it! ³² Six shafts shall extend from its sides, three shafts of the lampstand from its one side and three shafts of the lampstand from its other side! ³³ Three cups shaped in the form of almond blossoms with a bulb and a flower shall be on the one shaft and three cups in the form of almond blossoms with a bulb and a flower on the other shaft! There shall also be the same for all six shafts, which extend from the lampstand! ³⁴ On the lampstand there shall also be four cups in the form of almond-blossoms, each with its bulb and its flower! ³⁵ One bulb shall be under the first pair of shafts extending from the lampstand, a second bulb under the second pair of shafts extending from it and a third bulb under the third pair of shafts extending from it! The six shafts that extend from the lampstand shall be like this! ³⁶ Their buds and their shafts shall be of one piece with the lampstand! All of it shall be one piece of hammered metalwork of pure gold! ³⁷ You shall

also make seven lamps for it and set up its lamps, that it may give light over the space in front of it! ³⁸ Its wick-trimmers and its fire-pans shall be of pure gold! ³⁹ Thirty-five kilograms of pure gold shall be used to make the lampstand and all these accessories! ⁴⁰ **See that you make them according to the pattern of them, which you have been shown on the mountain!**"

26

Instructions about the Tabernacle — Exodus 36:8-38

¹ "You shall make the Tabernacle with ten curtains! You shall make them with twisted fine linen and purple wool, wool dyed with maroon and crimson material, with cherubim worked into them by a weaver! ² The length of one curtain shall be fourteen metres and the width of one curtain two metres! All of the other curtains shall be the same size as the first! ³ Five curtains shall be joined to one another, and the other five curtains shall be joined to one another! ⁴ You shall also make loops of purple wool on the edge of the end-curtain in the one set and do the same on the edge of the outermost curtain in the other set! ⁵ You shall make fifty loops on the one curtain and make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the other set, so that the loops are opposite to each other! ⁶ You shall also make fifty golden hooks and with the hooks you shall join the curtains to one another, so as to form the Tabernacle as a unit!

Instructions about the covering for the Tabernacle — Exodus 36:14-19

⁷ "You shall also make curtains of goat hair to be a tent over the Tabernacle! You shall make eleven of these curtains! ⁸ The one curtain shall be fifteen metres long and two metres wide, and the eleven curtains shall all be the same size as the first curtain! ⁹ You shall join five of the curtains to one another as one set and the other six to one another as a second set and shall fold the sixth curtain double at the front of the tent! ¹⁰ You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the end-curtain in the one set and fifty loops on the edge of the end-curtain in the second set! ¹¹ You shall also make fifty bronze hooks and put the hooks through the loops, that you may join the tent together to form a unit! ¹² The projecting part of the tent-curtains that is left, the one half-curtain that is left over, shall hang over the back of the Tabernacle! ¹³ The fifty centimetres that are left over on each side in the length of the tent-curtains shall be an overhang on each side of the Tabernacle, to cover it! ¹⁴ You shall also make a covering for the tent of ram-skins dyed red and over that another covering of dolphin skins!

Instructions about the planks of the Tabernacle — Exodus 36:20-34

¹⁵ "You shall also make the planks for the Tabernacle of acacia wood, as uprights! ¹⁶ The length of each plank shall be five metres, and the width of each plank shall be seventy-five centimetres! ¹⁷ Each plank shall have two tenons to be dovetailed into the next plank! You shall make them like this on all the planks of the

Tabernacle! ¹⁸ You shall make twenty planks for the southern side of the Tabernacle! ¹⁹ You shall also make forty silver pedestals under the twenty planks, two pedestals under the one plank for its two tenons and two pedestals under the next plank for its two tenons! ²⁰ You shall also make twenty planks on the other side of the Tabernacle, the northern side, ²¹ with their forty silver pedestals, two pedestals under the one plank and two pedestals under the next plank! ²² You shall also make six planks for the rear of the Tabernacle, the western side! ²³ You shall also make two planks for the two rear corners of the Tabernacle! ²⁴ These shall be made double from the bottom! They shall fit at the top into a single ring! Both of them shall be like that! They shall form the two corners! ²⁵ There shall be eight planks with their sixteen silver pedestals, two pedestals under the one plank and two pedestals under the next plank!

²⁶ "You shall also make crosspieces of acacia wood, five for the planks on the one side of the Tabernacle, ²⁷ five crosspieces for the planks on the other side of the Tabernacle and five crosspieces for the planks on the rear side of the Tabernacle, that is, the western side! ²⁸ The middle crosspiece, halfway up the planks, shall slide through, from the one end to the other! ²⁹ You shall plate the planks with gold! You shall also make golden rings for them as sockets for the crosspieces and plate the crosspieces with gold! ³⁰ You shall erect the Tabernacle according to the building-plan of it, which you have been shown on the mountain!

Instructions about the curtain and the Most Holy Place — Exodus 36:35

³¹ "You shall also make a curtain of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen! It shall be made with cherubim worked into it by a weaver! ³² You shall hang it on four acacia posts overlaid with gold. Their hooks shall be of gold and stand on four silver pedestals! ³³ You shall hang the curtain from the hooks and bring the Ark of the Testimony inside, behind the curtain! The curtain shall divide for you the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. ³⁴ You shall put the propitiatory cover on the Ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy Place!

Instructions about the table and the lampstand in the Holy Place — Exodus 37:10-16

³⁵ "You shall set the table outside the curtain! You shall put the lampstand opposite the table on the southern side of the Tabernacle! You shall set the table on the northern side!

Instructions about the entrance to the Tabernacle — Exodus 36:37

³⁶ "You shall also make a curtain for the entrance to the tent, of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen, worked by a weaver of coloured fabric! ³⁷ You shall also make for the curtain five posts of acacia wood! You shall plate them with gold! They shall have golden nails, and you shall cast five bronze pedestals for them!

27

Instructions about the altar for burnt offerings — Exodus 38:1-7

¹ “You shall also make the altar of acacia wood! The altar shall be square, two and a half metres long and two and a half metres wide and shall be one and a half metres high! ² You shall also make its horns on its four corners! Its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall plate it with bronze!

³ “You shall also make pots for it to clean it of fatty ashes and its fire-shovels, its bowls used for pouring, its meat-forks and its ash-buckets! You shall make all its utensils of bronze!

⁴ “You shall also make a grating for it, a bronze network, and on the network you shall make four bronze rings, one on each of its four edges! ⁵ You shall put the network below, under the rim of the altar, so that the network is halfway up the altar!

⁶ “You shall also make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and plate them with bronze! ⁷ Its poles shall be inserted through the rings, and the poles shall be along two sides of the altar to be used in carrying it! ⁸ You shall make the altar as a hollow chest of boards! **It shall be made as God has shown you on the mountain!**

Instructions about the courtyard and its curtains — Exodus 38:9-20

⁹ “You shall also make the courtyard of the Tabernacle! For the one side, on the southern side of the courtyard, there shall be curtains of twisted fine linen for the courtyard, fifty metres long, ¹⁰ with twenty posts and twenty bronze pedestals for them! The hooks on the posts and their bindings shall be of silver!

¹¹ Similarly there shall be curtains on the northern side, fifty metres long, with their twenty posts and twenty bronze pedestals! The hooks on the posts and their bindings shall be of silver! ¹² The curtains on the western side of the courtyard shall be twenty-five metres wide and have their ten posts and their ten pedestals!

¹³ On the eastern side, toward the rising sun, the courtyard shall be twenty-five metres wide! ¹⁴ On the one side of the entrance there shall be seven and a half metres of curtains with three posts and three pedestals for them!

¹⁵ On the other side of the entrance there shall be seven and a half metres of curtains with three posts and three pedestals for them! ¹⁶ For the gate of the courtyard there shall be a curtain ten metres long of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen, worked by a weaver of coloured fabric! It shall have four posts and four pedestals!

¹⁷ All the posts around the courtyard shall have silver bindings! Their hooks shall be of silver, and their pedestals shall be of bronze! ¹⁸ The courtyard shall be fifty metres long, twenty-five metres wide all the way and two and a half metres high, with curtains of twisted fine linen and with bronze pedestals!

¹⁹ “All the other articles used in the service of the Tabernacle, all its tent-pegs and all the tent-pegs for the courtyard shall be of bronze!

Instructions about olive-oil for lamps — Exodus 35:28, Leviticus 24:1-4

²⁰ “You shall command the Israelites to bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the lighting to cause the lamps to burn continuously! ²¹ Aaron and his sons shall attend to this from evening until morning before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain, which is in front of the Testimony! This shall be a lasting Statute for the Israelites in their coming generations!”

28

Sacred vestments for the priests — Exodus 39:1-21

¹ “You now, make your brother Aaron together with his sons come to you from among the other Israelites, that they may serve Me as priests! They shall be Aaron and Aaron’s sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar! ² You shall make holy garments for your brother Aaron, to make him magnificent and splendid!

³ “You shall tell all who have skilful minds, whom I have endowed with skill, to make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, so he may serve Me as priest! ⁴ These are the garments that they shall make: a breast-piece, a priestly garment, a sleeveless robe, a tunic of chequered work, a headband and a sash! They shall make holy garments for your brother Aaron as well as for his sons, that Aaron may serve Me as a priest! ⁵ They shall use gold, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and fine linen!

Instructions about the priestly garment (or ephod) — Exodus 39:2-7

⁶ “They shall make the priestly garment by having a weaver work it with gold, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen!

⁷ It shall have two shoulder-pieces attached at the back and the front, that it may be fastened! ⁸ The waistband that is on it to fasten it shall be made like it and be of one piece with it! It shall be made of gold, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen!

⁹ You shall also take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ six of their names on the one stone, and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, in the order in which they were born!

¹¹ They shall be made as a gem-cutter engraves a seal! You shall engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones! Then you shall mount them in filigree work of gold!

¹² You shall fasten the two stones on the shoulder-pieces of the priestly garment as reminder-stones for the Israelites, that Aaron may bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a reminder!

¹³ You shall make filigree settings of gold! ¹⁴ You shall make two chains of pure gold by working twisted wires into chains and fasten the corded chains to the filigree settings!

Instructions about the breast-piece—Exodus 39:8-21

¹⁵ “You shall make a breast-piece of judgment! You shall use a weaver to make it as the priestly garment is made! You shall make it of gold, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine

linen! ¹⁶ It shall be square, a span long and a span wide, when folded double! ¹⁷ You shall make settings of precious stones on it, four rows of precious stones! The first row shall consist of a ruby, a topaz and an emerald! ¹⁸ The second row shall consist of a turquoise, a lapis lazuli and a sardonyx! ¹⁹ The third row shall consist of a carnelian, an agate and an amethyst! ²⁰ The fourth row shall consist of a chrysolite, an onyx and a jasper! They shall be set in gold filigrees! ²¹ There shall be **twelve** stones, corresponding to **the names of the sons of Israel!** They shall be engraved like a seal, each bearing the name of one of the twelve tribes! ²² You shall also make chains on the breast-piece by welding cordage-work of pure gold together! ²³ You shall make two golden rings on the breast-piece and fasten the two rings to the upper corners of the breast-piece! ²⁴ You shall fasten the two golden cords to the two rings at the edges of the breast-piece! ²⁵ You shall fasten the other two ends of the two cords to the two filigrees and attach them to the shoulder-pieces of the priestly garment at the front! ²⁶ You shall also make two golden rings and fasten them to the other two edges of the breast-piece on the edge of it that is next to the inner side of the priestly garment! ²⁷ You shall make two more golden rings and fasten them to the bottom of the two shoulder-pieces of the priestly garment at the front, close to its seam above the waistband of the priestly garment! ²⁸ They shall tie the breast-piece by its rings to the rings of the priestly garment with a cord of purple wool, that it may lie over the waistband of the priestly garment, that the breast-piece may not come loose from the priestly garment! ²⁹ Aaron shall wear the names of the sons of Israel on the breast-piece of judgment over his heart when he enters the Holy Place, as a constant reminder before the LORD! ³⁰ You shall also put the Urim and Thummim into the breast-piece of judgment, that they may be over Aaron's heart when he enters the presence of the LORD! Aaron shall always wear the means of making judgment on the Israelites over his heart in the presence of the LORD!

Instructions about the sleeveless robe for the priest — Exodus 39:22-26

³¹ “You shall also make the sleeveless robe that goes with the priestly garment entirely of purple wool! ³² It shall have an opening in it for the head! There shall be a woven border all around, like the collar in a body-armour of leather! It shall have this to keep it from tearing! ³³ You shall also make pomegranates of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon and crimson material all around on the hem of its skirt, with golden bells between them all around! ³⁴ A golden bell shall alternate with a pomegranate all around the lower hem of the sleeveless robe! ³⁵ Aaron must wear it when he ministers, that its sound may be heard when he enters the Holy Place before the LORD and when he comes out, that he may not die!

Instructions about the artificial flower — Exodus 39:30-31

³⁶ “You shall also make an artificial flower of pure gold and engrave on it, in the kind of engraving that a seal has: ‘THE HOLINESS OF THE LORD!’ ³⁷ You shall fasten it to a cord of purple wool to attach it to the headband! It shall be on the front of the headband! ³⁸ It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall bear the guilt for shortcomings in the holy things that the Israelites consecrate, whatever their gifts may be! The artificial flower shall always be on his forehead, that the LORD may show favour to them!

Instructions about the tunics, the headbands, the sashes and the linen breeches for the priests — Exodus 39:27-29

³⁹ “You shall also weave the tunic in checker work of fine linen! You shall also make a headband of fine linen, and a weaver of coloured fabric shall make a sash!

⁴⁰ “You shall also make tunics for Aaron's sons, make sashes for them and make headbands for them, to give them dignity and grandeur!

⁴¹ You shall put these on your brother Aaron and his sons, you shall anoint them, you shall install them as priests and consecrate them, that they may perform the duties of priests to Me!

⁴² “Make for them white linen breeches to cover their private parts! These shall reach from the hips to the thighs! ⁴³ Aaron and his sons shall wear them when they enter the Tent of Meeting or when they approach the altar to minister in the Holy Place, that they may not bring guilt on themselves and die! This shall be a permanent Statute for him and for his descendants after him!”

29

Instructions about the consecration of the priests — Exodus 40:12-15, Leviticus 8:1-36

¹ “This is what you shall do to the priests when you consecrate them to serve Me as priests: Take one young bull and two rams that are free from blemish! ² Take bread without yeast and ring-shaped bread without yeast, which have been moistened with olive-oil and wafers without yeast, which have been spread with olive-oil! You shall make them with fine wheat flour! ³ You shall put them in a single basket and present them in the basket, together with the young bull and the two rams!

⁴ “Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and shall wash them with water! ⁵ You shall take the garments and dress Aaron with the tunic, the sleeveless robe that is with the priestly garment, the priestly garment itself and the breast-piece! Then you shall put the priestly garment on him tightly by its waistband! ⁶ You shall put the headband on his head and fasten the holy crown on the headband! ⁷ Then you shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head to anoint him!

⁸ “Then you shall bring his sons forward and put tunics on them! ⁹ You shall fasten sashes around Aaron and his sons and tie their headbands on them, that the

priesthood may belong to them by a lasting Statute! This is the way in which you shall install Aaron and his sons!

¹⁰ “Then you shall bring the young bull forward, in front of the Tent of Meeting! Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the young bull! ¹¹ Then you shall slaughter the young bull before the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting! ¹² You shall take some of the blood of the young bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger and pour out all the rest of the blood against the base of the altar!

¹³ “You shall take all the fat that covers the internal organs, the lobe on the liver, the two kidneys with the fat on them and burn them on the altar! ¹⁴ However, you shall burn the young bull’s meat, hide and the contents of its stomach in a fire outside the camp! It is a sin-offering.

¹⁵ “You shall take one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram! ¹⁶ Then you shall slaughter the ram, take its blood and pour it out against the altar all around! ¹⁷ You shall cut the ram into its pieces, wash its internal organs and its shins and lay them beside its other pieces and its head! ¹⁸ Then you shall burn the whole ram on the altar! It is a burnt offering to the LORD, **a soothing aroma, an offering** made by fire to the LORD.

¹⁹ “Then you shall take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram! ²⁰ You shall slaughter the ram, take some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron’s right ear, on the lobes of his sons’ right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet! Then you shall pour the blood out against the altar all around! ²¹ You shall take some blood that is on the altar and some of the anointing oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments and on his sons and his sons’ garments! Then he and his garments and his sons and their garments will also be holy.

²² “You shall also take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the internal organs, the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys and the fat that is on them and the right leg! For this is a ram for the installation. ²³ You shall also take one disk-shaped loaf of bread, one ring-shaped loaf of bread made with olive-oil and one wafer from the basket of bread without yeast, which is before the LORD! ²⁵ You shall lay all these in the hands of Aaron and of his sons and move them back and forth as a wave offering to the LORD! ²⁶ Then you shall take them from their hands and burn them on the altar together with the burnt offering, as a soothing aroma before the LORD! It will be an offering made by fire to the LORD.

²⁶ “You shall take the brisket of the ram for Aaron’s installation and move it back and forth as a wave offering before the LORD! That shall be your portion!

²⁷ You shall consecrate the brisket of the wave offering that has been moved back and forth and the leg of

the contribution that has been presented, taken from the ram for the installation! These parts of it shall belong to Aaron and to his sons! ²⁸ By a permanent Statute this gift from the Israelites shall belong to Aaron and to his sons! For this is a contribution and shall be a contribution from the Israelites out of their peace-offerings! It is their contribution to the LORD.

²⁹ “Aaron’s holy garments shall belong to his sons after him, that they may be anointed and installed in them! ³⁰ When the son who succeeds him as priest goes into the Tent of Meeting to minister in the Holy Place, he shall wear them for seven days!

³¹ “You shall take the ram for installation and boil its meat in a holy place! ³² Then Aaron and his sons shall eat the meat of the ram and the bread that is in the basket at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting! ³³ They shall eat these offerings, by which atonement has been made for their ordination and consecration! However, no unqualified person shall eat them, because they are holy! ³⁴ If any of the meat from the installation or any of the bread is left over until morning, you shall burn up what is left! It shall not be eaten! For it is holy.

³⁵ “You shall do this with Aaron and his sons exactly as I have commanded you! You shall take seven days to install them! ³⁶ You shall sacrifice a young bull each day as a sin-offering, as an act of atonement! You shall also free the altar from sin when you make atonement for it and also anoint it to make it holy! ³⁷ For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and make it holy! Then the altar will be most holy, and anyone who touches the altar will be holy.

Instructions about the daily offerings — Numbers 28:1-8

³⁸ “This is what you shall prepare for the offering on the altar regularly each day: two male lambs that are one year old. ³⁹ You shall prepare the one lamb in the morning and prepare the other lamb at twilight! ⁴⁰ With the first lamb you shall prepare four litres of fine wheat flour mixed with one litre of olive-oil produced from beaten olives and a drink offering of one litre of wine! ⁴¹ You shall prepare the other lamb at twilight with the same cereal offering and drink offering as in the morning! You shall prepare it as a soothing aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD!

⁴² “For your coming generations this burnt offering shall be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD! I shall reveal Myself to you and speak to you there. ⁴³ I shall reveal Myself to the Israelites there, and My glory will make it a holy place. ⁴⁴ I shall make the Tent of Meeting and the altar holy and make Aaron and his sons holy, to serve Me as priests. ⁴⁵ **I shall dwell among the Israelites and shall be their God.** ⁴⁶ They will know I am the LORD, their God. It is I who have brought them out of the land of Egypt to dwell **among them**. I am the LORD, their God.”

30

Instructions about the altar for incense — Exodus 37:25-29

¹ “You shall also make an incense-altar! You shall make it of acacia wood! ² It shall be square, fifty centimetres long by fifty centimetres wide and one metre high! Its horns should be of one piece with it! ³ You shall plate it with pure gold, its top slab, its sides all around and its horns! You shall also make a golden moulding around it! ⁴ You shall make two rings of gold for it below its moulding on two of its sides! You shall make them on two of its sides, and they shall be sockets for the poles used to carry it! ⁵ You shall also make the poles of acacia wood and plate them with gold! ⁶ You shall set it in front of the curtain, which is before the Ark of the Testimony, in front of the propitiatory cover that is over the Testimony, where I shall reveal Myself to you!

⁷ “Aaron shall burn fragrant perfumes on it every morning! He shall burn incense on it when he attends to the lamps! ⁸ When Aaron puts the lamps up at twilight, he shall burn incense on it regularly before the LORD in your coming generations!

⁹ “You shall not offer any unauthorised incense on it or burnt offerings or grain-offerings and you shall not pour a drink offering on it! ¹⁰ Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once each year with the blood of the annual sin-offering of atonement! He shall make atonement for it in your coming generations! It is most holy to the LORD.”

Instructions about ransom after a census by the payment of a half shekel

¹¹ Then the LORD told Moses: ¹² “When you take a census of the Israelites, to count them, everyone shall pay to the LORD a ransom for his life when he is counted, that no plague may come among them when they are counted! ¹³ Each one who crosses over to those already counted shall pay a half shekel, according to the shekel valid at the Holy Place, twenty gerahs to the shekel! The half shekel shall be a contribution to the LORD! ¹⁴ Everyone who is twenty years old or more and crosses over to those who have already been counted shall pay the contribution to the LORD! ¹⁵ Rich people shall not pay more than the half shekel, and poor people shall not pay less when you give the contribution to the LORD to atone for your lives! ¹⁶ You shall receive the atonement money from the Israelites and use it for the service of the Tent of Meeting! It shall be a reminder to the Israelites before the LORD, to make atonement for your lives!”

Instructions about the bronze basin — Exodus 38:8

¹⁷ Then the LORD told Moses: ¹⁸ “You shall also make a bronze basin for washing, with a bronze stand for it and place it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar! You shall put water in it! ¹⁹ Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet with water from it! ²⁰ When they go into the Tent of Meeting, they shall wash with water, that they may not die! So also, when they approach the altar to minister by burning an offering made by fire to the LORD, ²¹ they shall wash

their hands and feet, that they may not die! This shall be a permanent Statute for him and his descendants in their coming generations!”

Instructions about the holy oil for anointing — Exodus 37:29

²² Then the LORD told Moses: ²³ “In addition, you yourself shall get the choicest spices: six kilograms of myrrh-oil, half as much (that is, three kilograms) of fragrant cinnamon, three kilograms of sweet cane, ²⁴ six kilograms of cassia-buds (according to the shekel weight valid in the Holy Place) and four litres of olive-oil! ²⁵ You shall make holy anointing oil with these, a spice blended by the perfumer’s art! It shall be holy anointing oil! ²⁶ With it you shall anoint the Tent of Meeting, the Ark of the Testimony, ²⁷ the table with all its utensils, the lampstand with its utensils, the altar of incense, ²⁸ the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils and the basin with its stand! ²⁹ You shall make them holy, that they may be most holy! Whatever touches them shall be holy! ³⁰ You shall anoint Aaron and his sons and make them holy to serve Me as priests!

³¹ “You shall tell the Israelites: ‘This shall be My holy anointing oil throughout your coming generations!’

³² It shall not be poured out on the body of other people, and you shall not make anything with similar proportions to this! This is holy, and you shall regard it as holy! ³³ Anyone who blends a mixture like it or puts any of it on any unqualified person shall be cut off from his people!”

Instructions about the incense to be used in the Tabernacle

³⁴ The LORD told Moses: “Get yourself fragrant spices: stacte resin, onycha and galbanum! Add these spices and clear frankincense to these spices in equal parts! ³⁵ You shall make it into incense, a spice made by the perfumer’s art! It shall be salted, pure and a holy thing! ³⁶ You shall also grind some of it, crushing it fine, and put some of it in front of the Testimony in the Tent of Meeting where I shall reveal Myself to you! You shall treat it as most holy! ³⁷ You shall not make for yourselves anything with similar proportions to the incense that you will make! You shall regard it as holy to the LORD! ³⁸ Anyone who makes anything like it to enjoy the smell of it shall be cut off from his people!”

31

Instructions about the craftsmen to make the Tabernacle — Exodus 35:30-35

¹ Then the LORD told Moses: ² “See! I have by name called Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ³ I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, intelligence and knowledge for every kind of craft, ⁴ to devise artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze. ⁵ He knows how to cut gemstones to be set, to carve wood and to engage in all other kinds of craftsmanship. ⁶ Further, I Myself have appointed with him Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. I have also given to all skilful per-

sons the ability to make everything that I have commanded you: ⁷ the Tent of Meeting, the Ark of the Testimony, the propitiatory cover on it, all the equipment of the tent, ⁸ the table with its utensils, the pure-golden lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense, ⁹ the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, the basin with its stand, ¹⁰ the woven garments, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they serve as priests, ¹¹ the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the Holy Place. They shall make them exactly as I have commanded you!”

The observance of the sabbath, as a sign

¹² Then the LORD instructed Moses: ¹³ “Tell the Israelites yourself: ‘You shall surely keep My Sabbaths! For they will be a sign between Me and you for your coming generations, that you may know that I am the LORD and I make you holy. ¹⁴ You shall keep the Sabbath! For it is holy to you. Anyone who profanes it shall certainly be put to death! For any person who does any work on it shall be cut off from his people! ¹⁵ Work shall be done on six days, but on the seventh day there shall be a most solemn Sabbath, holy to the LORD! Anyone who does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death! ¹⁶ The Israelites shall keep the Sabbath and observe the Sabbath throughout their coming generations as a Covenant for all time! ¹⁷ It shall be a sign between Me and the Israelites for ever! For the LORD made the heavens and the earth in six days and on the seventh He stopped working and refreshed Himself.’”

The two tablets of the Covenant

¹⁸ When He had finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, which were tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

32

The Israelites' worship of a golden calf — Deuteronomy 9:7-29

¹ When the people saw that Moses was taking a long time to come back down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron. They said: “Come, **make us gods who will go before us. For, as for this Moses, the man who has brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.**”

² Aaron told them, “Pull off the golden ear-rings that your wives, sons and daughters have in their ears and bring them to me.”

³ So, all the people pulled off the golden earrings that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took them from their hands, shaped it with a sharp instrument and made it into a cast image of a bull calf. Then they said, “These are your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf. He announced, “Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD.”

⁶ On the next day the people got up early, sacrificed burnt offerings and made peace-offerings. **Then the people sat down to eat and drink and got up to amuse themselves.**

⁷ Then the LORD spoke to Moses: “Go! Get down! For your people, whom you have led up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. ⁸ They have been quick to turn aside from the Way that I have commanded them and have made themselves a cast image of a bull-calf. They have been bowing down to it and sacrificing to it and have been saying, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.’” ⁹ The LORD also told Moses: “I have seen that this people is indeed a stiff-necked people. ¹⁰ Now therefore let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them, that I may consume them! Then I shall make you into a great nation.”

¹¹ However, Moses pleaded with the LORD, his God. He asked: “O LORD, why is Your anger burning against Your people, whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘He has taken them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains and wipe them off the surface of the earth’? Turn from Your hot anger and relent from this harm to Your people! ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self! You promised them: ‘I shall make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and give to your descendants all this land, which I have promised, and they will inherit it for ever.’”

¹⁴ Then the LORD relented from the harm that He said He would do to His people.

¹⁵ Moses turned and went down from the mountain with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand. The tablets had been written on both sides. They were written on the front and on the back. ¹⁶ The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. ¹⁷ Then Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting. He told Moses, “There is the sound of war in the camp.”

¹⁸ However, Moses replied: “It is not the sound that greets a victory, nor is it the sound that reacts to defeat. It is the sound of singing that I hear.”

¹⁹ When Moses approached the camp, he saw the bull calf and the dancing, and his anger blazed out. He threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ He took the bull calf, which they had made, and burned it in a fire. Then he ground it into powder, scattered it over the water and made the Israelites drink it.

²¹ Moses asked Aaron, “What has this people done to you, that you have led them into such great sin?”

²² Aaron answered: “Do not become angry, my master! You yourself know that this people is inclined to evil. ²³ **They told me, ‘Make us gods who will go before us! For we do not know what has happened**

to this Moses, the man who has brought us out of the land of Egypt.’²⁴ So, I told them, ‘Those of you who have any gold, tear it off!’ So, they gave it to me. I threw it into the fire, and this calf came out!”

²⁵ When Moses saw that the people were out of control, because Aaron had let them get out of control, so that their enemies could whisper derisively about them,²⁶ Moses stood at the gate of the camp and said, “Whoever is for the LORD, come here to me!”

Then all the Levites gathered to him.²⁷ He told them: “The LORD, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Each of you, put your sword on your hip and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp and, each of you, kill his brother, his friend and his neighbour!’”

²⁸ The Levites did as Moses had told them and that day about three thousand of the people fell.²⁹ Moses said: “Fill your own hands with sacrificial offerings to the LORD today! For each of you has turned against his own son and his own brother, that He may bestow a blessing on you today.”

³⁰ On the next day Moses told the people: “You have committed a great sin. Now, therefore, I shall go up to the LORD. Perhaps I may make atonement for your sin.”

Moses’ intercession with God to spare the people

³¹ So, Moses went back to the LORD and said: “Oh! This people has committed a great sin! They have made gods of gold for themselves.³² So now, will You forgive their sin? If not, please **wipe me out of the book** that You have written.”

³³ The LORD told Moses: “**I shall wipe from My book** whoever has sinned against Me.³⁴ Now, therefore, go! Lead the people where I have promised you. Look! My Messenger will go before you. However, at the time when I take revenge, I shall take revenge on them for their sin.”

³⁵ Then the LORD struck the people with a plague because of what **they had done with the calf**, which Aaron had made.

33

God’s refusal to go to Canaan with the Israelites

¹ The LORD told Moses: “Come! Leave this place, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt and go up to the land that I have promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with an oath, saying, ‘I shall give it to your descendants!’² I shall send a Messenger before you and shall drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites.³ Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey! For I shall not go up among you, because you are a **stubborn people**. Otherwise, I might annihilate you on the way.”

⁴ When the people heard this adverse Message, they observed mourning rites, and no one put on his ornaments.⁵ The LORD had told Moses: “Tell the Israelites: ‘You are a stubborn people. If for only a moment I went up among you, I would destroy you. Now,

therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may determine what I am to do with you.’”

The erection of a tent outside the camp

⁶ Therefore, the Israelites stripped off their ornaments, from Mount Horeb on.⁷ Moses used to take a tent and set it up outside the camp at some distance from the camp. He used to call it “the Tent of Meeting.” Anyone who was making an inquiry of the LORD used to go out to the Tent of Meeting, which was outside the camp.⁸ When Moses used to go out to the tent, each one of the people would rise, stand at the entrance of his own tent and watch Moses until he went into the tent.⁹ When Moses used to go into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stand at the entrance of the tent while God was speaking to Moses.¹⁰ Whenever all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would get up and worship, everyone at the entrance of his own tent.¹¹ The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as one man speaks to another. Then Moses used to return to the camp, but his young assistant Joshua, the son of Nun, used to remain inside the tent.

Moses’ intercession for the people

¹² Then Moses said to the LORD: “Look! You have been telling me, ‘Lead these people up! But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. You have also said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favour in My sight.’¹³ Now therefore, please, if I have found favour in Your sight, cause me to know Your Way, that I may know You and find favour in Your sight! Consider also that this nation is Your people!”

¹⁴ He answered, “My Presence will go with you, and I shall give you rest.”

¹⁵ Then Moses said to Him: “If Your Presence is not going with us, do not make us go up from here!”

¹⁶ How will anyone ever know that Your people and I have found favour in Your sight unless You go with us? Then we, Your people and I, shall be distinct from every other nation on the surface of the earth.”

God’s assurance that He will be merciful to Israel

¹⁷ The LORD answered Moses, “I shall also do these things, which you have asked, because you have found favour in My sight, and I know you by name.”

Moses’ request to see God’s glory — Exodus 34:5-9

¹⁸ Then Moses said, “Please, show me Your glory!”

¹⁹ He answered: “I shall make all My goodness pass in front of you and shall proclaim My name, ‘the LORD’ in your presence. **I shall be gracious to anyone to whom I am gracious. I shall have compassion on anyone on whom I have compassion.**”

²⁰ However, He said, “You cannot see My face, because no human being may see Me and live.”²¹ The LORD also said: “Look! Here is a place near Me. Stand on the rock!²² When My glory goes past, I shall put you in a gap in the rock and shall cover you with My hand until I have gone past.²³ Then I shall take My hand away, and you will see My back. Nev-

ertheless, My face will not be seen.”

34

God's replacement for the two smashed tablets — Exodus 31:18, Deuteronomy 10:1-5

¹ Then the LORD told Moses: “Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the first ones, and I shall write on the tablets the Words that were on the first tablets, which you smashed. ² Be ready in the morning and in the morning you shall come up on Mount Sinai and stand before Me there on the top of the mountain! ³ No one shall come up with you and no one should even be seen anywhere on the mountain! Not even the flocks and the herds should graze in front of this mountain!”

⁴ So, Moses cut two stone tablets like the first ones. He got up early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai as the LORD had commanded him. He took the two stone tablets in his hands.

God revelation of His Gracious name to Moses

⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud, stood with Moses there and proclaimed the name of the LORD.

⁶ Then the LORD passed in front of him and proclaimed: “The LORD, the LORD, the merciful and compassionate God, slow to become angry, abounding in unfailing mercy and truth. ⁷ He preserves mercy for thousands and forgives wrongdoing, rebellion and sin. He certainly does not declare anyone exempt from punishment. He avenges the wrongdoing of the fathers on the children and on the children’s children, on the third and fourth generation.”

⁸ Moses at once bowed down to the ground and worshipped. ⁹ Then he said: “O Lord, if now I have found favour in Your sight, please let the Lord go among us, even though this is a stiff-necked people! Pardon our wrongdoing and our sin and take us as Your inheritance!”

God's renewal of His Covenant with Israel — Exodus 23:14-19, Deuteronomy 7:1-6, Deuteronomy 16:1-17

¹⁰ He said: “Look! I am making a Covenant. Before all your people I shall do such wonders as have never been performed anywhere on earth or among any other nation, that all the people who are around you may see that **the work of the LORD, which I shall be doing for you, is awesome.** ¹¹ Carefully observe what I am commanding you today! Look! I shall drive out ahead of you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites.

¹² Be on your guard that you do not make a covenant with those who are living in the land against which you are going, that they may not become snares among you! ¹³ Rather, you shall tear down their altars! You shall smash their upright stones and cut down their Asherah posts! ¹⁴ For you shall not worship any other god! For the LORD, whose name is ‘Jealous,’ is a jealous God. ¹⁵ Be careful not to make a covenant with those who are living in the land! When they run wantonly after their gods and sacrifice to their gods, they will invite you, and you will eat their

sacrifices. ¹⁶ Then you will choose some of their daughters as wives for your sons. When their daughters run wantonly after their gods, they will lead your sons astray into worshipping other gods as idols. ¹⁷ “You shall not make any images of gods from cast metal for yourselves!

¹⁸ “You shall keep the Festival of Bread without Yeast! As I commanded you, you shall eat bread without yeast for seven days, at the appointed time in the month of Abib! For in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt.

¹⁹ “The first male offspring of every womb belongs to Me, including all the first-born males of your livestock, both from the herd and from the flock.

²⁰ However, you may redeem the first-born donkey with a lamb or kid. If you do not redeem it, you shall break its neck! You shall redeem all your first-born sons!

“No one shall appear before Me empty-handed!

²¹ “You shall work for six days but rest on the seventh day. You shall rest even during the time of ploughing and the season of harvest.

²² “You shall observe the Festival of Weeks with the first-fruits of the wheat harvest and the Festival of In-Gathering at the end of the year!

²³ “Three times a year all your males shall come into the presence of the Lord GOD, the God of Israel!

²⁴ For, after I drive nations out before you and enlarge your territory, no one will want to take your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the LORD, your God.

²⁵ “You shall not slaughter the blood of any sacrifice to Me along with anything containing yeast!

“The sacrifice at the Passover Festival shall not remain through the night until the morning!

²⁶ “You shall bring the best of the first-fruits of your ground to the house of the LORD, your God!

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk!”

²⁷ Then the LORD told Moses: “Write down these Words! For in accordance with these Words I have made a Covenant with you and with Israel.”

²⁸ Moses was there with the LORD for forty days and nights without eating food or drinking water. God also wrote on the tablets the Words of the Covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Moses' return to the people with a shining face after speaking with God

²⁹ Moses came down from Mount Sinai. The two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses’ hands when he came down the mountain. Moses did not know that the skin of his face was radiant because God had been speaking with him. ³⁰ When Aaron and all the other Israelites looked at Moses, they saw that the skin of **Moses’ face was radiant** and were afraid to come near him. ³¹ However, when Moses called to them, Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back to him, and Moses spoke to them. ³² After that, all the

other Israelites came near him, and he commanded them to do everything that the LORD had told him on Mount Sinai. ³³ When Moses had finished speaking to them, he **put a veil over his face**. ³⁴ However, **when ever Moses entered the presence of the LORD** to speak with Him, **he used to remove the veil** until he came out. Whenever he came out he used to tell the Israelites what he had been commanded. ³⁵ When the Israelites saw Moses' face, they observed that the skin on **Moses' face was shining**. Then Moses used to **put the veil back over his face until he went in** to speak with Him.

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Regulations about the Sabbath

¹ Moses assembled the whole congregation of the Israelites and told them: "These are the things that the LORD has commanded you to do: ² Work may be done for six days, but you shall keep the seventh day as your most solemn Sabbath holy to the LORD! Anyone who does any work on it shall be put to death! ³ You shall not light a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day!"

The people's contributions for the Tabernacle — Exodus 25:1-7, Exodus 39:32-43

⁴ Then Moses told the whole congregation of the Israelites: "This is what the LORD has commanded: ⁵ 'Out of what you possess make a contribution to the LORD! Everyone with a willing heart should bring a contribution to the LORD: gold, silver and bronze, ⁶ purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material, fine linen, goat hair, ⁷ ram skins dyed red, dolphin skins, acacia wood, ⁸ olive-oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, ⁹ onyx stones and other precious stones to be mounted on the priestly garment and the breast-piece!"

The craftsmen to make the Tabernacle and its furnishings — Exodus 31:2-6, 39:32-41

¹⁰ "All skilful persons among you should come to make everything that the LORD has commanded: ¹¹ the Tabernacle with its tent and its covering, its hooks, its planks, its bars, its posts and its pedestals, ¹² the Ark with its poles, the propitiatory cover, the covering curtain, ¹³ the table with its poles and all its utensils, the bread of the Presence, ¹⁴ the lampstand for the light with its utensils, its lamps and the oil for the light, ¹⁵ the altar of incense with its poles, the anointing oil, the fragrant incense, the curtain for the doorway at the entrance to the Tabernacle, ¹⁶ the altar for burnt offering with the bronze grating for it, its poles and all its utensils, the basin with its stand, ¹⁷ the curtains for the courtyard, its posts, its pedestals, the curtain for the gate to the courtyard, ¹⁸ the pegs for the Tabernacle, the tent-pegs for the courtyard with their tent-cords, ¹⁹ the woven garments worn for ministering in the Holy Place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments in which his sons will serve as priests!"

The offerings for the Tabernacle

²⁰ Then the whole congregation of the Israelites went away from Moses' presence, ²¹ and everyone who was willing, and everyone whose spirit prompted him came and brought a contribution to the LORD for the making of the Tent of Meeting, for all its service and for the holy garments. ²² All who were willing, both men and women, came and brought brooches, earrings, rings, necklaces and golden articles of all kinds. Yes, all of them offered gifts of gold as wave offerings to the LORD. ²³ Everyone who found that he had purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material, fine linen, goat hair, ram skins dyed red or dolphin skins came and brought them. ²⁴ All came who made a contribution of silver or bronze and brought them as contributions to the LORD. Everyone who found that he had acacia wood that could be used in any of the sacred work brought it. ²⁵ Every skilled woman spun with her hands and brought what she had spun, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material or fine linen, ²⁶ and all the women who were willing and skilful spun the goat hair. ²⁷ The leaders brought onyx stones and other precious stones to be mounted on the priestly garment and the breast-plate. ²⁸ They also brought the spices and the olive-oil for the light, for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense. ²⁹ The Israelites brought voluntary gifts to the LORD, every man and woman bringing whatever their hearts prompted them to bring for all the work that the LORD through Moses had commanded them to do.

The work of the skilled craftsmen, Bezalel and Oholiab — Exodus 31:2-6

³⁰ Moses told the Israelites: "See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, ³¹ and has filled him with God's Spirit, with skill, intelligence and knowledge and with every kind of craftsmanship, ³² to devise artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, ³³ to cut gemstones to be set, to carve wood and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship. ³⁴ He has also made him and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, able to train others. ³⁵ He has also filled them with skill to do all kinds of work: engraving, designing, embroidering with purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and fine linen, weaving all kinds of things and the ability to devise artistic designs.

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¹ "So, Bezalel and Oholiab should do the work with every other skilled workman to whom the LORD has given skill and intelligence, so that they know how to do all the work for the service of the Holy Place exactly as the LORD has commanded."

The excess in contributions

² Moses summoned Bezalel and Oholiab and every other skilled workman to whom the LORD had given skill and everyone who was willing to come and do the work. ³ They received from Moses every contribu-

tion that the Israelites had brought to carry out the work on the Holy Place. However, people still brought voluntary gifts to Moses every morning ⁴ so that all the skilled workmen who were doing all the work on the Holy Place came. Each one left the work that he was doing ⁵ and told Moses, “The people are bringing much more than we need to carry out the work that the LORD has commanded us to do.”

⁶ ‘So, Moses gave the order and sent the command throughout the camp: “No man or woman should prepare any more work to contribute towards the Holy Place.”

This restrained the people from bringing more. ⁷ The material for all the work to be done was enough for them and to spare.

The construction of the Tabernacle — Exodus 26:1-37

⁸ All those who were skilled among the workers built the Tabernacle with its ten curtains. They made these of fine twisted linen, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon and crimson material, with a pattern of cherubim worked into them by a weaver. ⁹ Each curtain was fourteen metres long and two metres wide. All the other curtains were the same size. ¹⁰ Five curtains were joined to one another, and the five other curtains were joined to one another. ¹¹ They made loops of purple wool on the edge of the end-curtain in the one set and did the same on the edge of the outermost curtain in the other set. ¹² They made fifty loops on the one curtain and made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain in the other set, so that the loops were opposite to each other. ¹³ They made fifty golden hooks and with these hooks they joined the curtains to one another, so that the Tabernacle formed a unit.

The covering for the Tabernacle — Exodus 26:7-14

¹⁴ They made curtains of goat hair for a tent over the Tabernacle. They made eleven of these curtains. ¹⁵ The one curtain was fifteen metres long and two metres wide, and the eleven curtains were all the same size. ¹⁶ Five of the curtains were joined together as one set, and the other six curtains as a second set. ¹⁷ They made fifty loops on the edge of the end-curtain in the one set and fifty loops on the edge of the end-curtain in the second set. ¹⁸ They also made fifty bronze hooks to join the tent together to form a unit.

¹⁹ They also made a covering for the tent of ram skins, dyed red and over that another covering of dolphin skins.

The making of the planks for the Tabernacle — Exodus 26:15-25

²⁰ They also made the planks of acacia wood as uprights for the Tabernacle. ²¹ Each plank was five metres long and seventy-five centimetres wide. ²² Each plank had two tenons that dovetailed into the next plank. They made them like this on all the planks of the Tabernacle. ²³ They made the twenty planks for the southern side of the Tabernacle.

²⁴ They also made forty silver pedestals under the twenty planks, two pedestals under the one plank for its two tenons and two pedestals under the next plank

for its two tenons. ²⁵ They also made twenty planks on the other or northern side of the Tabernacle, ²⁶ and their forty silver pedestals, two pedestals under the one plank and two pedestals under the next plank. ²⁷ They also made six planks for the rear or the western side of the Tabernacle. ²⁸ They made two planks for the two rear corners of the Tabernacle. ²⁹ They were made double from the bottom and were completed at the top in a single ring. They did the same for both of them at the two corners. ³⁰ There were eight planks with their sixteen silver pedestals, two pedestals under each plank.

³¹ They also made crosspieces of acacia wood, five for the planks on the one side of the Tabernacle, ³² five crosspieces for the planks on the other side of the Tabernacle and five crosspieces for the planks on the rear or the western side of the Tabernacle. ³³ They made the middle crosspiece slide through, from the one end to the other, halfway up the planks. ³⁴ They overlaid the planks with gold, made golden rings for them as sockets for the crosspieces and overlaid the crosspieces with gold.

The making of the curtain between the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place — Exodus 26:31-32

³⁵ They made the curtain of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen. They made it with cherubim worked into it by a weaver. ³⁶ They also made for it four acacia posts and overlaid them with gold. Their hooks were of gold, and they cast four silver pedestals for them. ³⁷ They also made a curtain for the entrance to the tent, of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen, worked by a weaver of coloured fabric, ³⁸ and five posts with their nails for the curtain. They overlaid their tops and their binders with gold, and their five pedestals were of bronze.

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The making of the Ark of the Testimony — Exodus 25:10-16

¹ Bezalel made the Ark of acacia wood, one hundred and twenty-five centimetres long, seventy-five centimetres wide and seventy-five centimetres high. ² He overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside and made a moulding of gold all around it. ³ He cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four lower corners, two rings on one side and two rings on the other side. ⁴ He also made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold ⁵ and inserted the poles through the rings on the sides of the Ark that they might carry the Ark.

The making of the propitiatory cover — Exodus 25:17-22

⁶ He also made a propitiatory cover of pure gold, one hundred and twenty-five centimetres long and seventy-five centimetres wide. ⁷ He made two cherubim by hammering them out of gold. He made them on the two ends of the propitiatory cover. ⁸ He made one cherub on one end and the other cherub on the other end. He made the two cherubim at the two ends, to

form one whole with the propitiatory cover. ⁹ **The angels** had wings that spread out upwards, **screening the propitiatory cover** with their wings as they faced each other. The faces of the cherubim looked towards the propitiatory cover.

The making of the table for the Holy Place — Exodus 25:23-30

¹⁰ He also made the table of acacia wood, one metre long, fifty centimetres wide and seventy-five centimetres high. ¹¹ He overlaid it with pure gold and made a moulding of gold for it all around. ¹² He also made a rim for it all around, a handbreadth wide, and a moulding of gold for the rim all around. ¹³ He also cast four gold rings for it and fastened the rings to the four edges that were on the table's legs. ¹⁴ The rings were close to the rim as sockets for the poles to carry the table. ¹⁵ He also made the poles of acacia wood, overlaid them with gold, that the table might be carried with them. ¹⁶ He also made, out of pure gold, the utensils to be used on the table, its dishes, its basins, its jars and its bowls, with which to pour drink offerings.

The making of the lampstand — Exodus 25:31-40

¹⁷ He also made the lampstand of pure gold. He made it as hammered metalwork. Its base and its shaft, its cups, its buds and its flower-shaped ornaments were of one piece with it. ¹⁸ Six shafts extended out of its sides, three shafts of the lampstand from its one side and three shafts of the lampstand from its other side. ¹⁹ Three cups shaped in the form of almond blossoms with a bulb and a flower were on the one shaft, and three cups in the form of almond blossoms with a bulb and a flower were on the next shaft, and the same for all six shafts that extended from the lampstand. ²⁰ On the lampstand there were also four cups in the form of almond blossoms, each with its bulb and its flower. ²¹ There was a bulb under the first pair of shafts extending from the lampstand, there was a second bulb under the second pair of shafts extending from it, and there was a third bulb under the third pair of shafts extending from it. The six shafts that extended from the lampstand were like this. ²² Their buds and their shafts were of one piece with the lampstand. All of it was one piece of hammered metalwork of pure gold. ²³ He made seven lamps for it with its wick-trimmers and fire-pans of pure gold. ²⁴ He made the lampstand and all its equipment out of thirty-five kilograms of pure gold.

The making of the altar for incense — Exodus 30:1-5

²⁵ He also made an altar of incense from acacia wood. It was square, fifty centimetres long, fifty centimetres wide and one metre high. Its horns were of one piece with it. ²⁶ He overlaid it with pure gold, its top slab, its sides all around and its horns. He also made a golden moulding around it. ²⁷ He also made two rings of gold for it below its moulding on two of its sides, as sockets for the poles used to carry it. ²⁸ He also made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.

The making of the anointing oil and the incense — Exodus 30:22-38

²⁹ He also made the holy anointing oil and the pure fragrant incense, blended by a perfumer.

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The making of the altar for burnt offerings — Exodus 27:1-8

¹ He also made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood, two and a half metres long and two and a half metres wide. The altar was square and one and a half metres high. ² He also made its horns on its four corners. Its horns were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze. ³ He also made all the utensils for the altar, the pots, its fire-shovels, its bowls used for pouring, its meat-forks and its ash-buckets. He made all its utensils of bronze. ⁴ He also made a grating for the altar, a bronze network below, under the rim of the altar, halfway up the altar. ⁵ He also cast four rings at the four corners of the bronze grating as sockets for the poles. ⁶ He also made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with bronze. ⁷ He inserted the poles through the rings along the sides of the altar, to be used in carrying it. He made it as a hollow chest of boards.

The making of the bronze basin — Exodus 30:17-21

⁸ He also made the bronze basin with a bronze stand for it, out of the bronze mirrors given by the women who were on duty at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

The making of the courtyard around the Tabernacle — Exodus 27:9-19

⁹ He also made the courtyard. On the southern side the curtains of the courtyard were fifty metres long, of twisted fine linen. ¹⁰ Their twenty posts and twenty pedestals were of bronze, and the hooks on the posts and their bindings were of silver. ¹¹ On the northern side the curtains were also fifty metres long. Their twenty posts and twenty pedestals were of bronze, and the hooks on the posts and their bindings were of silver. ¹² On the western side the curtains were twenty-five metres wide, with their ten posts and their ten pedestals. The hooks on the posts and their bindings were of silver. ¹³ On the eastern side, toward the rising sun, the curtains were twenty-five metres wide. ¹⁴ The curtains on the one side of the entrance were seven and a half metres long, with their three posts and their three pedestals. ¹⁵ There were also curtains seven and a half metres wide on the other side of the gateway of the courtyard, with their three posts and their three pedestals, the same as on the first side. ¹⁶ The curtains all around the courtyard were of twisted fine linen. ¹⁷ The pedestals for the posts were of bronze, and the hooks on the posts and their bindings were of silver. The tops of the posts were overlaid with silver. The bindings on all the posts of the courtyard were of silver. ¹⁸ A weaver of coloured fabric worked the curtain for the gateway of the courtyard. It was made of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted linen. It was ten metres long and two and a half metres high all the way, cor-

responding to the rest of the curtains of the courtyard. ¹⁹ Their four posts and their four pedestals were of bronze, the hooks on them were of silver, their tops were overlaid with silver and their bindings were of silver. ²⁰ All the tent-pegs for the Tabernacle and for the courtyard all around were of bronze.

The inventory of the gold, silver and bronze used for the Tabernacle

²¹ This is an accounting of the materials used in the Tabernacle, the Tabernacle of the Testimony. It was counted at Moses' command by the Levites under the direction of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. ²² Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made everything that the LORD had commanded Moses. ²³ Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, assisted him. He was a craftsman, a weaver and an embroiderer of purple wool, of wool dyed with maroon, of crimson material and of fine linen. ²⁴ The total amount of gold, that is, the gold that was contributed and used for all the work of the Holy Place weighed one thousand and twenty three kilograms and seven hundred and sixty grams, according to the monetary weight used in the Holy Place. ²⁵ The silver that was obtained from the men of the congregation who were registered weighed three tonnes, five hundred and twenty-one kilograms and three hundred grams, according to the monetary weight used in the Holy Place. ²⁶ Six grams was collected from each man who was twenty years old or older and who crossed over to those who had already been registered. The amount was a half-shekel by the standard of the shekel used in the Holy Place. The total levied came from six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty men. ²⁷ Three and a half tonnes of the silver were used to cast the pedestals for the Holy Place and the pedestals for the curtain. Three thousand, five hundred kilograms were used for one hundred pedestals, thirty-five kilograms for each pedestal. ²⁸ With the twenty-one kilograms and three hundred grams he made the hooks for the posts, overlaid the tops of the posts and made bindings for them. ²⁹ The wave offering of bronze weighed two tonnes, four hundred and seventy-eight kilograms and eight hundred grams. ³⁰ With this he made the pedestals for the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, the bronze altar with its bronze grating, all the utensils for the altar, ³¹ the pedestals all around the courtyard, the pedestals for the gateway of the courtyard, all the tent pegs for the Tabernacle and all the tent-pegs for the surrounding courtyard.

39

The making of garments for Aaron — Exodus 28:1-5

¹ They used purple wool, wool dyed with maroon and crimson material to make woven garments for ministering in the Holy Place. They made the holy garments for Aaron as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The making of the priestly garment or ephod — Exodus 28:6-14

² They also made the priestly garment of gold, purple

wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen. ³ They hammered out thin sheets of gold and cut these up into threads that a weaver might work them into the purple wool, into the wool dyed with maroon, into the crimson material and into the fine linen. ⁴ They made shoulder pieces for the priestly garment, which were attached to its two edges so that it could be fastened. ⁵ The waistband on his priestly garment was of one piece with it. It was made like it, of gold, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ⁶ They also prepared onyx stones, mounted them in filigree work of gold and engraved them, as seals are engraved, with the names of the sons of Israel. ⁷ He fastened them on the shoulder pieces of the priestly garment as reminder-stones for the sons of Israel, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The making of the breast-piece for the High Priest — Exodus 28:15-28

⁸ He also made a breast-piece, using a weaver to make it as the priestly garment had been made, of gold, purple wool, wool dyed with maroon, crimson material and twisted fine linen. ⁹ The breast-piece was square. They made it a span long and a span wide, and it was folded double. ¹⁰ On it they made settings with four rows of precious stones. The first row had a ruby, a topaz and an emerald. ¹¹ The second row had a turquoise, a lapis lazuli and a sardonyx. ¹² The third row had a carnelian, an agate and an amethyst. ¹³ The fourth row had a chrysolite, an onyx and a green jasper. They were set in golden filigrees. ¹⁴ The twelve stones corresponded to the names of the sons of Israel and were engraved like a seal, each bearing the name of one of the twelve tribes. ¹⁵ On the breast-piece they made chains by welding cordage work of pure gold together. ¹⁶ They made two golden filigrees and two golden rings and fastened the two rings to the two edges of the breast-piece. ¹⁷ They fastened the two golden cords to the two rings at the edges of the breast-piece. ¹⁸ They fastened the other two ends of the two cords to the two filigrees and attached them to the shoulder pieces at the front of the priestly garment. ¹⁹ They made two golden rings and fastened them to the other two edges of the breast-piece, on the edge of it that is next to the inner side of the priestly garment. ²⁰ They made two more golden rings and fastened them to the bottom of the two shoulder-pieces of the priestly garment at the front, close to its seam above the waistband of the priestly garment. ²¹ They tied the breast-piece by its rings to the rings of the priestly garment with a cord of purple wool, so that it lay over the waistband of the priestly garment and so that the breast-piece would not become detached from the priestly garment, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The making of the priestly robe — Exodus 28:31-35

²² They also made the robe that went with the priestly

garment. A weaver worked it, entirely of violet material. ²³ There was an opening in the sleeveless robe like the collar in a body-armour of leather. Its opening had a hem all around to keep it from tearing. ²⁴ They also made pomegranates of purple wool, wool dyed with maroon and twisted crimson material, on the lower border of the sleeveless robe. ²⁵ They also made bells of pure gold and fastened the bells between the pomegranates all around the lower hem of the sleeveless robe between the pomegranates. ²⁶ A golden bell alternated with a pomegranate all around the lower hem of the sleeveless robe, for the priest to use when he was ministering, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The making of the other priestly garments — Exodus 28:36-43

²⁷ They also had weavers make tunics of fine linen for Aaron and his sons, ²⁸ the headband of fine linen, the ornamental headbands of fine linen, the breeches of twisted fine linen, ²⁹ and the sash of twisted fine linen, which an embroiderer made with purple wool, wool dyed with maroon and crimson material, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³⁰ They made the artificial flower for the holy headband, of pure gold and engraved on it, in the kind of engraving that a seal has, “THE HOLINESS OF THE LORD.” ³¹ They fastened it to a cord of purple wool, to attach it to the top of the headband, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The completion of the Tabernacle and its presentation to Moses — compare 35:10-19

³² So, all the work on the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, was completed. The Israelites did everything exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³³ They brought the Tabernacle to Moses, the tent with all its equipment, its hooks, its planks, its bars, its posts and its pedestals, ³⁴ the covering of ram skins dyed red, the covering of dolphin skins, the covering curtain, ³⁵ the Ark of the Testimony with its poles and the propitiatory cover, ³⁶ the table with all its utensils and the bread of the Presence, ³⁷ the lampstand of pure gold with its lamps set in order and all its accessories, the olive-oil for the light, ³⁸ the golden altar, the anointing oil, the fragrant incense, the curtain for the entrance to the tent, ³⁹ the bronze altar with its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils, the basin with its stand, ⁴⁰ the curtains for the courtyard with its posts and pedestals, the curtain for the gateway to the courtyard with its tent-cords and tent-pegs, all the other articles needed for the service of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, ⁴¹ the woven garments for serving in the Holy Place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they served as priests.

⁴² The Israelites had done all the work exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses. ⁴³ When Moses inspected all the work, he saw that they had done it as the LORD had commanded. Then Moses blessed them.

40

The instructions for setting up the Tabernacle

¹ Then the LORD told Moses: ² “On the first day of the first month you shall set up the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting! ³ You shall put the Ark of the Testimony there and partition off the Ark with the curtain! ⁴ You shall also bring in the table and arrange its accessories! You shall bring in the lampstand and set up its lamps! ⁵ You shall put the golden altar for incense in front of the Ark of the Testimony! You shall also put the curtain at the entrance of the Tabernacle! ⁶ You shall also put the altar of burnt offering in front of the entrance of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting! ⁷ You shall also put the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it! ⁸ You shall also set up the courtyard all around and put the curtain at the gateway to the courtyard! ⁹ You shall also take the anointing oil and anoint the Tabernacle and everything that is in it and you shall consecrate it with all its equipment, that it may be holy! ¹⁰ You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering with all its equipment and consecrate the altar, that it may be most holy! ¹¹ You shall also anoint the basin and its stand and consecrate it!

The consecration of priests — Exodus 29:1-46, Leviticus 8:1-36

¹² “Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and wash them with water! ¹³ You shall also clothe Aaron with the holy garments and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve Me as priest! ¹⁴ Then you shall bring his sons forward and clothe them in tunics! ¹⁵ You shall also anoint them as you have anointed their father, that they may serve Me as priests! Their anointing will constitute them as a perpetual priesthood throughout their coming generations.”

The erection of the Tabernacle

¹⁶ Moses did this exactly as the LORD had commanded him. ¹⁷ On the first day of the first month in the second year the Tabernacle was set up. ¹⁸ Moses set up the Tabernacle. He placed the pedestals for it, set up its planks, inserted its crossbars and set up its posts. ¹⁹ Then he spread the tent over the Tabernacle and put the covering for the tent on top of it, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The arrangement of the Tabernacle

²⁰ Then he took the Testimony and placed it in the Ark, attached the poles to the Ark and put the propitiatory cover on top of the Ark. ²¹ Then Moses brought the Ark into the Tabernacle, put up the covering curtain and shielded the Ark of the Testimony, as the LORD had commanded him. ²² Then Moses put the table in the Tent of Meeting, on the northern side of the Tabernacle, outside the curtain. ²³ Then Moses arranged the appropriate number of loaves on it before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded him. ²⁴ Then he placed the lampstand in the Tent of Meeting, opposite the table, on the southern side of the

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Tabernacle. ²⁵ Moses set up the lamps before the LORD as the LORD had commanded him. ²⁶ He put the golden altar in the Tent of Meeting in front of the curtain. ²⁷ Then Moses burned fragrant incense on it as the LORD had commanded him.

²⁸ He put up the curtain at the entrance of the Tabernacle. ²⁹ He put the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting. Then Moses offered the burnt offering and the grain-offering on it, as the LORD had commanded him.

³⁰ He put the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing. ³¹ Moses, Aaron and his sons used to wash their hands and their feet from it. ³² They used to wash whenever they went into the Tent of Meeting or approached the altar, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³³ Moses set up the courtyard around the Tabernacle and the altar and

put up the curtain at the gateway of the courtyard. So, Moses finished the work.

The indication of God's presence by a cloud at the Tent of Meeting — Exodus 13:21-22, Numbers 9:15-23

³⁴ Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and **the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.**

³⁵ Moses could not go into the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud had settled down on it, and **the glory of the LORD had filled the Tabernacle.**

³⁶ In all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle, the Israelites used to set out. ³⁷ However, if the cloud was not taken up, they would not set out, until the day when it was taken up.

³⁸ For the cloud of the LORD was over the Tabernacle by day, and fire used to be in it at night for all the family of Israel to see, throughout all their journeys.

LEVITICUS

1

Instructions about burnt offerings — Leviticus 1:6-13, 8:18-21, 16:24

¹ The LORD called Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting. He told him: ² “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When anyone of you offers a gift to the LORD, you shall offer your gifts of livestock from the herd or from the flock!

Instructions about burnt offerings of cattle

³ “If anyone’s gift is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish! He shall bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that it may be acceptable to the LORD! ⁴ He shall lay his hand on the head of the animal that is being offered as a burnt offering! Then it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him. ⁵ He shall slaughter the young bull before the LORD, and Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall bring the blood and pour the blood out all around against the altar that is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting! ⁶ He shall skin the animal that is being offered for the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces! ⁷ The sons of Aaron, the priest, shall put fire on the altar and arrange the wood on the fire! ⁸ Then Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall arrange the pieces, the head and the fat, on the burning wood that is on the altar! ⁹ He shall wash its inner parts and its legs with water! Then the priest shall burn all of it on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a soothing aroma to the LORD!

Instructions about burnt offerings of sheep or goats

¹⁰ “If anyone offers his gift from the flock, from either the sheep or the goats, as a burnt offering, he shall bring a male without blemish! ¹¹ He shall slaughter it on the northern side of the altar before the LORD, and Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall pour its blood out against the altar on all sides! ¹² He shall cut it into its pieces, together with its head and its fat, and the priest shall arrange the pieces on the burning wood that is on the altar! ¹³ He shall wash the inner parts and the legs with water! Then the priest shall offer all of it and burn it on the altar! It is a burnt offering, an offering by fire and a soothing aroma to the LORD.

Instructions about burnt offerings of birds

¹⁴ “If anyone’s gift to the LORD is a burnt offering from the birds, he shall bring some turtledoves or some young pigeons as his gift! ¹⁵ The priest shall take it to the altar, wring off its head and burn it on the altar. Its blood shall be pressed out against the side of the altar! ¹⁶ He shall remove its crop and its feathers and throw them at the eastern side of the altar, on the place for the ashes! ¹⁷ He shall tear it open by its wings without severing it completely! Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the burning wood! This is a burnt offering, an offering by fire and a soothing aroma to the LORD.

2

Instructions about uncooked grain-offerings — Leviticus 6:14-23

¹ “When anyone brings, as a gift, a grain-offering to the LORD, his gift shall be of fine wheat flour! He shall pour olive-oil on it, put frankincense on it ² and take it to Aaron’s sons, the priests! A priest shall take from this a handful of its fine wheat flour and some of its olive-oil, with all its incense and the priest shall burn it on the altar as its memorial portion, an offering by fire and a soothing aroma to the LORD! ³ The rest of the grain-offering shall be for Aaron and his sons! It is a most holy part of the offerings made by fire to the LORD.

Instructions about baked grain-offerings

⁴ “When you bring something baked in an oven as the gift of a grain-offering, it shall be made with fine wheat flour, either ring-shaped loaves made without yeast, mixed with olive-oil or wafers made without yeast, spread with olive-oil! ⁵ If your gift is a grain-offering prepared on a griddle, it shall be made of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil and without yeast! ⁶ You shall crumble it into small pieces and pour olive-oil on it! It is a grain-offering. ⁷ If your gift is a grain-offering prepared in a baking-pan, it shall be made of fine wheat flour with olive-oil! ⁸ You shall bring the grain-offering, which is prepared from these things, to the LORD! When it is presented to the priest, he shall take it to the altar! ⁹ The priest shall present some of the grain-offering as its memorial portion and burn it on the altar! It is an offering by fire and a soothing aroma to the LORD. ¹⁰ The rest of the grain-offering shall be for Aaron and his sons! It is a most holy part of the offerings made by fire to the LORD.

Instructions about other ingredients with offerings

¹¹ “No grain-offering that you bring to the LORD shall be prepared with yeast, because you shall burn no yeast or honey in any offering made by fire to the LORD! ¹² As for the gift of first-fruits, you may bring them to the LORD. However, they shall not be brought up to the altar for a soothing aroma! ¹³ You shall season every gift of your grain-offering with salt! You shall not let the salt of the Covenant of your God be lacking from your grain-offering! You shall offer salt with every one of your gifts!

Instructions about offerings of the first grain of the harvest

¹⁴ “If you offer a gift of first-fruits to the LORD, it shall be heads of grain roasted in the fire! You shall offer crushed newly ripe grains as your gift of first-fruits! ¹⁵ You shall put olive-oil on it and place frankincense on it! It is a grain-offering. ¹⁶ The priest shall burn some of its crushed grain and some of its olive-oil with all the frankincense as its memorial portion, an offering made by fire to the LORD!

3

Instructions about peace-offerings — Leviticus 7:11-34

Instructions about peace-offerings of cattle

¹ “If anyone’s gift is a peace-offering, if he is offering it from the herd, either male or female, he shall offer an animal without blemish before the LORD!
² He shall lay his hand on the head of his gift and slaughter it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting! Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall pour the blood out against the altar on all sides!
³ He shall offer part of the peace-offering as an offering by fire to the LORD! He shall remove the fat that covers the inner parts, all the fat that is connected with the inner parts,
⁴ the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver in addition to the kidneys!
⁵ Then Aaron’s sons shall burn these parts on the altar along with the burnt offering that is on the burning wood! It shall be an offering by fire and a soothing aroma to the LORD!

Instructions about peace-offerings of sheep

⁶ “If anyone’s gift, as a peace-offering to the LORD, is an animal from the flock, he shall offer a male or female without blemish!
⁷ If he is offering a lamb as his gift, he shall present it before the LORD!
⁸ He shall lay his hand on the head of his gift and slaughter it in front of the Tent of Meeting! Aaron’s sons shall pour its blood out against the altar on all sides!
⁹ Then he shall offer part of the peace-offering as an offering by fire to the LORD! He shall remove its fat, the whole fat tail, which he shall take off close to the tail-bone, the fat that covers the inner parts, all the fat that is connected with the inner parts,
¹⁰ the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver in addition to the kidneys!
¹¹ The priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering by fire to the LORD!

Instructions about peace-offerings of goats

¹² “If anyone’s gift is a goat, he shall present it before the LORD!
¹³ He shall lay his hand on its head and slaughter it in front of the Tent of Meeting! Aaron’s sons shall pour its blood out against the altar on all sides!
¹⁴ He shall offer part of it as his gift, an offering made by fire to the LORD! He shall remove the fat that covers the inner parts, all the fat that is connected with the inner parts,
¹⁵ the two kidneys, with the fat on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver, in addition to the kidneys!
¹⁶ The priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering by fire for a soothing aroma! All the fat shall belong to the LORD!
¹⁷ This shall be a permanent Statute throughout your coming generations wherever you live: You shall not eat any fat or any blood!”

4

Instructions about special offerings for thoughtless sins or sin-offerings — Leviticus 6:24-30, 8:14-17, 16:3-22

¹ Then the LORD instructed Moses: ² “Tell the Israelites: ‘When anyone sins thoughtlessly and does something that one of the Commandments of the LORD forbids, this is what he must do!

Instructions about offerings for thoughtless sins by the High Priest

³ “If the anointed priest sins and brings guilt on the people, he shall offer to the LORD, for his sin, which he has committed, a young bull without blemish from the herd as a sin-offering!
⁴ He shall take the bull to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before the LORD, shall lay his hand on the head of the bull and slaughter the bull before the LORD!
⁵ Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull’s blood and bring it into the Tent of Meeting!
⁶ The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD on the surface of the curtain of the Holy Place!
⁷ Then the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense, which is in the Tent of Meeting, before the LORD! He shall pour out all the rest of the bull’s blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting!
⁸ He shall remove all the fat of the bull of the sin-offering! He shall remove the fat that covers the inner parts, all the fat that is connected with the inner parts,
⁹ the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver in addition to the kidneys,
¹⁰ just as these are removed from the bull of the peace-offering! The priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering!
¹¹ However, the bull’s hide, all its meat, as well as its head legs, its inner parts and the contents of its stomach,
¹² that is, all the rest of the bull, he shall carry them outside the camp to a ceremonially clean place, where the ashes are dumped, and burn it on a wood fire there! It shall be burnt where the ashes are dumped!

Instructions about sin-offerings for a thoughtless sin by the whole congregation

¹³ “If the whole congregation of Israel sins thoughtlessly, and the assembly is unaware of the matter and they have done something forbidden by one of the Commandments of the LORD, they have become guilty.
¹⁴ When the sin that they have committed against the Commandment becomes known, the assembly shall bring a young bull from the herd as a sin-offering, and present it before the Tent of Meeting!
¹⁵ The elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the bull’s head before the LORD and slaughter the bull before the LORD!
¹⁶ The anointed priest shall take some of the bull’s blood into the Tent of Meeting!
¹⁷ The priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD on the surface of the curtain!
¹⁸ He shall also put some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting and pour out all the rest of the blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting!
¹⁹ He shall remove all the fat from it and burn it on the altar!
²⁰ He shall do the same with this bull as he has done with the bull for the sin-offering! Therefore, when the priest makes atonement for them, they will be forgiven for it.
²¹ Then he shall carry the bull outside the

camp and burn it as he has burnt the first bull! This is the sin-offering for the assembly.

Instructions about the sin-offering for the thoughtless sin of a tribal leader

22 “When a tribal leader sins thoughtlessly by doing something forbidden in one of the Commandments of the LORD, his God, he has become guilty.

23 Likewise, when the sin that he has committed against the Commandment has been made known to him, he shall bring a male goat without blemish as his gift! 24 He shall lay his hand on the goat’s head and slaughter it at the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered before the LORD! It is a sin-offering.

25 The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin-offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar for burnt offering! Then he shall pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar for burnt offering!

26 He shall burn all the fat on the altar just as is done with the fat of the peace-offering! When the priest makes atonement for his sin, he will be forgiven for it.

Instructions about the sin-offering made with a goat for a thoughtless sin by any ordinary person

27 “If anyone of the ordinary people sins thoughtlessly by doing something forbidden in one of the Commandments of the LORD, he has become guilty.

28 Likewise, when the sin that he has committed has been made known to him, he shall bring a female goat without blemish as his gift for his sin, which he has committed! 29 He shall lay his hand on the head of the sin-offering and slaughter the sin-offering at the place for the burnt offering! 30 The priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of the blood at the base of the altar! 31 He shall remove all the fat as the fat is removed from the peace-offering!

The priest shall burn it on the altar as a soothing aroma to the LORD! When the priest makes atonement for his sin, he will be forgiven for it.

The sin-offering made with a lamb for a thoughtless sin by any ordinary person

32 “If the man brings a lamb as his gift for a sin-offering, he shall bring a female without blemish!

33 He shall lay his hand on the head of the sin-offering and slaughter it for a sin-offering at the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered! 34 The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin-offering with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of the blood at the base of the altar! 35 He shall remove all the fat just as the fat of the lamb for the peace-offering is removed, and the priest shall burn it on the altar on top of the offerings made by fire to the LORD! When the priest makes atonement for the sin that the person has committed, he will be forgiven for it.

5

A list of sins that require guilt-offerings — Leviticus 7:1-6

1 “When a person sins because he refuses to report a publicly uttered curse that he has heard or witnessed, either by seeing it or hearing about it, he brings guilt

on himself. 2 Or if a person touches anything that is ceremonially unclean, either the carcass of an unclean wild animal or the carcass of an unclean domestic animal or the carcass of an unclean swarming creature, even when he has been unaware of it, he becomes unclean and guilty. 3 Or when a person touches any human uncleanness of any kind, which makes him unclean, even when he has not been aware of it, when he finds out about it, he becomes guilty. 4 Or if a person takes an oath by speaking thoughtlessly that he will do evil or do good, in any matter in which a human being might swear a rash oath, even if he is unaware of it, when he realises it, he becomes guilty in any of these matters. 5 When he is guilty of any of these, he shall confess that he has sinned in doing that! 6 He shall also bring his guilt-offering to the LORD for his sin! It shall be a female animal from the flock, a young lamb or a goat, as a sin-offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin!

Provision for guilt-offerings when a person cannot afford a sheep

7 “However, if he cannot afford the expenditure for a lamb, he shall bring to the LORD two turtledoves or two young pigeons as his guilt-offering for the sin that he has committed! One shall be a sin-offering, and the other a burnt offering! 8 He shall take them to the priest, who shall first offer the one for the sin-offering! He shall wring its head from the front of its neck without severing it completely! 9 He shall sprinkle some of the blood of the sin-offering against the side of the altar, and the rest of the blood shall be pressed out against the base of the altar! It is a sin-offering. 10 Then he shall offer the second one as a burnt offering in the prescribed manner! When the priest makes atonement for him to take away his sin, which he has committed, he will be forgiven for it.

Provision for guilt-offerings when a person cannot afford two doves

11 “However, if he cannot afford **two turtledoves or two young pigeons**, he shall bring, as his gift for the sin that he has committed, four litres of fine wheat flour as a sin-offering! He shall not pour olive-oil on it or put frankincense on it! For it is a sin-offering. 12 He shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take a handful of it as its memorial portion and burn it on the altar on top of the offerings made to the LORD by fire! It is a sin-offering. 13 The priest shall make atonement for him for his sin, which he has committed in any of these ways, and he will be forgiven for it! The remainder shall belong to the priest, as in a grain-offering!”

Instructions about guilt-offerings for thoughtless sins against the property of God — Leviticus 7:1-6

14 Then the LORD told Moses: 15 “When a person is unfaithful and sins thoughtlessly in any of the holy things of the LORD, he shall bring his guilt-offering to the LORD! It shall be a ram without blemish from the flock of the estimated value in silver, according to the weight used at the Holy Place, for a guilt-offering!

16 He shall make amends for the sin that he has com-

mitted concerning the holy thing and add one fifth to it! He shall give it to the priest, and the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram as the guilt-offering! Then he will be forgiven for it.

Instructions about guilt-offerings for thoughtless disobedience to God's Commands

¹⁷ “If a person sins by doing something that is forbidden in any of the Commandments of the LORD, even though he is not aware of it, he becomes guilty and brings guilt on himself. ¹⁸ He shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock of the estimated value as a guilt-offering! The priest shall make atonement for him for the error that he has committed thoughtlessly, even though he has not been aware of it and he will be forgiven for it! ¹⁹ It is a guilt-offering. He has incurred guilt before the LORD.”

6

Instructions about guilt-offerings for sins against God's people

¹ Then the LORD told Moses, ² “When a person sins by being unfaithful to the LORD, if it is by making a denial to his neighbour about something entrusted to him, about joint property, about something stolen, if he has extorted something from his neighbour, ³ if he has found some lost property and made a denial about it or if he swears a false oath about any of the other sins that people may commit, ⁴ then, because he sins and becomes guilty, he shall restore the stolen property that he has taken, the thing that he has extorted, the deposit that has been entrusted to him, the lost property that he has found ⁵ or any of the other things about which a false oath may have been sworn! He shall restore the full amount, add one fifth to it and give it to the person to whom it belongs on the day when he realises his guilt! ⁶ He shall also bring to the priest his guilt-offering to the LORD! It shall be a ram without blemish from the flock, of the estimated value for a guilt-offering! ⁷ The priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD! Then he will be forgiven for any of the things he may have done to make him guilty.”

Instructions about the fire on the altar and regulations for the burnt offering — Leviticus 1, Numbers 15:1-16

⁸ Then the LORD told Moses: ⁹ “Give Aaron and his sons this Command: ‘This is the Law for the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall remain on the hearth on the altar all night until morning, and the fire shall be kept burning on the altar! ¹⁰ The priest shall put on his linen garment, with the linen breeches next to his body! He shall remove the ashes of the burnt offering that the fire has been consuming on the altar and put them beside the altar! ¹¹ Then he shall take off his clothes, put on other clothes and take the ashes to a ceremonially clean place outside the camp! ¹² The fire shall be kept burning on the altar and shall not go out! The priest shall burn wood on it every morning! He shall arrange the burnt offering on it and shall burn the fat of the peace-offerings on it! ¹³ The fire shall be kept burning on the altar constantly! It shall not go

out!

Instructions about the grain-offering from the people — Leviticus 2

¹⁴ “This is the Law for the grain-offering: Aaron’s sons shall bring it before the LORD, in front of the altar! ¹⁵ One priest shall take a handful of the fine wheat flour from the grain-offering, some of its olive-oil and all the frankincense that is on the grain-offering and shall burn the grain-offering on the altar as a soothing aroma, as its memorial portion, to the LORD! ¹⁶ Aaron and his sons shall eat the rest of it! They shall eat it as bread without yeast! They shall eat it in a sacred place, in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting! ¹⁷ It shall not be baked with yeast! I have given it to them as their share of the offerings made to Me by fire. It is most holy, like the sin-offering and the guilt-offering. ¹⁸ Any male descendant of Aaron may eat it. This shall be permanently due to them in the coming generations from the offerings made to the LORD by fire! Everyone who touches them will become holy.”

Instructions about special grain-offerings from the priests

¹⁹ The LORD also told Moses: ²⁰ “This is the gift that Aaron and his sons shall bring to the LORD on the day when he is anointed: four litres of fine wheat flour as a regular grain-offering, half of it in the morning and the other half of it in the evening! ²¹ It shall be prepared on a griddle with olive-oil! You shall bring it in as mixed dough! You shall offer the baked parts of the grain-offering in small pieces, as a soothing aroma to the LORD! ²² The one from the sons of Aaron who is anointed as priest to succeed him shall prepare it! It shall be the part that permanently belongs to the LORD! It shall be burnt completely! ²³ Every grain-offering made by a priest shall be burnt completely! It shall not be eaten!”

Instructions about sin-offerings — Leviticus 4:1-5:13

²⁴ The LORD also told Moses: ²⁵ “Tell Aaron and his sons: ‘This is the Law for the sin-offering: The sin-offering shall be slaughtered before the LORD in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered! It is most holy. ²⁶ The priest who makes the sin-offering shall eat it! It shall be eaten in a Holy Place, in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting! ²⁷ Everyone who touches its meat will be holy, and you shall wash any garment that has any of its blood sprinkled on it in a holy place! ²⁸ Any earthenware vessel in which it is cooked shall be broken and, if it is cooked in a bronze vessel, it shall be scoured and washed off with water! ²⁹ Any male among the priests may eat it. It is most holy. ³⁰ However, when any blood of a sin-offering is brought into the Tent of Meeting to make atonement in the Holy Place, the sin-offering shall not be eaten! It shall be burnt with fire!

7

Instructions about guilt-offerings — Leviticus 5:14-6:7

¹ “This is the Law for the guilt-offering: It is most holy. ² They shall slaughter the guilt-offering in the

place where they slaughter the burnt offering! The priest shall pour its blood out against the altar on all sides! ³ He shall offer all its fat, the fat tail, the fat that covers the inner parts ⁴ and the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins! He shall remove the long lobe of the liver in addition to the kidneys! ⁵ The priest shall burn them on the altar as an offering made to the LORD by fire! It is a guilt-offering. ⁶ Any male among the priests may eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place! It is most holy.

⁷ “The same Law applies to both the sin-offering and the guilt-offering: The priest who makes atonement with each of them shall have it! ⁸ The priest who offers anyone’s burnt offering shall have the hide of the burnt offering that he has offered! ⁹ Every grain-offering that is baked in an oven or prepared in a covered pan or on a griddle shall also belong to the priest who offers it! ¹⁰ Every grain-offering, whether mixed with olive-oil or dry, shall belong equally to all the sons of Aaron!

Instructions about peace-offerings as thanksgivings — Leviticus 3

¹¹ “This is the Law for the peace-offerings that a person may offer to the LORD: ¹² If he offers it as a sacrifice of thanksgiving, he shall offer, together with the sacrifice of thanksgiving, ring-shaped loaves without yeast and mixed with olive-oil, wafers without yeast and spread with olive-oil and ring-shaped loaves kneaded from fine wheat flour and spread with olive-oil! ¹³ Together with the ring-shaped loaves he shall offer bread with yeast as his gift, in addition to the sacrifice of his peace-offering for a thanksgiving! ¹⁴ Out of every gift he shall present one part as a contribution to the LORD! It shall belong to the priest who pours out the blood of the peace-offering! ¹⁵ The meat of the sacrifice of thanksgiving that is anyone’s peace-offering shall be eaten on the day when he offers it! He shall not leave any of it until morning!

Instructions about other peace-offerings

¹⁶ “However, if the sacrifice that anyone gives is the result of a vow or is a free-will offering, it may be eaten on the day when he offers his sacrifice, and what is left over from it may also be eaten on the next day. ¹⁷ However, any of the meat of the sacrifice that is left over on the third day shall be burnt up with fire! ¹⁸ If any of the meat of the peace-offering is nevertheless eaten on the third day, it will not be accepted. It will not be credited to the person who offers it. It will be sacrificial meat that has become unclean. The person who eats any of it will bring guilt on himself. ¹⁹ Meat that touches anything that is ceremonially unclean shall not be eaten! It shall be burnt up with fire! Anyone who is ceremonially clean may eat the meat. ²⁰ However, if anyone eats meat from a peace-offering, which belongs to the LORD, while he is unclean, that person will be cut off from his people. ²¹ When anyone touches something unclean, whether human uncleanness or an unclean animal or any other

unclean, detestable thing and then eats any of the meat of a peace-offering, which belongs to the LORD, that person will be cut off from his people.”

The prohibition of eating fat and blood

²² The LORD spoke to Moses: ²³ “Tell the Israelites: ‘You shall not eat any fat of cattle, sheep or goats! ²⁴ The fat of the carcass of any animal that dies by itself and the fat of one that is torn by wild animals may be used for any other purpose, but you shall certainly not eat it! ²⁵ Indeed, when anyone eats the fat of an animal, part of which is offered by fire to the LORD, the person who eats it will be cut off from his people. ²⁶ Moreover, you shall not eat the blood of any bird or animal, wherever you live! ²⁷ Any person who eats any blood will be cut off from his people.”

The division of peace-offerings between the people and the priests — Leviticus 10:12-15, Numbers 18:8-20, Deuteronomy 18:1-5

²⁸ The LORD spoke to Moses: ²⁹ “Tell the Israelites: ‘Anyone who offers a peace-offering to the LORD shall bring a part of his peace-offering as his gift to the LORD! ³⁰ He shall bring with his own hands the offerings made by fire to the LORD! He shall bring the fat, together with the brisket, that he may move the brisket back and forth before the LORD as a wave offering! ³¹ The priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the brisket shall belong to Aaron and his sons! ³² You shall also give the right leg from your peace-offerings as a contribution to the priest! ³³ When any of the sons of Aaron offers the blood of the peace-offering and the fat, he shall have the right leg as his portion! ³⁴ For I have taken the brisket of the wave offering and the hind leg that is contributed, out of the peace-offerings of the Israelites and have given them to Aaron, the priest, and to his sons, as what is regularly due them from the Israelites.

³⁵ “This is the portion that belongs to Aaron and to his sons out of the offerings made by fire to the LORD. It became theirs when Moses presented them to serve the LORD as priests. ³⁶ The LORD commanded that these should be given to them by the Israelites on the day when He anointed them. It shall be regularly due to them throughout their coming generations!”

A summary of the offerings

³⁷ This is the Law for the burnt offering, for the grain-offering, for the sin-offering, for the guilt-offering, for the offering at an installation and for the peace-offering. ³⁸ The LORD issued Commands about them to Moses on Mount Sinai on the day when He commanded the Israelites to offer their gifts to the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai.

8

The installation of Aaron and his sons as priests — Exodus 29:1-46, Exodus 40:12-15

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Take Aaron and his sons with him, the garments, the anointing oil, the young bull for the sin-offering, the two rams and the basket of bread made without yeast! ³ Gather the whole con-

gregation at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting!”

⁴ Moses did as the LORD had commanded him. The congregation gathered at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ⁵ Moses told the congregation: “The LORD has commanded that this is what you must do.”

⁶ Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons forward and washed them with water. ⁷ He put the tunic on him, fastened the sash around him, clothed him with the sleeveless robe and put the priestly garment on him. He fastened the priestly garment with a waistband, tying it tightly on him. ⁸ Then he put the breast-piece on him and put the Urim and Thummim into the breast-piece. ⁹ Moses put the headband on his head and fastened the golden flower, the holy crown, to the front of the headband, as the LORD had commanded him.

¹¹ Then Moses took the anointing oil, anointed the Tabernacle and everything in it and made them holy.

¹¹ He used some of the oil to sprinkle the altar seven times and anointed the altar with all its utensils and the basin with its stand, to make them holy. ¹² He also poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him, to make him holy.

¹³ Then Moses brought Aaron’s sons forward and put tunics on them. He fastened sashes around them and tied headbands on them, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁴ Then he brought the young bull forward, which was the sin-offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the young bull for the sin-offering. ¹⁵ Moses slaughtered the bull, took the blood and with his finger put it on the horns of the altar on all sides and freed the altar from sin. Then he poured the rest of the blood against the base of the altar and made it holy, to provide atonement for it. ¹⁶ Moses also took all the fat that was on the inner parts, the long lobe of the liver and the two kidneys with the fat on them and burned them on the altar. ¹⁷ However, Moses burned with fire the rest of the young bull, its hide, meat and the contents of its stomach outside the camp, as the LORD had commanded him.

¹⁸ He then brought the ram forward for the burnt offering. Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the ram’s head. ¹⁹ Then Moses slaughtered the ram and poured the blood out against the altar on all sides.

²⁰ Moses cut the ram into its pieces and burned the head, the pieces of meat and the fat. ²¹ Moses washed the inner parts and the legs with water and burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt offering and a soothing aroma. It was an offering made to the LORD by fire, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²² Then Moses brought the second ram forward, the ram for the installation, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the ram’s head. ²³ Moses slaughtered the ram, took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron’s right ear, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁴ Then Moses

brought Aaron’s sons forward and put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet. Then Moses poured the blood out against the altar on all sides. ²⁵ Then he took the fat, the fat tail, all the fat that was on the inner parts, the long lobe of the liver, the two kidneys with their fat and the right leg. ²⁶ Then he took out of the basket of bread made without yeast, which had been before the LORD, one ring-shaped loaf made without yeast, one ring-shaped loaf of bread made with olive-oil and one wafer and laid them on the fat portions and on the right leg. ²⁷ He laid all these in the hands of Aaron and his sons and moved them back and forth as a wave offering before the LORD. ²⁸ Then Moses took them from their hands and burned them on the altar, on top of the burnt offering. They were an installation offering, a soothing aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD.

²⁹ Then Moses took the brisket from the ram for the installation and moved it back and forth as a wave offering before the LORD. It belonged to Moses as his portion, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁰ Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood that was on the altar. He sprinkled them on Aaron and his clothes and on his sons and his sons’ clothes. In this way he made Aaron holy and made his clothes, his sons and his sons’ clothes holy with him.

³¹ Then Moses told Aaron and his sons: “Cook the meat at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that you may eat it there together with the bread in the basket for the installation offering, as I commanded when I said: ‘Aaron and his sons shall eat it!’ ³² You shall burn up any meat or bread that is left over! ³³ You shall not leave the entrance to the Tent of Meeting for seven days, until the days of your ordination are completed! For your installation will last for seven days. ³⁴ The LORD commanded me to do today what has been done, to make atonement for you. ³⁵ You shall stay day and night, for seven days, at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, that you may keep your obligation to the LORD and that you may not die! For this is what I have been commanded.”

³⁶ Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD had commanded through Moses.

9

The first sacrifices offered by Aaron

¹ On the eighth day Moses summoned Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. ² He told Aaron: “Choose a bull calf from the herd as a sin-offering and a ram for a burnt offering! They shall be without blemish! Then present them before the LORD! ³ Then tell the Israelites, ‘Take a male goat for a sin-offering, a calf and a lamb, each a year old and without blemish, for a burnt offering! ⁴ Take also a bull and a ram for peace-offerings to sacrifice before the LORD, together with a grain-offering mixed with olive-oil! For

the LORD will appear to you today.”

⁵ They brought what Moses had commanded to the front of the Tent of Meeting, and the whole congregation approached and stood before the LORD. ⁶ Then Moses said, “This is what the LORD has commanded you to do, that the glory of the LORD may appear to you.”

⁷ Moses told Aaron: “Approach the altar and make your sin-offering and your burnt offering, to make atonement for yourself and for the people! Offer the gift of the people also and make atonement for them, as the LORD has commanded!”

⁸ Aaron approached the altar and slaughtered the calf as a sin-offering for himself. ⁹ Aaron’s sons brought the blood to him, dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar. Then he poured out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. ¹⁰ He burned the fat, the kidneys and the long lobe of the liver from the sin-offering on the altar, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹¹ Then he burned up the meat and the hide outside the camp. ¹² Then he slaughtered the animal for the burnt offering. Aaron’s sons handed the blood to him, and he poured it out against the altar on all sides. ¹³ They also brought the burnt offering to him, piece by piece, including the head, and he burned them on the altar. ¹⁴ He washed the inner parts and the legs and burned them on top of the burnt offering on the altar.

¹⁵ Then Aaron brought the people’s gift. He took the male goat for the people’s sin-offering, slaughtered it and offered it as a sin-offering, as he had done with the first one. ¹⁶ Then he brought forward the burnt offering and dealt with it in the specified manner. ¹⁷ Then he brought the grain-offering. He took a handful of it and burned it on the altar in addition to the morning burnt offering.

¹⁸ Then he slaughtered the bull and the ram as the peace-offering for the people. Aaron’s sons handed the blood to him, and he poured it out against the altar on all sides. ¹⁹ However, as for the fat portions from the bull and the ram, the fat tail, the fatty layer, the kidneys and the long lobe of the liver, ²⁰ they placed these fat portions on top of the briskets, and he burned the fat portions on the altar. ²¹ Aaron had moved the briskets and the right leg back and forth before the LORD as a wave offering, as Moses had commanded.

²² Then Aaron raised his hands toward the people and blessed them. After he had dealt with the sin-offering, the burnt offering and the peace-offering, he came down. ²³ Then Moses and Aaron went into the Tent of Meeting. When they came out, they blessed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. ²⁴ Fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted with joy and fell face-down.

10

The death of two of Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, for improper priestly conduct

¹ Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu each took his fire pan, put fire in it, laid incense on it and brought unauthorised fire before the LORD, which He had commanded them not to bring. ² A fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. ³ Moses told Aaron: “This is what the LORD has said: ‘I must be treated as holy by those who come near Me. All the people must regard Me with honour!’”

Aaron stood motionless. ⁴ Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Aaron’s uncle Uzziel. He told them, “Come here and carry your cousins outside the camp, away from the front of the Holy Place!”

⁵ They came near and carried them outside the camp by their tunics, as Moses had told them. ⁶ Then Moses told Aaron and his sons, Eleazar and Ithamar: “Do not let your hair hang loose! You shall not tear your clothes to pieces, that you may not die and that God may not be angry with the whole congregation! However, your relatives, the whole house of Israel, may mourn because of the fire that the LORD has sent. ⁷ You shall not go outside the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that you may not die, because the anointing oil of the LORD is on you.”

So, they did as Moses had told them.

Instructions about proper conduct for priests

⁸ Then the LORD told Aaron, ⁹ “You and your sons must not drink any wine or other intoxicating drink when you go into the Tent of Meeting, that you may not die! This is a lasting ordinance for your coming generations. ¹⁰ You must distinguish between what is holy and what is profane and between what is unclean and what is clean! ¹¹ You must also teach the Israelites all the Prescriptions that the LORD has told them through Moses!”

¹² Moses told Aaron and his surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar: “Take the grain-offering that has been left over from the offerings made by fire to the LORD and eat it without yeast beside the altar! For it is most holy. ¹³ You shall eat it in a holy place! For it is your proper portion and the proper portion of your sons, out of the offerings made by fire to the LORD. For this is what I have been commanded. ¹⁴ You, together with your sons and your daughters, shall also eat the brisket of the wave offering and the hind leg of the wave offering in a clean place! For they have been given as your proper portion and the proper portion of your children out of the peace-offerings of the Israelites.

¹⁵ They shall bring the hind leg of the wave offering and the brisket of the wave offering, together with the fat portions of the offerings made by fire and move them back and forth as a wave offering before the LORD! These shall continue to be the proper portion that belongs to you and to your children, as the LORD

has commanded!”

The sin-offering by Eleazar and Ithamar

¹⁶ Then Moses searched carefully for the male goat of the sin-offering and found that it had already been burnt. He became angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s remaining sons, and asked: ¹⁷ “Why have you failed to eat the sin-offering in the Holy Place? For it is most holy, and God has given it to you to take away the guilt of the congregation by making atonement for them before the LORD. ¹⁸ Look! Its blood was not brought inside the Holy Place. You certainly should have eaten the sin-offering in the Holy Place, as I had commanded.”

¹⁹ However, Aaron answered Moses: “Look! Today they presented their sin-offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, although such things have happened to me! If I had eaten a sin-offering today, would that have been pleasing to the LORD?”

²⁰ When Moses heard that, he approved.

11

Instructions about clean and unclean kinds of food— Deuteronomy 14:3-20

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron and told them, ² “Tell the Israelites: ‘Out of all the animals that are on the earth, these are the animals that you may eat: ³ You may eat any animal that has a divided or split hoof and that also chews the cud. ⁴ Nevertheless, you shall not eat any of those that only chew the cud or only have a divided hoof! You shall not eat the camel, because, although it chews the cud, it does not have a divided hoof! It is ceremonially unclean for you. ⁵ You shall not eat the coney! For, although it chews the cud, it does not have a divided hoof! It is unclean for you. ⁶ You shall not eat the hare! For, although it chews the cud, it does not have a divided hoof. It is unclean for you. ⁷ You shall not eat the pig! For, although it has a divided or cloven hoof, it does not chew the cud. It is unclean for you. ⁸ You shall not eat any meat from them our touch their dead bodies! They are unclean for you.

⁹ “Of all the creatures in the water you may eat anything in the water of the seas and of the streams if they have fins and scales. ¹⁰ However, you shall consider disgusting any creatures in the seas and the streams that do not have fins or scales, both any things that move in shoals and any other living creatures that are in the water! ¹¹ You shall consider them disgusting! You shall not eat meat from them and you shall detest their dead bodies! ¹² You shall consider anything in the water that does not have fins or scales disgusting!

¹³ “These are ones from the flying creatures that you shall consider disgusting! You shall not eat them! They shall be detestable! They are the eagle, the great bearded vulture, the black vulture, ¹⁴ the kite, any kind of black kite, ¹⁵ any kind of crow, ¹⁶ the horned owl, the screech owl, the seagull, any kind of falcon, ¹⁷ the little owl, the cormorant, the ibis, ¹⁸ the barn

owl, the jackdaw, the carrion vulture, ¹⁹ the stork, any kind of plover, the hoopoe and the bat.

²⁰ “You shall consider disgusting all swarming creatures that have wings and crawl on four feet!

²¹ However, of all the swarming things that have wings, you may eat those that have jointed lower legs above their feet with which they hop over the ground.

²² Of these you may eat any kind of locust, any kind of consuming locust, any kind of grasshopper and any kind of non-flying locust. ²³ However, you shall consider disgusting all other swarming things that have wings and four feet!

Instructions about unclean animals

²⁴ “These will make you unclean. Anyone who touches their dead bodies will be unclean until the evening. ²⁵ Anyone who carries any of their dead bodies shall wash his clothes! He will be unclean until the evening. ²⁶ The dead bodies of all animals that have divided hoofs without being completely cloven and that do not chew the cud are unclean for you. Anyone who touches them will be unclean. ²⁷ Among all the animals that walk on four legs, all those that walk on their paws are unclean for you. Anyone who touches their dead bodies will be unclean until the evening. ²⁸ Anyone who carries their dead bodies shall wash his clothes! Then he will be unclean until the evening. They are unclean for you.

²⁹ “The following tiny creatures that occur in large numbers on the ground are unclean for you: the mole, the small rodent and every kind of lizard, ³⁰ the gecko, the monitor lizard, the wall lizard, the skink and the chameleon. ³¹ Among all the small crawling creatures these are unclean for you. Anyone who touches them when they are dead will be unclean until the evening. ³² When one of them dies and falls on any article, that article, with which any work is done, will be unclean, whether it is made of wood, is an article of clothing, is made of leather or is made of sackcloth. It shall be put in water. It will be unclean until the evening and then be clean. ³³ When any of them falls inside any clay pot, everything in the pot will be unclean. You shall break the pot. ³⁴ If water from any such pot comes on any food that could be eaten, the food will be unclean, and any liquid that could be drunk from any pot like that will be unclean. ³⁵ Anything on which any of their dead bodies falls will be unclean. An oven or a small stove shall be broken up! They are unclean and shall remain unclean for you! ³⁶ Although a spring or a cistern for collecting water shall remain clean, anyone who touches a dead body in them will be unclean. ³⁷ If any of their dead bodies falls on any seed that is to be sown, the seed remains clean. ³⁸ However, if water is put on the seed and any of their dead bodies falls on it, it will be unclean for you.

³⁹ “When any animal that you are allowed to eat dies, anyone who touches its dead body will be unclean

until the evening. ⁴⁰ Anyone who eats any of its dead body shall wash his clothes! He will be unclean until the evening. Anyone who carries its dead body shall wash his clothes! He will be unclean until the evening.

⁴¹ “You shall consider disgusting any small animal that crawls on the ground! It shall not be eaten!

⁴² You shall not eat any creature that crawls on its belly or on four legs, any creature with many legs or any other small creature that crawls on the ground! For they are detestable. ⁴³ You shall not make yourselves detestable by any creature that crawls on the ground! You shall not make yourselves unclean by them or defile yourselves with them!

⁴⁴ “For I am the LORD, your God. You shall behave as people who have been made holy and **you shall be holy! For I am holy.** You shall not make yourselves unclean by means of any creature that moves about and crawls on the ground! ⁴⁵ For I am the LORD and have brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall be holy! For I am holy.”

⁴⁶ This is the Law about animals, flying creatures and every living thing that moves in the water and every small living creature that moves about on the ground,

⁴⁷ that you may distinguish between what is unclean and what is clean and between the living creatures that may be eaten and those that shall not be eaten.

12

Instruction for the cleansing of women after childbirth — Luke 2:22-24

¹ The LORD instructed Moses: ² “Tell the Israelites: ‘When a woman becomes pregnant and gives birth to a male child, she will be unclean for seven days, the same number of days as she is unclean during her menstruation. ³ On the eighth day the boy shall have the flesh of his foreskin circumcised! ⁴ Then the woman shall wait for thirty-three days to be ceremonially purified from her bleeding! She shall not touch anything holy or go to the Holy Place until the days of her purification are over! ⁵ If the woman gives birth to a female child, she will be unclean for two weeks, as during her menstruation. Then she shall wait for sixty-six days to be purified from her bleeding!

⁶ “When the days of her purification for a son or a daughter are completed, she shall bring a one-year-old lamb to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a sin-offering! ⁷ The priest shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her! Then she will be ceremonially clean from her flow of blood. This is the Law for the woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl. ⁸ If she cannot afford a lamb, she shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin-offering! In this way the priest shall make atonement for her! Then she will be clean.”

13

Instructions about infectious skin-diseases

¹ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ² “When any person has a swelling, a rash or a white patch on the skin of his body, and it begins to look like infectious skin-disease in his body, he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons, who are the priests!

³ The priest shall examine the sore on the skin of his body! If the hair in the sore has turned white, and the sore appears to have gone deeper than the rest of the skin of his body, it is an infectious skin-disease. The priest shall examine him and declare him ceremonially unclean! ⁴ If the bright spot on his skin is white but does not appear to have gone deeper than the rest of the skin and the hair in it has not turned white, the priest shall isolate the person who has the sore for seven days! ⁵ On the seventh day the priest shall examine him! If indeed the sore appears to him not to have changed and the sore has not spread in the skin, the priest shall isolate him for another seven days!

⁶ On the seventh day the priest shall examine him again, and, if the spot has faded, and the sore has not spread in the skin, the priest shall declare him clean! It is a harmless skin-eruption. The person shall wash his clothes! Then he will be clean. ⁷ However, if the skin-eruption has indeed spread in the skin after the person has shown himself to the priest to determine his cultic purity, he shall appear again before the priest! ⁸ The priest shall examine him, and, if the skin-eruption has indeed spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean! It is an infectious skin-disease.

⁹ “When any person has an infectious skin-disease, he shall be brought to the priest! ¹⁰ The priest shall examine him! If there indeed is a white swelling in the skin that has turned the hair white, and, if raw flesh has emerged in the swelling, ¹¹ it is a chronic infectious skin-disease in the skin of his body. The priest shall declare him unclean! He shall not shut him up! For he is unclean. ¹² If the infectious skin-disease breaks out all over the skin and covers the whole skin of the diseased person from his head to his foot, wherever the priest looks, ¹³ the priest shall examine him! If an infectious skin-disease has covered his whole body, he shall declare the person who had been infected clean! Since it has all turned white, he is clean. ¹⁴ However, when raw flesh appears on him, he will be unclean. ¹⁵ The priest shall examine the raw flesh and declare him unclean! Raw flesh is unclean. It is an infectious skin-disease. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, if the raw flesh recovers and turns white, he shall come to the priest! ¹⁷ The priest shall examine him and, if the sore spot has indeed turned white, the priest shall declare the person who had been diseased clean! He is clean.

¹⁸ “When someone’s body has a boil on the skin, and it has healed, ¹⁹ and a white swelling or a reddish-white spot appears where the boil had been, it shall be shown to the priest! ²⁰ The priest shall examine it, and, if it looks deeper than the rest of the skin and its hair has turned white, the priest shall declare him un-

clean! It is an infectious skin-disease, which has broken out where the boil had been. ²¹ However, if, when the priest examines it, there is indeed no white hair on it and it is not deeper than the rest of the skin and has faded, the priest shall isolate him for seven days! ²² If it has indeed spread in the skin, the priest shall declare him unclean! It is a skin-disease. ²³ However, if the bright spot stays where it has been and has not spread, it is a scar from the boil. The priest shall declare him clean.

²⁴ “Moreover, when fire leaves a burn in the skin of anyone’s body and a reddish-white or a white spot emerges from raw flesh of the burn, ²⁵ the priest shall examine it and, if the hair on the bright spot has indeed turned white and looks deeper than the rest of the skin, it is a skin-disease. It has broken out in the burn. The priest shall declare him unclean! It is an infectious skin-disease. ²⁶ However, if, when the priest examines it, there is indeed no white hair on the bright spot, if it is not deeper than the rest of the skin, and, if it has faded, the priest shall isolate him for seven days! ²⁷ On the seventh day the priest shall examine him! If it is indeed spreading in the skin, the priest shall declare him unclean! It is an infectious skin-disease. ²⁸ However, if the bright spot stays where it has been and has not spread in the skin but has faded, it is only a swelling caused by the burn. The priest shall declare him clean! For it is a scar from the burn.

²⁹ “When a man or a woman has a sore on the head or on the cheeks and chin, ³⁰ the priest shall examine the sore! If it indeed appears to be deeper than the rest of the skin and there is gleaming-red thin hair on it, the priest shall declare the person unclean! It is an itch, an infectious skin-disease on the head or on the cheeks and chin. ³¹ However, if, when the priest examines the itching sore in the skin, it does not indeed appear to be any deeper than the rest of the skin and there is no black hair on it, the priest shall isolate the person infected with the itching sore for seven days! ³² The priest shall examine the infected spot on the seventh day! If the itch has not in fact been spreading, no gleaming-red hair has come on it and the itching spot does not appear to be deeper than the rest of the skin, ³³ the person shall shave himself but shall not shave the itching spot! The priest shall isolate the person with the itching spot for another seven days! ³⁴ On the seventh day the priest shall examine the itching spot and, if the itching spot has not indeed spread on the skin and does not appear to be deeper than the rest of the skin, the priest shall declare him clean! He shall wash his clothes! Then he will be clean. ³⁵ However, if the itching spot does indeed spread in the skin after the person has been declared clean, ³⁶ the priest shall examine him! If the itching spot has indeed spread on the skin, the priest shall not investigate carefully whether there is gleaming-red hair! The person is unclean. ³⁷ However, if he considers that the itching spot

has not changed and that black hair has been growing on it, the itch has healed. He is clean. The priest shall declare him clean!

³⁸ “When a man or a woman has bright spots on the skin of the body, that is, bright-white spots, ³⁹ the priest shall examine them! If the bright spots on the skin of the body are indeed dull white, a harmless rash has broken out on the skin. That person is clean.

⁴⁰ “When a man loses the hair on the back of his head, he is bald but is clean. ⁴¹ If he loses his hair on the front of his scalp, he has become bald on the forehead but is clean. ⁴² However, when there is a reddish-white sore on the bald spot on the head or on the forehead, it is an infectious skin-disease breaking out on his bald head or on his bald forehead. ⁴³ The priest shall examine him! If the swollen sore on his bald head or on his bald forehead is indeed reddish-white and looks like an infectious disease in the skin elsewhere on the body, ⁴⁴ the man is suffering from a skin-disease. He is unclean. The priest shall certainly declare him unclean! He has the disease on his head.

⁴⁵ “Anyone who is suffering from the sore of an infectious skin-disease shall wear his clothes torn and let the hair on his head hang loose! He shall cover his upper lip and shall call out, ‘Unclean, unclean!’ ⁴⁶ He shall remain unclean while he has the infection! He is unclean. He shall live alone! His dwelling shall be outside the camp!”

Instructions about fungus on clothing or leather articles

⁴⁷ “When there is an infectious fungus on any woollen garment or linen garment, ⁴⁸ whether it is in woven material or knitted material from linen or wool or in leather or in anything made of leather, ⁴⁹ if the contamination is greenish or reddish in the garment, in the leather, in the woven material, in the knitted material or in any leather article, it is an infectious fungus and **shall be shown to the priest!** ⁵⁰ The priest shall examine the fungus and isolate the infected article for seven days! ⁵¹ He shall examine the infected article on the seventh day! When the infection has spread in the woven or knitted garment, in the leather or in anything made of leather for any purpose, the infection is a malignant fungus. The article is unclean. ⁵² He shall burn the garment, the woven material, the knitted material, of wool or linen or any leather article that has the infection on it! For it is a malignant fungus. The article shall be burnt up! ⁵³ However, if, when the priest examines it and sees that the spot has not spread in the woven or knitted garment or in any leather article, ⁵⁴ the priest shall order that the contaminated article shall be washed! Then he shall isolate it for seven more days! ⁵⁵ The priest shall examine the contamination after the article has been washed! If, although the discoloration has not spread, it has not changed its appearance, it is unclean. You shall burn it up! It is eaten away, whether the fungus is on its outer side or on its inner side. ⁵⁶ If, when the priest examines it, he

sees that the fungus has faded after the article has been washed, he shall tear the contaminated part out of the clothing or out of the leather or out of the woven or knitted material! ⁵⁷ If the discoloration reappears in the woven or knitted garment or in any leather article, the fungus is spreading. You shall burn up whatever has the contamination on it! ⁵⁸ However, if the fungus disappears from the clothing or the woven or the knitted material or from any leather article when you have washed it, it shall be washed a second time! Then it will be clean.”

⁵⁹ This is the Law concerning contamination by a fungus on woollen or linen clothing, on woven or knitted material or on any leather article, to declare whether it is clean or unclean.

14

Regulations for cleansing a person infected with a skin-disease — Matthew 8:1-4, Luke 5:12-14

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “This shall be the Law for the person who is infected with a skin-disease at the time of his ceremonial cleansing! He shall be brought to the priest! ³ The priest shall go outside the camp! The priest shall examine him! If the person who had the infectious skin-disease has indeed been healed of it, ⁴ the priest shall order someone to get two living clean birds, some cedar-wood, crimson material and hyssop for the person who is about to be cleansed! ⁵ Then the priest shall order someone to kill the one bird over fresh water in a clay pot! ⁶ He shall take the living bird, with the cedar-wood, the crimson material and the hyssop and dip them, together with the living bird, in the blood of the bird that that has been killed over the fresh water! ⁷ Then he shall sprinkle it seven times on the person who is about to be cleansed of the infectious skin-disease! He shall declare the person clean and release the living bird in the open field! ⁸ The person who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair and wash himself in water! Then he is ceremonially clean. After that he may come into the camp. However, he shall live outside his tent for seven days! ⁹ On the seventh day he shall shave off all the hair on his head, his beard and his eyebrows and shave off all the rest of his hair! He shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water! Then he will be clean.

¹⁰ “On the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish and one female lamb one year old without blemish, twelve litres of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil as a grain-offering and a third of a litre of olive-oil! ¹¹ The priest who is declaring the person ceremonially clean shall station the man who is purifying himself together with his offerings before the LORD at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting! ¹² The priest shall take the one male lamb and offer it as a guilt-offering with the one third of a litre of olive-oil and shall move them back and forth as a wave offering before the LORD! ¹³ He shall slaughter the

lamb where he slaughters the sin-offering and the burnt offering in the Holy Place, because the guilt-offering, like the sin-offering, belongs to the priest! It is most holy. ¹⁴ The priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt-offering! The priest shall put it on the lobe of the right ear of the person who is purifying himself, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot! ¹⁵ Then the priest shall take some of the one third of a litre of olive-oil and the priest shall pour it into the palm of his own left hand! ¹⁶ The priest shall dip his right finger in the olive-oil in his left hand and with his finger he shall sprinkle some of the oil seven times before the LORD! ¹⁷ The priest shall put some of the rest of the olive-oil that is in his hand on the lobe of the right ear of the person who is purifying himself, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, on top of the blood of the guilt-offering! ¹⁸ The priest shall put the rest of the olive-oil that is in his hand on the head of the person who is purifying himself! Then the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD! ¹⁹ The priest shall make the sin-offering to make atonement for the person who is purifying himself from his ceremonial uncleanness and after that he shall slaughter the burnt offering! ²⁰ The priest shall offer the burnt offering together with the grain-offering on the altar! So, the priest shall make atonement for him! Then he will be clean.

Instructions about the cleansing of a poor person after a skin-disease

²¹ “However, if the person is poor and cannot afford so much, he shall take one lamb as a guilt-offering to be moved back and forth, to make atonement for him! He shall bring only four litres of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil as a grain-offering, three hundred and thirty millilitres of olive-oil, ²² and two turtle-doves or two young pigeons, whichever he can afford! The one shall be a sin-offering, and the other a burnt offering! ²³ On the eighth day he shall bring them to the priest for his cleansing, to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD! ²⁴ The priest shall take the lamb for the guilt-offering, together with three hundred and thirty millilitres of olive-oil and the priest shall move them back and forth before the LORD as a wave offering! ²⁵ The priest shall slaughter the lamb for the guilt-offering! He shall take some of the blood of the guilt-offering and shall put it on the lobe of the right ear of the person who is purifying himself, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot! ²⁶ The priest shall pour some of the olive-oil into the palm of his own left hand! ²⁷ Then the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the olive-oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD! ²⁸ The priest shall put some of the olive-oil that is in his hand on the lobe of the right ear of the person who is purifying himself, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot, on the same places as he had put the blood of the guilt-

offering! ²⁹ The priest shall pour the rest of the olive-oil that is in his hand on the head of the person who is purifying himself to make atonement for him before the LORD! ³⁰ Then he shall prepare one of the turtle-doves or the young pigeons, whichever the person can afford! ³¹ He shall offer the one, such as the person can afford, as a sin-offering and the other as a burnt offering together with the grain-offering! So, the priest shall make atonement for the person who is purifying himself before the LORD!”

³² This is the Law for a person who has had an infectious skin-disease and who cannot afford the usual offering for his cleansing.

Regulations for the cleansing of a spreading mildew in houses

³³ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ³⁴ “When you enter the land of Canaan, which I am giving you to own, and I put a spreading mildew in a house in the land that you own, ³⁵ the owner of that house shall come and tell the priest, ‘There is something that looks to me like mildew in my house!’

³⁶ “Then the priest shall order the people to take everything out of the house before the priest goes in to examine the mildew, that he may not declare everything in the house unclean! After that, the priest shall go in to inspect the house! ³⁷ He shall examine the mildew! If the mildew in the walls of the house has greenish or reddish depressions that appear to be deeper than the surface of the wall, ³⁸ the priest shall come out of the doorway of that house and close the house up for seven days! ³⁹ On the seventh day the priest shall go back and inspect it! If the mildew has indeed spread in the walls of the house, ⁴⁰ the priest shall order people to pull out the stones that have the mildew on them, and they shall throw them into an unclean place outside the city! ⁴¹ He shall have the inside of the house scraped off all around, and people shall dump the dust that they have scraped-off in an unclean place outside the city! ⁴² They shall fetch fresh stones to replace the other stones and fetch fresh clay to plaster the house! ⁴³ If the mildew breaks out in the house again after they have pulled out the stones and after they have scraped and plastered the house, ⁴⁴ the priest shall come and examine it! If the mildew has indeed spread in the house, there is a malignant mildew in the house. It is unclean. ⁴⁵ They shall tear down the house, its stones, its timbers and all the plaster in the house and carry them to an unclean place outside the city! ⁴⁶ Anyone who goes into the house at any time after the priest has closed it up will be ceremonially unclean until the evening. ⁴⁷ Anyone who lies down in the house shall wash his clothes, and anyone who eats in the house shall wash his clothes! ⁴⁸ However, if the priest comes and examines it, and the mildew has not indeed spread in the house after the house has been plastered, the priest shall declare the house ceremonially clean! For the mildew has been cured.

⁴⁹ “To purify the house from its defect, he shall take two birds, cedar-wood, crimson material and hyssop! ⁵⁰ He shall kill the one bird over fresh water in a clay pot! ⁵¹ He shall take the cedar-wood, the hyssop, the crimson material and the living bird and dip them in the blood of the bird that has been killed and in the fresh water and sprinkle the house seven times! ⁵² He shall purify the house with the bird’s blood and the fresh water, with the living bird, the cedar-wood, the hyssop and the crimson material! ⁵³ Then he shall release the living bird in the open fields outside the city! So, he shall make atonement for the house! Then it will be clean.”

⁵⁴ This is the Law for any kind of infectious skin-disease, for an itch, ⁵⁵ for mildew in clothing or in a house, ⁵⁶ for a swelling, for a rash and for a white patch, ⁵⁷ to show when it is unclean and when it is clean. This is the Law for infectious skin-diseases and mildew.

15

Regulations about bodily discharges from men

¹ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ² “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When any man has a mucous discharge from his penis, his discharge is unclean. ³ This shall be the manner in which he becomes unclean because of his discharge: whether his body continues to let his discharge flow or whether he keeps his member blocked up, it makes him unclean! ⁴ Any bed on which anyone with a discharge lies will be unclean, and anything on which he sits will be unclean. ⁵ Anyone who touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ⁶ Anyone who sits on anything on which a person with the discharge was sitting shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ⁷ Anyone who touches the body of anyone with the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ⁸ When a person with the discharge spits on anyone who is clean, that person shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ⁹ Any saddle on which a person with the discharge rides will be unclean. ¹⁰ Anyone who touches anything that was under him will be unclean until the evening. Anyone who carries such things shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ¹¹ Anyone whom a person with the discharge touches and has not washed his hands off in water, shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ¹² Any pottery that a person with the discharge touches shall be broken, and any wooden container shall be washed off with water!

¹³ “When a person with the discharge is being cleansed from it, he shall count off seven days for his cleansing, wash his clothes and bathe his body in running water! Then he will be clean. ¹⁴ On the eighth

day he shall get two turtledoves or two young pigeons for himself, come before the LORD at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and give them to the priest!

¹⁵ The priest shall prepare them, the one for a sin-offering and the other for a burnt offering! So, the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD because of his discharge!

¹⁶ “When a man has an emission of semen, he shall bathe his whole body in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ¹⁷ Any garment and any leather that has an emission of semen on it shall be washed in water! It will be unclean until the evening. ¹⁸ When a man has sexual relations with a woman and has an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water! They will be unclean until the evening.

Regulations about bodily discharges from women

¹⁹ “When a woman has her regular flow of blood, the discharge from her body in her menstruation lasts for seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean until the evening. ²⁰ Anything on which she lies during her menstruation will be unclean, and anything on which she sits will be unclean. ²¹ Anyone who touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ²² Anyone who touches anything on which she sits shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. ²³ If anything is on the bed or on anything on which she sits, anyone who touches it will be unclean until the evening. ²⁴ If a man has sexual relations with her, and her menstrual flow comes on him, he will be unclean for seven days, and any bed on which he lies will be unclean.

²⁵ “When a woman has a **discharge of blood** for many days at some other time than her menstruation or when she has a discharge that **continues beyond her period**, she will be unclean while she has the discharge. She will be unclean as at the time of her regular menstruation. ²⁶ Any bed on which she lies while her discharge continues will be unclean, like her bed during her menstruation, and anything on which she sits will be unclean, as during her menstruation. ²⁷ Whoever touches those things will be unclean. He shall wash his clothes and bathe with water! He will be unclean until the evening.

²⁸ “If she is clear of her discharge, she shall count off seven days for herself! After that she will be ceremonially clean. ²⁹ On the eighth day she shall get two turtledoves or two young pigeons for herself and bring them to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting! ³⁰ The priest shall prepare the one as a sin-offering and the other as a burnt offering! In this way the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD because of the discharge that had made her unclean!

³¹ “You shall keep the Israelites separate from what makes them unclean, that they may not die in their uncleanness because they defile My Tabernacle,

which is among them!”

³² This is the Law for the man who has a discharge or an emission of semen to make him unclean, ³³ for a woman who is menstruating, for a man or a woman who has a discharge and for a man who has sexual intercourse with a woman who is ceremonially unclean.

16

Regulations for the Day of Atonement — compare Leviticus 23:26-32, Numbers 29:7-11

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, who died when they came into the presence of the LORD. ² The LORD instructed Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron not to come at just any time into the Holy Place **inside the curtain** in front of the **propitiatory cover**, which is on the Ark, that he may not die! For I appear in the cloud over the propitiatory cover. ³ Aaron shall use a young bull as a sin-offering and a ram as a burnt offering to come into the holy place in the following way! ⁴ He shall put on the holy linen tunic and wear the linen breeches on his body! He shall tie the linen sash around him and wrap on the linen headband! These are holy garments. He shall bathe his body in water before he puts them on! ⁵ He shall take two male goats from the congregation of Israel as a sin-offering and one ram as a burnt offering!

⁶ “Aaron shall offer the young bull as the sin-offering for himself and make atonement for himself and for his family! ⁷ He shall take the two goats and place them before the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting! ⁸ Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two male goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for a scapegoat! ⁹ Aaron shall bring forward the goat on which the lot for the LORD has fallen and prepare it as a sin-offering! ¹⁰ However, the goat on which the lot has fallen to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, that atonement may be made over it and that it may be released into the wilderness as the scapegoat!

¹¹ “Aaron shall bring forward the young bull for his own sin-offering, make atonement for himself and his family and slaughter the young bull as his own sin-offering! ¹² He shall take a pan **full of burning coals from the altar** before the LORD and two handfuls of finely ground fragrant perfumes and take them up **to the curtain**! ¹³ He shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the propitiatory cover, which is over the Testimony, that he may not die! ¹⁴ He shall take some of the young bull’s blood and with his finger sprinkle it on the eastern side in front of the propitiatory cover! Then he shall with his finger sprinkle some of the blood seven times in front of the propitiatory cover!

¹⁵ “He shall slaughter the goat for the sin-offering that is for the people! He shall bring its blood inside the curtain and do with its blood as he has done with the

blood of the young bull! He shall sprinkle it on **the propitiatory cover and** in front of the propitiatory cover! ¹⁶ He shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the Israelites and because of their rebellious acts, that is, for all their other sins! He shall do the same for the Tent of Meeting, which remains among the people, in the middle of their forms of uncleanness! ¹⁷ No other person shall be in the Tent of Meeting when he goes into the Holy Place to make atonement until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his family and for the whole assembly of Israel! ¹⁸ Then he shall go out to the altar, which is before the LORD, and make atonement for it! He shall take some of the young bull's blood and some of the goat's blood and shall put it on the horns of the altar on all sides! ¹⁹ He shall use his finger to sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times, that he may cleanse it and make it holy from the forms of uncleanness of the Israelites!

²⁰ "After he has finished making atonement for the Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the living goat! ²¹ Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the living goat! He shall confess over it all the offences of the Israelites, all their transgressions and all their other sins and shall put them on the head of the goat! Then he shall use a man, standing beside him, to release it into the wilderness! ²² The goat will carry all their offences on itself away to unfertile land. The man shall release the goat in the wilderness!

²³ "Then Aaron shall go into the Tent of Meeting, take off the linen clothes that he had put on when he went into the Holy Place and leave them there! ²⁴ He shall bathe his body in water in a holy place and put on his other clothes! Then he shall come out and make the burnt offering for himself and the burnt offering for the people, that he may make atonement for himself and for the people! ²⁵ He shall also burn the fat of the sin-offering on the altar! ²⁶ The man who releases the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water! After that, he may come into the camp. ²⁷ He shall take **outside the camp** the young bull for the sin-offering and the goat for the sin-offering, **whose blood has been brought into the Holy Place** to make atonement! Their hides, their meat and the contents of their stomachs **shall be burnt up!** ²⁸ The man who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water! After that he may come into the camp.

²⁹ "This shall be a permanent Statute for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you shall humble yourselves by fasting! You shall not do any work, neither the native Israelite nor the foreigner who is living among you! ³⁰ For on this day the priest shall make atonement for you to make you clean! You will be clean before the LORD from all your sins. ³¹ It shall be a most solemn Sabbath for you! You shall humble yourselves by fasting! It is a permanent Statute.

³² The priest who is anointed and installed to serve as a priest in his father's place shall make the atonement! He shall put on the linen clothes, the holy garments, ³³ and make atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar! He shall also make atonement for the priests and make atonement for all the people of the assembly!

³⁴ "This shall be a permanent Statute for you, to make atonement for the Israelites once each year because of all their sins!"

Aaron did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

17

Regulations about the slaughter of animals and about the eating of sacrifices at the Tabernacle

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² "Speak to Aaron, his sons and all the Israelites and tell them: 'This is what the LORD has commanded: ³ Any man belonging to the family of Israel who butchers a bull, a young ram or a goat inside the camp or butchers it outside the camp ⁴ and has not brought it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to present it as a gift to the LORD before the sanctuary of the LORD, that man will be considered guilty of bloodshed. He has poured out blood. That man will be cut off from his people. ⁵ The purpose is that the Israelites shall bring their sacrifices, which they have been making in the open field, to the LORD instead. They shall bring them to the priest at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and offer them as their peace-offerings to the LORD! ⁶ The priest shall pour out the blood against the altar of the LORD at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and burn the fat for a soothing aroma to the LORD! ⁷ They shall no longer offer their sacrifices to evil spirits, after whom they used to run wantonly! This shall be a permanent Statute for them throughout their coming generations!'

⁸ "You shall also tell them: 'If any man belonging to the family of Israel or any stranger who lives among them offers a burnt offering or any other sacrifice ⁹ but does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to offer it to the LORD, that man will be cut off from his people.'

The prohibition of the consumption of blood

¹⁰ "If any man belonging to the family of Israel or any stranger who lives among them eats any blood, I shall set My face against the person who eats the blood and cut him off from his people. ¹¹ For the life of the body is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for your lives on the altar. For it is the blood that makes atonement by means of the life. ¹² That is why I have told the Israelites: "No person among you shall eat blood, and the stranger who lives among you shall also not eat blood!

¹³ "If any man belonging to the family of Israel or any stranger who lives among you hunts as game an animal or a bird that may be eaten, he shall drain out its blood and cover it with soil! ¹⁴ For the life of any creature is its blood. Its blood is its life. Therefore, I

have told the Israelites: “You shall not eat the blood of any creature! For the life of every creature is its blood. Anyone who eats it will be cut off.”

¹⁵ “Any person, either a native Israelite or a stranger, who eats the carcass of an animal that has died by itself or that has been torn by wild animals shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! He will be unclean until the evening. Then he will be clean. ¹⁶ However, if he does not wash his clothes and bathe his body, he will bear his guilt.”

18

Forbidden sexual relationships

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘I am the LORD, your God! ³ You shall not do what the people do in the land of Egypt, where you lived! You shall also not do what the people do in the land of Canaan, where I am taking you! You shall not follow their statutes! ⁴ You shall observe My Decisions! You shall keep My Statutes and walk in them! I am the LORD, your God. ⁵ You shall keep My Statutes and My Decisions! **If a man practises them, he will live by them.** I am the LORD.

⁶ “No person shall approach anyone closely related to him to have sexual relations! I am the LORD. ⁷ You shall not uncover the genital area of your father by having sexual relations with your mother! She is your own mother. You shall not have sexual relations with her! ⁸ You shall not have sexual relations with your father’s wife! Her genital area belongs to your father. ⁹ You shall not have sexual relations with your sister, either your father’s daughter or your mother’s daughter! Whether she has been born in the same home or elsewhere, you shall not have sexual relations with either! ¹⁰ You shall not have sexual relations with your son’s daughter or your daughter’s daughter! For their genital area belongs to you. ¹¹ You shall not have sexual relations with a daughter of your father’s wife, born to your father! She is your own sister. You shall not have sexual relations with her! ¹² You shall not have sexual relations with your father’s sister! She is your father’s close relative. ¹³ You shall not have sexual relations with your mother’s sister, because she is your mother’s close relative! ¹⁴ You shall not uncover the genital area that belongs to your father’s brother! You shall not approach his wife! She is your aunt. ¹⁵ You shall not have sexual relations with your daughter-in-law! She is your son’s wife. You shall not have sexual relations with her! ¹⁶ You shall not have sexual relations with your brother’s wife! Her genital area belongs to your brother.

¹⁷ “You shall not have sexual relations with both a woman and her daughter! You shall not take the daughter of her son or her daughter’s daughter and have sexual relations with them! They are close relatives. That is a shameful evil. ¹⁸ You shall not marry your wife’s sister to be a rival-wife and have sexual

relations with her while your wife is alive!

¹⁹ “You shall not go to a wife to have intercourse with her while she is ceremonially unclean from her menstruation!

²⁰ “You shall not consummate intercourse with your neighbour’s wife and so become ceremonially unclean with her!

²¹ “You shall not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molech! You shall not profane the name of your God! I am the LORD.

²² “You shall not have sexual relations with a man as with a woman! That is detestable. ²³ You shall not have intercourse with any animal and become unclean with it! A woman must also not offer herself to an animal for intercourse with her! That is perversion.

Punishment for sexual sins

²⁴ “You shall not make yourselves unclean in any of these ways! For by all these practices the nations that I am driving out ahead of you have made themselves unclean. ²⁵ The land has become unclean. I have punished it for its guilt, and the land has vomited out its inhabitants. ²⁶ You yourselves shall keep My Statutes and My Decisions! You shall not do any of these detestable things, either a native Israelite or a stranger who is living among you! ²⁷ For the people of the land, who were there before you, have been doing all these detestable things, and so the land has become unclean. ²⁸ You shall avoid having the land vomit you out because you make it unclean, as it has vomited out the nation that was there before you! ²⁹ For, as for everyone who commits any of these detestable things — the persons who commit them will be cut off from their people. ³⁰ So, you shall keep your obligation to Me, not to practise any of these detestable customs, which were practised before you came! You shall not make yourselves unclean by means of them! I am the LORD, your God.”

19

The requirement for the people to be ritually and morally holy

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Speak to the whole congregation of the Israelites and tell them: ‘**You shall be holy! For I am the LORD, your God and I am holy.**

³ “Each of you shall respect his mother and his father! You shall also keep My Sabbaths! I am the LORD, your God. ⁴ Do not turn to idols! You shall not make any gods of cast metal for yourselves! I am the LORD, your God.

⁵ “When you sacrifice a peace-offering to the LORD, you shall sacrifice it that God may grant you favour!

⁶ It shall be eaten on the day when you sacrifice it or on the next day! What is left over until the third day shall be burnt up! ⁷ If any is nevertheless eaten on the third day, it is sacrificial meat that has become unclean and will not be accepted. ⁸ Anyone who eats it will bring guilt on himself, because he has profaned what is holy to the LORD. That person will be cut off from his people.

Leviticus

The duties of the people toward each other

9 “When you harvest the grain on your land, you shall not finish harvesting the edge of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest! 10 You shall not pick your vineyard a second time or pick up the fallen grapes in your vineyard! You shall leave them for the poor man and the stranger! I am the LORD, your God.

11 “You shall not steal! You shall not tell lies and shall not deal falsely with one another! 12 **You shall not swear** by My name **to deceive** anyone or profane the name of your God! I am the LORD.

13 “You shall not oppress your neighbour or rob him! You shall not keep the wages of your hired labourer with you overnight until morning! 14 You shall not curse a deaf person or place an obstacle in front of a blind person to make him stumble but shall fear your God! I am the LORD.

15 “You shall not deliver unjust verdicts! You shall not show partiality to poor people or give preference to important people! You shall judge your neighbour fairly! 16 You shall not go about spreading slander among your people! You shall not do anything that endangers your neighbour’s life! I am the LORD.

17 “You shall not hate your brother in your heart! You shall be sure to correct your neighbour, that you may not be guilty of sin because of him! 18 You shall not take revenge! You shall not hold a grudge against any of your own people! Instead, **you shall love your neighbour as yourself!** I am the LORD.

Prohibitions about mixing — Deuteronomy 22:8-10

19 “You shall keep My Statutes! You shall not cross-breed two different kinds of your animals! You shall not sow your field with two different kinds of seed! You shall not put on a garment woven from two different kinds of material!

Instructions about a guilt-offering for illicit intercourse

20 “When a man has intercourse with a woman who is a slave and who is engaged to another man and who has not been ransomed at all or who has not been emancipated from slavery, there shall be due punishment! Such persons shall not be put to death! For there had been no emancipation from slavery.

21 Nevertheless, the man shall bring his guilt-offering to the LORD at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting! The guilt-offering shall be a ram! 22 The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt-offering before the LORD for his sin, which he has committed! He will then be forgiven for his sin, which he has committed.

Various regulations

23 “When you come into the land and plant all kinds of fruit trees, you shall leave their fruit unharvested as though it were uncircumcised! For three years you shall consider it uncircumcised! It shall not be eaten!

24 In the fourth year all its fruit shall be a holy offering of praise to the LORD! 25 However, in the fifth year you may eat its fruit. In this way it will yield all the more for you. I am the LORD, your God.

26 “You shall not eat any meat with its blood still in it!

“You shall not practise divination and you shall not conjure up spirits!

27 “You shall not trim the hair at the sides of your head or clip off the edges of your beard! 28 You shall not make incisions in your bodies because a person has died and shall not put tattoo marks on yourselves! I am the LORD.

29 “You shall not profane your daughter by urging her into cultic prostitution, that the land may not turn to prostitution and that the land may not be full of shameful evil!

30 “You shall keep My Sabbaths and have reverence for My sanctuary! I am the LORD.

31 “Do not turn to mediums or to soothsayers! Do not search for them to become unclean through them! I am the LORD, your God.

32 “You shall stand up in the presence of a grey-haired person and treat the presence of an old man with respect! You shall also fear your God! I am the LORD.

33 “When a foreigner lives in your country with you, you shall not oppress him! 34 The stranger who lives with you shall be treated like a native Israelite among you! You shall love him as yourself! For you were strangers in the land of Egypt. I am the LORD, your God.

35 “You shall not act unjustly when you impose a sentence, when you measure length, when you measure weight or when you measure liquids! 36 You shall have honest scales, honest weights, an honest grain measure and an honest liquid measure! I am the LORD, your God, and I have brought you out of the land of Egypt.

37 “You shall keep all My Statutes and all My Decisions and shall put them into practice! I am the LORD.”

20

Punishments for the sacrifice of children

1 The LORD told Moses: 2 “You shall tell the Israelites: ‘If there is any Israelite or any stranger who lives in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech, he shall certainly be put to death! The people of the land shall stone him! 3 I Myself shall set My face against that man and shall cut him off from his people. For he has given some of his children to Molech, with the result that he has made My sanctuary unclean and has profaned My holy name. 4 If the people of the country actually cover their eyes to that person when he gives some of his children to Molech and fail to put him to death, 5 I shall set My face against that man and his family. I shall cut him off from his people when he runs wantonly after Molech, together with all who run wantonly after him.

6 “When a person turns to mediums and to soothsayers to run wantonly after them, I shall also set My face

against that person and cut him off from his people.

⁷ “You shall behave as people who have been made holy and you shall be holy! For I am the LORD, your God.

⁸ “You shall keep My Statutes and shall put them into practice! I am the LORD and I make you holy.

⁹ “When there is **anyone who curses his father or his mother, he shall certainly be put to death! He has cursed his father or mother.** His blood-guilt shall be on him!

Penalties for sexual immorality

¹⁰ “When anyone commits adultery with another man’s wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbour’s wife, the adulterer, together with the adulteress, shall surely be put to death! ¹¹ If a man has sexual relations with his father’s wife, he has uncovered the genital area that belongs to his father. Both the man and the woman shall certainly be put to death! Their blood-guilt shall be on them!

¹² “If a man has sexual relations with his daughter-in-law, both shall certainly be put to death! What they have done is a perversion. Their blood-guilt shall be on them! ¹³ When a man has sexual relations with another male as with a woman, both of them have done something detestable. They shall certainly be put to death! Their blood-guilt shall be on them! ¹⁴ If a man marries both a woman and her mother, it is a shameful evil. People shall burn the man and the two women, that no shameful evil may be among you!

¹⁵ If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he shall certainly be put to death! You shall also kill the animal! ¹⁶ If a woman approaches any animal to have sexual relations with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal! They shall certainly be put to death! Their blood-guilt is on them. ¹⁷ When a man takes his sister, either his father’s daughter or his mother’s daughter and sees her genital area and she sees his genital area, it is a disgrace. Their people shall regard them as outcasts! He has uncovered his sister’s nakedness. He shall bear his guilt! ¹⁸ If a man lies with a woman while she is menstruating and has intercourse with her, he has exposed her source, and she has uncovered the source of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people! ¹⁹ You shall not have intercourse with your mother’s sister or your father’s sister! For such a person has made a close relative naked. They shall bear their guilt! ²⁰ When a man has sexual relations with his uncle’s wife, he has uncovered the genital area that belongs to his uncle. They shall bear their sin! They shall die childless! ²¹ If a man marries his brother’s wife, it will be something detestable. He has uncovered the genital area that belongs to his brother. They shall be childless!

The requirement for holiness

²² “You shall keep all My Statutes and all My Decisions and put them into practice, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out!

²³ You shall not live according to the statutes of the

nation that I am throwing out ahead of you! Because they have been doing all these things, I have been disgusted with them. ²⁴ I have been telling you: “You will inherit their land. I shall give it to you to inherit, a land flowing with milk and honey.” I am the LORD, your God and I have separated you from the other peoples.

²⁵ “You shall make a distinction between the animals that are clean and that are unclean, between birds that are unclean and that are clean! You shall not make yourselves detestable with any animal, bird or any reptile on the ground that I have set apart for you by declaring it unclean! ²⁶ You shall **be holy to Me! For I, the LORD, am holy and** I have set you apart from the other peoples to be My own.

²⁷ “Any man or woman who has a demon or a spirit of the dead in them shall certainly be put to death! People shall stone them! Their blood-guilt shall be on them!”

21

Requirements for the holiness of the priests — Ezekiel 44:15-31

¹ The LORD told Moses: “Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron and tell them: ‘None of them shall become ceremonially unclean for any person in his family who has died ² except for his nearest relatives: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter and his brother! ³ He may also become unclean for his sister if she is not married but a virgin and is dependent on him. ⁴ Because he is the head of his family, he shall not become unclean by profaning himself!

⁵ “Priests shall not shave their heads bald, shave the edges of their beards or make incisions on their bodies! ⁶ They shall be holy to their God and shall not profane the name of their God! For they present the offerings made to the LORD by fire, the food of their God. They shall be holy!

⁷ “They must not marry any woman who is a prostitute, who has lost her virginity or who has been divorced from her husband! For a priest is holy to his God. ⁸ You shall regard him as holy! For he offers the food of your God. You shall consider him holy to you! For I, the LORD, am holy — I Myself, who make you holy. ⁹ When the daughter of any priest profanes herself by being a prostitute, she is profaning her father. She shall be burnt with fire!

Requirements for the holiness of the Chief Priest

¹⁰ “Moreover, the one who is the High Priest among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been installed to wear the garments, shall not let the hair on his head hang loose or tear his clothes! ¹¹ He shall not go near any dead bodies! He shall not become unclean even for his father or his mother! ¹² He shall not leave the sanctuary and shall not profane the sanctuary of his God! For the anointing oil of his God, which has consecrated him, is on him. I am the LORD.

¹³ “He shall marry a woman who is a virgin! ¹⁴ He

shall not marry any of these, a widow, a divorced woman, a woman who has lost her virginity or a prostitute! Rather, he shall marry a virgin from his own people! ¹⁵ He shall not profane his children among his people! For I am the LORD and I make him holy.”

¹⁶ The LORD instructed Moses: ¹⁷ “Tell Aaron: ‘If any man among your descendants in their succeeding generations has any blemish, he shall not come near to offer the food of his God! ¹⁸ For no man who has any blemish shall come near: no man who is blind, lame, with a split nose or deformed, ¹⁹ no man with a broken foot or broken hand, ²⁰ or who is hunchbacked, who is dwarfed, who has a spot in the eye, who has a festering sore, who has a skin-disease with scabs or who has damaged testicles! ²¹ No descendant of Aaron the priest who has a defect shall come near to present the offerings made to the LORD by fire! He has a defect. He shall not come near to offer the food of his God! ²² He may eat the food of his God, both some of the most holy things and some of the holy things. ²³ Nevertheless, he shall not come up to the curtain or up to the altar! For he has a defect and shall not profane My holy places! For I am the LORD and I make them holy.”

²⁴ So, Moses told this to Aaron, his sons and all the Israelites.

22

Regulations about eating the priests' share of the holy things

¹ The LORD instructed Moses: ² “Tell Aaron and his sons that they shall treat with awe the holy offerings of the Israelites, which they consecrate to Me, that they may not profane My holy name! I am the LORD.”

³ “Tell them: ‘In your coming generations, if any of your descendants, while he is ceremonially unclean, comes near the holy offerings that the Israelites consecrate to the LORD, that person shall be cut off from My presence! I am the LORD.

⁴ “If any descendant of Aaron has an infectious skin-disease or suffers from a discharge, he shall not eat any of the holy offerings until he is clean! Whoever touches anything unclean by contact with a corpse or any man who has had an emission of semen ⁵ or anyone who touches any swarming thing, which makes him unclean, or any human being in whatever way he is ceremonially unclean, ⁶ the person who touches any such thing will be unclean until the evening. He shall not eat any of the holy offerings unless he has bathed his body with water! ⁷ When the sun goes down, he will be clean and after that he may eat the holy offerings. For they are his food. ⁸ He shall not eat the meat of an animal that has died by itself or that has been torn by wild animals, so that it makes him unclean! I am the LORD. ⁹ They shall keep My Requirement, that they may not bring sin on themselves through this and die because of this when they profane it! I am the LORD and I make them holy.

¹⁰ “No unauthorised person shall eat a holy offering! No foreigner who is living with the priest and no hired servant shall eat a holy offering! ¹¹ However, when a priest buys a slave as personal property with his money, he may eat his food. Any slave born in his household may also eat it. ¹² When a priest's daughter marries anyone who is not a priest, she shall not eat any of the holy contributions! ¹³ However, when a priest's daughter is a widow or has been divorced and has no child comes back to her father's home as when she was young, she may eat her father's food. However, no unauthorised person shall eat it!

¹⁴ “When anyone by mistake eats a holy offering, he shall add a fifth of its value to it and give the holy offering to the priest! ¹⁵ The priests shall not make profane use of the sacred offerings that the Israelites present to the LORD! ¹⁶ The priests shall burden such people with guilt that requires repayment when they eat the priests' holy offerings! For I am the LORD and I make them holy.”

Regulations about acceptable offerings

¹⁷ The LORD told Moses: ¹⁸ Speak to Aaron, his sons and all the Israelites and tell them: ‘If anyone in the family of Israel or any stranger in Israel presents, as his gift, something to fulfil any vow that he has made or if he makes any kind of free-will offering and offers it to the LORD as a burnt offering, ¹⁹ that God may be favourable to you, it shall be a male without blemish from the herd, from the sheep or from the goats! ²⁰ You shall not offer anything with a defect! For God will not treat it as acceptable on your behalf. ²¹ When anyone brings from the herd or from the flock a peace-offering to the LORD to fulfil a special vow or as a free-will offering, it shall be without blemish to be acceptable! There shall be no defect in it! ²² You shall not offer these to the LORD: anything blind, broken, mutilated, with warts, with festering sores or with scabs! You shall not give any of these as an offering made to the LORD on the altar by fire! ²³ You may use a bull or a sheep that has a deformity or a bodily defect as a free-will offering, but it will not be regarded as acceptable in fulfilment of a vow. ²⁴ You shall not bring to the LORD any animal whose testicles are crushed, torn away or cut out! You shall not use them in your country! ²⁵ You shall also not accept any of these animals from any stranger to offer them as food to your God! For they have a defect or a blemish in them. God will not treat them as acceptable on your behalf.”

²⁶ The LORD told Moses: ²⁷ “When a calf, a lamb or a goat is born, it shall stay with its mother for seven days! However, from the eighth day on it will be regarded as acceptable as a gift offered by fire to the LORD. ²⁸ You shall not slaughter a cow or a ewe and its young the same day!

²⁹ “When you offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the LORD, you shall sacrifice it in such a way as will be

accepted on your behalf! ³⁰ It shall be eaten on the same day! You shall not leave any of it until the next morning! I am the LORD.

³¹ “You shall keep My Commandments and put them into practice! I am the LORD. ³² You shall not profane My holy name! I must be treated as holy among the Israelites! I am the LORD and I make you holy.

³³ It is I who have brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD.”

23

Instructions about the appointed festivals

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘The following are the fixed days of the LORD, which you shall proclaim as holy assemblies! These are My fixed days.

The observance of the Sabbath

³ “‘Work may be done for six days, but on the seventh day there shall be a most solemn Sabbath, a holy assembly! You shall not do any work! It shall be the Sabbath to the LORD wherever you live!

⁴ “‘The following are the fixed days of the LORD. They are holy assemblies, which you shall announce at their appointed times.

The Spring festivals, the Passover, Unleavened Bread, the Presentation of the first ears of barley and the Festival of Weeks

The Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread — Exodus 12:1-30, 43-51, Numbers 28:16-25, Deuteronomy 16:1-8

⁵ “‘The Passover of the LORD shall begin at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month! ⁶ The Festival of Bread without Yeast to the LORD shall begin on the fifteenth day of that month! You shall eat bread without yeast for seven days! ⁷ On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work! ⁸ You shall present to the LORD an offering made by fire for seven days! On the seventh day there shall be a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work!’”

The Presentation of the first ears of barley or first-fruits

⁹ The LORD told Moses: ¹⁰ “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When you come to the land that I am giving you and are reaping its harvest, you shall bring to the priest the first ears of grain from your harvest!

¹¹ He shall move the sheaf back and forth before the LORD that you may be accepted! The priest shall move it back and forth on the day after the Sabbath!

¹² On the day when you move the ears of grain back and forth, you shall also offer a one-year-old ram without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD!

¹³ The grain-offering with it shall be four-fifths of a litre of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil as a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD as a soothing aroma, together with a drink offering of one litre of wine!

¹⁴ You shall not eat bread, parched grain or fresh grain until this very day, until you bring this gift to your God! It shall be a permanent Statute throughout your coming generations, wherever you live!

The Festival of Weeks (Harvest or Pentecost) — Exodus 34:22, Numbers 28:26-31, Deuteronomy 16:9-12

¹⁵ “‘You shall count off for yourselves seven weeks

from the day after the Sabbath, from the day when you bring the ears of grain as a wave offering! They shall be seven full weeks! ¹⁶ You shall count off fifty days, until the day after the seventh Sabbath! Then you shall present an offering of new grain to the LORD! ¹⁷ From wherever you live you shall bring two loaves of bread as a wave offering! They shall be made of four-fifths of a litre of fine wheat flour! They shall be baked with yeast! They are first-fruits to the LORD. ¹⁸ Together with the bread you shall present seven one-year-old male lambs without blemish, one young bull from the herd and two rams! They shall be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain-offering and drink offerings! It is an offering made by fire and a soothing aroma to the LORD. ¹⁹ You shall also use one male goat for a sin-offering and two lambs one year old for a peace-offering! ²⁰ The priest shall move them back and forth before the LORD as a wave offering, with the bread of the first-fruits! They, together with the two lambs, shall be holy to the LORD and belong to the priest! ²¹ On that very day you shall proclaim that you are holding a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work! It is a permanent Statute wherever you live throughout your coming generations.

²² “‘When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap everything on the edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest! You shall leave them for poor people and for strangers! I am the LORD, your God.’”

The festivals in Autumn, the Blowing of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Festival of Booths — compare Numbers 29:1-40

The Blowing of Trumpets — Numbers 29:1-6

²³ The LORD instructed Moses: ²⁴ “Tell the Israelites: ‘On the first day of the seventh month you shall have a Sabbath festival as a memorial day with the blowing of trumpets and a holy assembly! ²⁵ You shall not do any regular work and shall present an offering made to the LORD by fire!’”

The Day of Atonement — compare Leviticus 16:1-34, Numbers 29:7-11

²⁶ The LORD told Moses: ²⁷ “Now, the Day of Atonement is on the tenth day of this seventh month. You shall hold a holy assembly, humble yourselves by fasting and present an offering made to the LORD by fire! ²⁸ You shall not do any work on that day! For it is a Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the LORD, your God. ²⁹ **Any person** who does not humble himself by fasting on that day **shall be cut off from his people!** ³⁰ If any person does any work on that day, I shall destroy that person from among his people. ³¹ You shall not do any work! It is a permanent Statute throughout your coming generations, wherever you live. ³² It shall be a most solemn Sabbath for you! You shall humble yourselves by fasting! You shall observe your Sabbath on the evening of the ninth day of the month, from the one evening until the next!”

The Festival of Tabernacles or the Festival of Booths or the Ingathering —

Numbers 29:12-40, Deuteronomy 16:13-17, Zechariah 14:16-19

³³ The LORD instructed Moses: ³⁴ “Tell the Israelites: ‘On the fifteenth day of this seventh month there shall be the Festival of Booths to the LORD and last for seven days! ³⁵ On the first day there shall be a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work! ³⁶ You shall present to the LORD an offering made by fire for seven days! On the eighth day you shall hold a holy assembly and shall present to the LORD an offering made by fire! It is a festive assembly. You shall not do any regular work!

³⁷ “These are the appointed festivals of the LORD, which you shall announce as holy assemblies, for presenting to the LORD sacrifices made by fire, burnt offerings, grain-offerings, other sacrifices and drink offerings, each on its right day. ³⁸ These offerings shall be in addition to Sabbaths of the LORD, in addition to your gifts, in addition to all your vow offerings and in addition to all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD!

³⁹ “Moreover, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered what the land has yielded, you shall celebrate the festival of the LORD for seven days! On the first day there shall be a Sabbath festival, and on the eighth day there shall be a Sabbath festival! ⁴⁰ On the first day you shall take for yourselves choice fruit from the trees, palm-branches, the branches of leafy trees and poplars of the Euphrates and shall rejoice before the LORD, your God, for seven days! ⁴¹ You shall celebrate it as the festival of the LORD for seven days each year! It is a permanent Statute throughout your coming generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month! ⁴² You shall live in booths for seven days! All native-born Israelites shall live in booths, ⁴³ that your coming generations may know that I made the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt! I am the LORD, your God.”

⁴⁴ So, Moses announced to the Israelites the fixed days of the LORD.

24

Instructions about the light in the Tent of Meeting — Exodus 27:20-21

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Command the Israelites to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp, that the lamps may burn continuously! ³ In the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain of the Testimony, Aaron shall continually keep the lamp supplied before the LORD from evening until morning! It is a permanent Statute throughout your coming generations. ⁴ Aaron shall continually keep the lamps on the pure-golden lampstand in trim before the LORD!

Instructions about the bread that is set before God

⁵ “You shall take fine wheat flour and bake twelve ring-shaped loaves with it, using four-fifths of a litre for each loaf! ⁶ You shall arrange them in two rows, with six in each row, on the table of pure gold before the LORD! ⁷ You shall lay pure frankincense beside

each row! When it is offered by fire to the LORD, it will become a memorial of the bread. ⁸ On each Sabbath day Aaron shall regularly **set this out before the LORD!** It shall come from the Israelites as an unending Covenant! ⁹ The bread shall belong to Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place! For it is most holy. It shall be Aaron’s part out of the offerings made by fire to the LORD! It shall be a permanent Statute!

The punishment of a man who blasphemed

¹⁰ A man who had an Israelite mother and an Egyptian father went out among the Israelites, and this Israelite woman’s son and a man of Israel had a quarrel in the camp. ¹¹ The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name and cursed it. People brought him to Moses. His mother’s name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, belonging to the tribe of Dan. ¹² They put him in custody to obtain precise information about what the LORD wanted them to do. ¹³ The LORD told Moses: ¹⁴ “Take the man who has cursed outside the camp! All who heard him shall lay their hands on his head, and then the whole congregation shall stone him! ¹⁵ Tell the Israelites: ‘Any man who curses his God shall pay the penalty for his sin! ¹⁶ He who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall certainly be put to death! The whole congregation shall certainly stone him! The stranger shall be treated like the native-born Israelite! When he blasphemes the Name, he shall be put to death!

The principle of retaliation

¹⁷ “When any man kills another human being, he shall certainly be put to death! ¹⁸ Anyone who kills an animal shall make restitution for it, a life for a life! ¹⁹ When anyone causes any disfigurement to his neighbour, whatever he has done shall be done to him: ²⁰ a broken bone for a broken bone, **an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth!** As he has caused a disfigurement to another human being, so it shall be done to him! ²¹ Anyone who kills an animal shall make restitution for it, but anyone who kills a human being shall be put to death! ²² You shall make the same decision about the stranger as you make about the native-born Israelite! For I am the LORD, your God.”

²³ Moses told this to the Israelites. So, they took outside the camp the man who had cursed and stoned him. The Israelites did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

25

Instructions about a year of rest for the land — Exodus 23:10-11, Deuteronomy 15:1-11

¹ The LORD told Moses on Mount Sinai: ² “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When you come into the land that I am giving to you, the land itself shall stop working for a Sabbath to the LORD! ³ You shall sow your field for six years, prune your vineyard and gather what it produces for six years, ⁴ but in the seventh year the land shall stop working for a most solemn

Sabbath, a Sabbath to the LORD! You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard! ⁵ You shall not harvest what grows of its own accord after your harvest or pick the grapes of your unpruned vines! The land shall have a year of rest! ⁶ You, together with your manservant, your maidservant, your hired worker and the temporary resident, who live among you, may use what the Sabbath of the land produces as your food. ⁷ Everything that it produces shall also feed your livestock and the wild animals that are in the land!

The Year of Jubilee for the land – Leviticus 27:17-24, Numbers 36:4, Deuteronomy 15:1-11

⁸ “You shall also count off for yourself seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the seven weeks of years amount to forty-nine years for you! ⁹ You shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month, on the Day of Atonement and sound trumpets all over your land! ¹⁰ Then you shall consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty in the land for all its inhabitants! This shall be your Jubilee, when everyone shall return to his family-property and everyone shall return to his own clan! ¹¹ That fiftieth year shall be your Jubilee year! You shall not sow or reap what grows of its own accord or pick grapes from the unpruned vines in the land! ¹² For it is the Jubilee. It shall be holy for you! You shall eat from the field what it produces! ¹³ In this Year of Jubilee each of you shall return to his family-property! ¹⁴ When you sell something saleable to your neighbour or buy anything from him, do not drive a hard bargain with one another! ¹⁵ You shall buy from your neighbour on the basis of the number of years after the Jubilee! He shall sell to you on the basis of the number of years left for crops! ¹⁶ If there are still many years, you shall increase the purchase-price for it! If there are only a few years, you shall decrease the purchase-price for it! For he is selling only the number of crops to you. ¹⁷ You shall not drive hard bargains with one another but shall fear your God! For I am the LORD, your God.

¹⁸ “You shall put My Statutes into practice, observe My Decisions and put them into practice! Then you will live safely in the land. ¹⁹ Then the land will yield its fruit, you will be satisfied with what you eat and live there in safety. ²⁰ When you ask, “What shall we eat in the seventh year, since we must not sow or harvest our crops?” ²¹ I shall command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and the land will yield enough for three years. ²² While you sow in the eighth year you will be eating some of the old crop until the ninth year. You will continue to eat the old crop until the harvest of the ninth year comes in.

The redemption of family-property

²³ “The land shall not be sold in such a way that the right of repurchase is forfeited! For the land is Mine. For you are only foreigners and temporary residents with Me. ²⁴ In all the land that you hold as family-property you shall provide a right of redemption for the land! ²⁵ When your fellow-Israelite becomes poor

and sells some of his family-property, his relative shall come to him as his redeemer and shall buy back what his relative has sold! ²⁶ However, when a man has no one to redeem it but comes into property and acquires enough to redeem it, ²⁷ he shall calculate the years since he sold it and refund the balance to the man to whom he sold it! Then he may return to his family-property. ²⁸ But if he has not acquired enough to repay him, what he has sold shall remain in the possession of the man who has bought it until the year of the Jubilee. It shall be released in the Jubilee, and he shall go back to his family-property!

²⁹ “If anyone sells a home in a walled city, he shall have the right of redemption for a whole year! During the year after he has sold it he shall retain his right to redeem it! ³⁰ However, if it is not redeemed before the man’s full year has elapsed, the house that is in the walled town shall belong permanently throughout his coming generations to the one who has bought it! It shall not be released in the Jubilee! ³¹ However, houses in villages without walls around them shall be regarded as belonging to the fields in the open country! They shall retain the right of redemption and in the Jubilee they shall be released!

³² “Nevertheless, as for the cities of the Levites and the houses in the cities that are their family-property, the Levites shall have the permanent right to redeem them! ³³ With respect to what any of the Levites redeems, the sale of a house that is in a city that is his family-property shall be released in the Jubilee! For the houses in the cities of the Levites shall be their family-property among the Israelites! ³⁴ However, a field that is pastureland around their cities shall not be sold! For it is their perpetual family-property.

Concern for impoverished people in the Year of Jubilee

³⁵ “When your fellow Israelite becomes poor and impoverished among you, you shall hold on to him as you would a stranger or a temporary resident, that he may continue to live among you! ³⁶ Do not take interest from him or require other additional charges from him, but you shall fear your God, that your fellow Israelite may continue to live among you! ³⁷ You shall not lend him your money at interest or loan him your food at a profit! ³⁸ I am the LORD, your God and I have brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan, that I may be your God.

Regulations about Hebrew servants — Exodus 21:2-11, Deuteronomy 15:12-18

³⁹ “When your fellow Israelite becomes poor among you and sells himself to you, you shall not compel him to work like a slave! ⁴⁰ He shall be like a hired worker or a temporary resident with you! He shall work with you until the Year of Jubilee! ⁴¹ Then he and his children shall be released from you! He shall go back to his own clan! He shall return to the family-property of his fathers! ⁴² For they are My servants, whom I have brought out of the land of Egypt. They shall not be sold like slaves! ⁴³ You shall not manage

him violently but shall fear your God!

The possession of slaves

44 “You may acquire your manservant and maidservant that you have from the nations around you. You may acquire a manservant and a maidservant from them. 45 You may also acquire them from the descendants of temporary residents who are foreigners living with you. You may own as family-property members of their clans who are among you and who have been born in your country. 46 You may bequeath them to your children after you as inherited family-property. You may use them as slaves permanently. However, with respect to your brothers, the Israelites, you shall not manage one another violently!

The redemption of a poor man

47 “When a stranger or a temporary resident among you becomes wealthy and your fellow Israelite becomes poor and he sells himself to a foreigner who is living among you or to a member of a foreigner’s clan, 48 after he has sold himself, there shall be a right of redemption for him! One of his brothers may redeem him. 49 Alternatively, his uncle or his cousin may redeem him or any other close relative in his clan may redeem him. Or, if he becomes wealthy, he may redeem himself. 50 Together with the man who has bought him he shall calculate the time from the year when he sold himself until the Year of Jubilee! The money paid for him shall be based on the number of years, as if he had spent the time with him as a hired man! 51 If they still have many years left, he shall repay, as his redemption, a price relative to what had been paid for him! 52 If there are only a few years left until the Year of Jubilee, he shall put them down to his account! He shall pay for his redemption in proportion to the years he would still have had to serve! 53 The man shall be with him like a hired worker on a yearly basis! He shall not manage the man in what you regard as a violent manner! 54 Moreover, if he is not redeemed in any of these ways, he and his children shall be released in the Year of Jubilee!

55 “For the Israelites belong to Me as servants. They are My servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. I am the LORD, your God.

26

The rewards for obedience — Deuteronomy 7:12-24, Deuteronomy 28:1-14

1 “You shall not make any idols for yourselves or set up any image or sacred stone for yourselves! You shall not place any stone carved in relief in your land to bow down before it! For I am the LORD, your God.

2 “You shall keep My Sabbaths and respect My sanctuary! I am the LORD.

God’s blessings on those who keep His Laws

3 “If you live according to My Statutes and carefully keep My Commandments, 4 I shall give you your rain at the right time, the land will produce its crops and the trees in the field will produce their fruit. 5 Your threshing will continue until grape harvest, the grape

harvest will continue until planting, you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land. 6 I shall give peace in the land. You will lie down, and no one will make you afraid. I shall remove savage beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country. 7 You will pursue your enemies and fall before you by the sword. 8 Five of you will chase a hundred, a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword. 9 I shall look kindly on you, make you fruitful, increase your numbers and confirm My Covenant with you. 10 You will eat old produce that has been stored up and clear out old stores of food to make room for new ones. 11 **I shall put My dwelling place among you and My soul will not abhor you.** 12 **I shall walk among you and be your God, and you will be My people.** 13 I am the LORD, your God, and have brought you out of the land of Egypt, so that you should no longer be their slaves. I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect.”

God’s curses on those who disobey His Laws — Deuteronomy 28:15-68

14 “However, if you do not listen to Me and do not practise all these Commandments, 15 and, if you reject My Statutes and your soul abhors My Decisions, so that you do not practise all My Commandments and so break My Covenant, 16 then I, too, shall do this to you: I shall punish you with terror, consumption and inflammation, which will make your eyes go dead and wear your life away. You will sow your seed for nothing, because your enemies will eat it. 17 I shall set My face against you, so that you will be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee when no one is pursuing you.

18 “If, after all this, you refuse to listen to Me, I shall again chastise you for your sins, seven times over. 19 I shall break down your stubborn pride. I shall make your sky like iron and your soil like bronze. 20 You will use up your strength for nothing. Your land will not yield its produce, and the trees of the land will not yield their fruit. 21 If you set yourselves against Me and refuse to listen to Me, I shall bring **seven more plagues** on you, as your sins deserve. 22 I shall send wild animals among you to rob you of your children, to destroy your livestock and to make you few in number, so that your roads will become deserted.

23 “If, despite these things, you do not accept My correction but set yourselves against Me, 24 then I too shall set Myself against you and I Myself shall also strike you down seven times for your sins. 25 I shall bring a sword against you to take revenge for breaking My Covenant. When you withdraw into your cities, I shall send a plague among you, and you will be delivered into the control of your enemy. 26 When I cut off your supply of bread, ten women will bake your bread in one oven and weigh it out exactly when they give it back to you. Although you eat, you will not be satisfied.

27 “If, despite this, you do not listen to Me but set yourselves against Me, 28 then I shall resist you furiously and I myself shall chastise you for your sins seven times over. 29 You will eat the flesh of your sons and eat the flesh of your daughters. 30 I shall destroy your high places, cut down your incense-altars and pile your dead bodies on your lifeless idols and I Myself shall abhor you. 31 I shall turn your cities into ruin and rubble. I shall make your sanctuaries desolate. I shall not smell the soothing aroma of your offerings. 32 I Myself shall make the land desolate, so that your enemies, who settle in it, will be horrified at it. 33 I shall scatter you among the nations. I shall draw out a sword after you. Your land will be a sinister desolation, and your cities will be places of ruin and rubble.

34 “Then the land will enjoy its Sabbath days the whole time it lies desolate and while you are in your enemies’ land. Then the land will rest and cause the debt to its Sabbath days to be paid off. 35 For while it lies desolate the land will have the rest that it failed to have during the Sabbath days when you were living in it. 36 I shall also make the hearts of those among you who are left dejected in the lands of their enemies. The sound of a leaf when it is blown away will make them flee. They will flee to a sword as a place of refuge. They will fall when no one is pursuing them. 37 You will fall over one another as if running from a sword when no one is chasing you. You will not be able to stand before your enemies. 38 You will perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies will devour you. 39 Those among you who are left will waste away because of their guilt in the lands of your enemies. Indeed, they will waste away because of their fathers’ guilt together with their own.

God’s promise to pardon His people when they repent

40 “Then they will confess their guilt and the guilt of their fathers, when they were unfaithful to Me and when they even set themselves against Me, 41 so that I also set Myself against them and brought them into the land of their enemies. If then they humble their **uncircumcised hearts** and, if they freely admit their guilt, 42 then I shall **remember** My Covenant with Jacob and remember My Covenant with Isaac and **My Covenant with Abraham**. I shall also remember the land. 43 However, the land, which will be abandoned by them, will enjoy its Sabbath days while it lies desolate without them. They will freely admit their guilt because they had been rejecting My Decisions and because they themselves had abhorred My Statutes. 44 Nevertheless, despite this, while they are in the land of their enemies I shall not reject them or abhor them so that I exterminate them and make My Covenant with them invalid. For I am the LORD, their God. 45 Rather, for their sake I shall remember the Covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt so that the nations could see it, that I

might be their God. I am the LORD.”

46 These are the Prescriptions, the Decisions and the Laws, which the LORD established on Mount Sinai between Himself and the Israelites through Moses.

27

Regulations about special vows and votive offerings

1 The LORD told Moses: 2 “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When anyone makes an extraordinary vow to consecrate persons to the LORD by the value that you estimate, 3 if you estimate the value of a man from twenty to sixty years old, you shall value him at six hundred grams of silver, according to the weight used at the Holy Place! 4 If it is a woman, you shall value her at three hundred and sixty grams of silver! 5 If it is a person from five to twenty years old, you shall value a male at two hundred and forty grams and a female at one hundred and twenty grams! 6 If it is a person from one month to five years old, you shall value a boy at sixty grams of silver and a girl at thirty-six grams of silver! 7 If it is a person sixty years old or older, you shall value a male at one hundred and eighty grams and a female at one hundred and twenty grams!

8 “However, if the person is too poor to pay the amount that you estimate, he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall assess his value! The priest shall assess the value of the one who is making a vow according to what he can afford!

9 “If it is a domestic animal that people are presenting as a gift to the LORD, any such animal that a person presents to the LORD shall become holy! 10 He shall not substitute anything for it and shall not exchange it, a good one for a bad one or a bad one for a good one! If he does indeed exchange one animal for another, then both it and the one exchanged for it shall become holy! 11 If it is any ceremonially unclean animal, which people may not present as a gift to the LORD, the person shall present the animal before the priest, 12 and the priest shall assess its value as either good or bad! Its value shall be whatever the priest estimates! 13 However, if the person wants to buy the animal back after all, he shall add a fifth to the value that you assess!

14 “When anyone dedicates his house as something holy to the LORD, the priest shall estimate its value as either good or bad! Its value shall remain at whatever the priest estimates! 15 However, if the person who dedicates his house wants to redeem it, he shall add a fifth to the price that you estimate for it! Then the house will become his again. 16 If anyone dedicates part of his inherited property to the LORD, you shall value it according to the amount of seed required for it! You shall value six bushels of barley seed at six hundred grams of silver! 17 If he dedicates his field at the Year of Jubilee, whatever you value it at shall stand! 18 However, if he dedicates his field after the

Leviticus

Jubilee, the priest shall value it according to the years left until the next Year of Jubilee! Your estimated value shall be reduced! ¹⁹ However, if the man who dedicates his field wishes to redeem it after all, he shall add a fifth to the amount of money that you estimate for it, and the field shall continue to be his! ²⁰ However, if he does not redeem the field or if he has sold the field to someone else, it shall never be redeemed! ²¹ When the field is released in the Jubilee Year, it shall be holy to the LORD! It shall be like a field that has been devoted to God and become the family-property of the priest! ²² However, if a man dedicates to the LORD a field that he has bought, which is not a part of his family property, ²³ the priest shall calculate for him how much it is worth until the Year of Jubilee, and on that day the man shall pay what is assessed as something holy to the LORD! ²⁴ At the Year of Jubilee the field shall revert to the man from whom he had bought it, to the man who had owned the land as family property! ²⁵ “Every valuation that you make shall be according to the weight used in the Holy Place, twenty gerahs to twelve grams! ²⁶ “Nevertheless, no one shall dedicate the first-born of an animal, whether it is a bull or a sheep! For it already belongs to the LORD by being born first. It belongs to the LORD. ²⁷ If it is one of the unclean animals, a person may redeem it at the value that you

estimate but shall add a fifth of its value to it! However, if it is not redeemed, it shall be sold at the price that you set!

Persons and things devoted to God under the ban

²⁸ “Nevertheless, nothing that a person devotes unconditionally to the LORD from what he owns, whether it is a human being, an animal or a field that is his family property, shall be sold or be redeemed! Everything devoted by the ban is most holy to the LORD.

²⁹ “No human being who has been devoted to destruction by the ban shall be ransomed! He shall certainly be put to death!

The reservation of one tenth to God

³⁰ “One tenth of everything that comes from the land, whether from the grain of the land or from the fruit of the trees, belongs to the LORD. It is holy to the LORD. ³¹ If anyone nevertheless redeems any part of his tenth, he shall add a fifth to it! ³² The full tenth part of the herd or the flock, each tenth being one of all the animals that pass under the shepherd’s staff, shall be holy to the LORD! ³³ He shall not investigate whether it is good or bad or exchange it! However, if he does exchange it, that animal and its substitute shall be holy! There shall be no redemption!”

³⁴ These are the Commandments that the LORD gave to Moses on Mount Sinai for the Israelites.

NUMBERS

1

A census of the Israelite soldiers — compare Numbers 26, 2 Samuel 24:1-9, 1 Chronicles 21:1-6

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the Wilderness of Sinai. It was on the first day of the second month in the second year after the Israelites had left the land of Egypt. He said: ² “Take a census of the whole congregation of the Israelites according to their clans and their families! Count every man by name individually! ³ You and Aaron shall count by their fighting forces all the men in Israel twenty years old or more who can serve in the army! ⁴ One man from each tribe, each of whom is the head of his family, shall assist you! ⁵ These are the names of the men who shall assist you: from Reuben, Elizur, the son of Shedeur; ⁶ from Simeon, Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai; ⁷ from Judah, Nahshon, the son of Amminadab; ⁸ from Issachar, Nethanel, the son of Zuar; ⁹ from Zebulun, Eliab, the son of Helon; ¹⁰ from the sons of Joseph: from Ephraim, Elishama, the son of Ammihud and from Manasseh, Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur; ¹¹ from Benjamin, Abidan, the son of Gideon; ¹² from Dan, Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai; ¹³ from Asher, Pagiel, the son of Ocran; ¹⁴ from Gad, Eliasaph, the son of Deuel; ¹⁵ from Naphtali, Ahira, the son of Enan.”

¹⁶ These were the men who were chosen from the congregation, the leaders of the tribes of their fathers. They were the heads of the tribal subdivisions of Israel. ¹⁷ Moses and Aaron took these men, who had been designated by name. ¹⁸ They gathered the whole congregation on the first day of the second month. The people had themselves entered in a family-register according to their clans and their families. They counted individually the names of the men who were aged twenty years and more, ¹⁹ as the LORD had commanded Moses to do. So, he counted them in the Wilderness of Sinai.

²⁰ This is the family-record of the descendants of Reuben, the first-born son of Israel, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names. ²¹ The total for the tribe of Reuben was forty-six thousand, five hundred.

²² This is the family-record of the descendants of Simeon according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

²³ The total for the tribe of Simeon was fifty-nine thousand, three hundred.

²⁴ This is the family-record of the descendants of Gad, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

²⁵ The total for the tribe of Gad was forty-five thousand, six hundred and fifty.

²⁶ This is the family-record of the descendants of Judah, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

²⁷ The total for the tribe of Judah was seventy-four thousand, six hundred.

²⁸ This is the family-record of the descendants of Issachar, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

²⁹ The total for the tribe of Issachar was fifty-four thousand, four hundred.

³⁰ This is the family-record of the descendants of Zebulun, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names. ³¹ The total for the tribe of Zebulun was fifty-seven thousand, four hundred.

³² From the descendants of Joseph, this is the family-record of the descendants of Ephraim, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names. ³³ The total for the tribe of Ephraim was forty thousand, five hundred.

³⁴ This is the family-record of the descendants of Manasseh, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

³⁵ The total for the tribe of Manasseh was thirty-two thousand, two hundred.

³⁶ This is the family-record of the descendants of Benjamin, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

³⁷ The total for the tribe of Benjamin was thirty-five thousand, four hundred.

³⁸ This is the family-record of the descendants of Dan, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

³⁹ The total for the tribe of Dan was sixty-two thousand, seven hundred.

⁴⁰ This is the family-record of the descendants of Asher, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names.

⁴¹ The total for the tribe of Asher was forty-one thousand, five hundred.

⁴² This is the family-record of the descendants of Naphtali, according to their clans and their families. All the men aged twenty years and over who could serve in the army were counted individually by their names. ⁴³ The total for the tribe of Naphtali was fifty-

three thousand, four hundred.

⁴⁴ These are the men who were counted by Moses and Aaron and the twelve leaders of Israel, each one representing his family. ⁴⁵ All the Israelites who were aged twenty years and over and who could serve in the army of Israel were counted by their families. ⁴⁶ The total number was six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty.

The exemption of the Levites

⁴⁷ However, the Levites were not numbered along with the others by the tribe of their fathers. ⁴⁸ The LORD had told Moses: ⁴⁹ “You shall omit only the tribe of Levi from the count! You shall not take a census of them among the other Israelites. ⁵⁰ Instead, you personally shall appoint the Levites to be in charge of the Tabernacle of the Testimony, all its equipment and everything else that belongs to it! They shall carry the Tabernacle with all its equipment! They shall take care of it and camp around the Tabernacle! ⁵¹ When the Tabernacle must move, the Levites shall take it down, and, when it must be set up, the Levites shall erect it! Any outsider who comes near it shall be put to death! ⁵² The Israelites shall set up their tents in their own sections of the camp by their military divisions, each under his own standard! ⁵³ However, the Levites shall camp all around the Tabernacle of the Testimony, that God may not be angry with the congregation of the Israelites! The Levites shall stand guard over the Tabernacle of the Testimony!”

⁵⁴ The Israelites did that. They did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses.

2

The arrangement of the camp of the Israelites and the order in which they were to march

¹ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ² “The Israelites shall camp all around the Tent of Meeting and facing it, and each man shall be under his own standard with the banners of his family!

³ “The tribal division of the camp of Judah shall be the ones who camp, in their military divisions, on the eastern side, toward the rising sun! Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, shall be the leader of the descendants of Judah! ⁴ The total of his military division is seventy-four thousand, six hundred.

⁵ The tribe of Issachar shall be the ones who camp next to Judah! Nethanel, the son of Zuar, shall be the leader of the descendants of Issachar! ⁶ The total of his military division is fifty-four thousand, four hundred.

⁷ Next there shall be the tribe of Zebulun! Eliab, the son of Helon, shall be the leader of the descendants of Zebulun! ⁸ The total of his military division is fifty-seven thousand, four hundred.

⁹ The total number of men in their military divisions that are assigned to the camp of Judah is one hundred and eighty-six thousand, four hundred. They shall set out first on the march!

¹⁰ “The tribal division of the camp of Reuben in their military divisions shall be on the southern side! Elizur, the son of Shedeur, shall be the leader of the descendants of Reuben! ¹¹ The total of his military division is forty-six thousand, five hundred.

¹² The tribe of Simeon shall be the ones who camp next to Reuben! Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai, shall be the leader of the descendants of Simeon!

¹³ The total of his military division is fifty-nine thousand, three hundred.

¹⁴ Next there shall be the tribe of Gad! Eliasaph, the son of Reuel, shall be the leader of the descendants of Gad! ¹⁵ The total of his military division is forty-five thousand, six hundred and fifty. ¹⁶ The total number of men in their military divisions that are assigned to the camp of Reuben is one hundred and fifty-one thousand, four hundred and fifty. They shall be the second to set out!

¹⁷ Then the Tent of Meeting shall set out with the camp of the Levites in the middle of the other camps! They shall break camp in the same order as they pitch camp! Each shall be in his own place, one tribal division after another!

¹⁸ “The tribal division of the camp of Ephraim, in their military divisions, shall be on the western side! Elishama, the son of Ammihud, shall be the leader of the descendants of Ephraim! ¹⁹ The total of his military division is forty thousand, five hundred.

²⁰ The tribe of Manasseh shall be the ones who camp next to Ephraim! Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur, shall be the leader of the descendants of Manasseh! ²¹ The total of his military division is thirty-two thousand, two hundred.

²² Next there shall be the tribe of Benjamin! Abidan, the son of Gideoni, shall be the leader of the descendants of Benjamin! ²³ The total of his military division is thirty-five thousand, four hundred. ²⁴ The total number of men in their military divisions that are assigned to the camp of Ephraim is one hundred and eight thousand, one hundred. They shall be the third to set out!

²⁵ “The tribal division of the camp of Dan shall be the ones who camp, in their military divisions, on the northern side! Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai, shall be the leader of the descendants of Dan! ²⁶ The total of his military division is sixty-two thousand, seven hundred.

²⁷ The tribe of Asher shall be the ones who camp next to Dan! Pagiel, the son of Ocran, shall be the leader of the descendants of Asher! ²⁸ The total of his military division is forty-one thousand, five hundred.

²⁹ Next there shall be the tribe of Naphtali! Ahira, the son of Enan, shall be the leader of the descendants of Naphtali! ³⁰ The total of his military division is fifty-three thousand, four hundred.

³¹ The total number of men that are assigned to the camp of Dan is one hundred and fifty-seven thousand,

six hundred. They shall be the last to set out, one tribal division after another!”

³² “These were the Israelites as they were counted according to their families. The total of those who were counted in the camps, in their military divisions, was six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty. ³³ The Levites, however, were not counted along with the other Israelites, as the LORD had commanded Moses. ³⁴ The Israelites put this into practice. They pitched their camps in their tribal divisions exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses. They also broke camp in this manner, each with his clan and according to his family.

3

The census of the sons of Aaron — Leviticus 10:1-7

¹ The following is the family-record of Aaron and Moses at the time when the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai. ² These were the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab, the first-born and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ³ These were the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, who were installed to serve as priests. ⁴ However, Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD because they made an offering with unauthorised fire before the LORD in the Wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children. Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests during the lifetime of their father Aaron.

The duties assigned to the Levites

⁵ The LORD told Moses: ⁶ “Bring the tribe of Levi forward and appoint them as assistants to Aaron the priest! ⁷ They shall perform duties for him and for the whole congregation at the Tent of Meeting, by doing the work that needs to be done at the Tabernacle! ⁸ They shall take care of all the equipment of the Tent of Meeting and fulfil the obligations of the Israelites by doing the work that needs to be done at the Tabernacle! ⁹ You shall assign the Levites to Aaron and his sons! Out of the Israelites they are unconditionally given to Aaron. ¹⁰ You shall appoint Aaron and his sons to attend to the priestly work! Any unauthorised person who comes near shall be put to death!”

¹¹ The LORD also told Moses: ¹² “See! I have Myself taken Levi’s descendants from among the Israelites instead of the first-born male children of the rest of the Israelite women. So, the Levites shall belong to Me! ¹³ For every first-born is Mine. At the time when I struck down every first-born in the land of Egypt, I declared every first-born in Israel, both human being and animal, holy to Me. They shall belong to Me! I am the LORD.”

A census of the Levites — Numbers 1:47-54

¹⁴ The LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai: ¹⁵ “Count the descendants of Levi by their families and clans! You shall count every male one month old and more!”

¹⁶ So, Moses counted them, as the Word of the LORD had commanded him. ¹⁷ These were the names of the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath and Merari. ¹⁸ These

were the names of the sons of Gershon by their clans: Libni and Shimei. ¹⁹ The sons of Kohath by their clans were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. ²⁰ The sons of Merari by their clans were Mahli and Mushi. These were the clans of Levi by their families.

The duties of the clan of Gershon

²¹ From Gershon came the clans of Libni and of Shimei. These were the Gershonite clans. ²² The total of all the males who were counted from one month old and over was seven thousand, five hundred. ²³ The Gershonite clans used to camp behind the Tabernacle, on the western side. ²⁴ Eliasaph, the son of Lael, was the leader of the family of the Gershonites. ²⁵ At the Tent of Meeting the descendants of Gershon were responsible for the care of the Tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the curtain at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, ²⁶ the curtains of the courtyard, the curtain at the entrance of the courtyard, which surrounded the Tabernacle and the altar, its ropes and all the work connected with them.

The duties of the clan of Kohath

²⁷ From Kohath came the clans of Amram, of Izhar, of Hebron and of Uzziel. These were the Kohathite clans. ²⁸ The number of all the males from one month old and more was eight thousand, six hundred. They were responsible for the care of the Holy Place. ²⁹ The clans of the descendants of Kohath used to camp on the southern side of the Tabernacle. ³⁰ Elizaphan, the son of Uzziel, was the leader of the family of the Kohathite clans. ³¹ They were responsible for the care of the Ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the utensils of the sanctuary that were used in ministering, the curtain and all the work connected with them. ³² Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, supervised the leaders of the Levites. He supervised those who were responsible for the care of the Holy Place.

The duties of the clan of Merari

³³ From Merari came the clans of Mahli and of Mushi. These were Merarite clans. ³⁴ The number of all the males who were counted from one month old and more was six thousand, two hundred. ³⁵ Zurriel, the son of Abihail, was the leader of the family of the Merarite clans. They used to camp on the northern side of the Tabernacle. ³⁶ The descendants of Merari were appointed to take care of the planks of the Tabernacle, its crosspieces, posts, pedestals and all its utensils and all the work connected with them, ³⁷ as well as the posts of the surrounding courtyard with their pedestals, tent pegs and ropes.

³⁸ Moses and Aaron and Aaron’s sons were the ones who used to camp in front of the Tabernacle on the eastern side, in front of the Tent of Meeting, toward the sunrise. They were responsible for the care of the Holy Place, to perform the duties that the Israelites needed. However, anyone else who came near had to be put to death. ³⁹ The total number of the Levites whom Moses and Aaron counted according to their clans, as the LORD had commanded them, including

every male who was one month old and more, was twenty-two thousand.

The substitution of the Levites for all the first-born Israelites and the redemption of those who exceeded the number

⁴⁰ The LORD told Moses: “Count all the first-born Israelite males who are one month old and more and determine the number of their names! ⁴¹ You shall take the Levites to be Mine — I am the LORD — as substitutes for all the first-born among the Israelites, and you shall take the livestock of the Levites as substitutes for all the first-born of the livestock of the Israelites!”

⁴² So, Moses counted all the first-born among the Israelites, as the LORD had commanded him. ⁴³ When the names were counted, all the first-born males who were one month old and more totalled twenty-two thousand, two hundred and seventy-three.

⁴⁴ The LORD also told Moses, ⁴⁵ “You shall take the Levites as substitutes for all the first-born among the Israelites and take the livestock of the Levites as substitutes for their animals! The Levites shall belong to Me! I am the LORD. ⁴⁶ As a ransom for the two hundred and seventy-three first-born of the Israelites who exceed the total of the male Levites, ⁴⁷ you shall collect for each person sixty grams of silver as it is weighed in the Holy Place! You shall reckon twenty gerahs to one shekel! ⁴⁸ You shall give to Aaron and his sons the money paid to redeem the number by which the first-born people exceed the Levites!”

⁴⁹ So, Moses took the money to redeem the number in excess of those whom the Levites redeemed. ⁵⁰ He collected from the first-born of the Israelites sixteen kilograms and three hundred and eighty grams of silver according to the weight used in the Holy Place. ⁵¹ Then Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the Word of the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

4

The duties of the families of the Levites descended from Kohath

¹ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ² “Among the descendants of Levi, take a census of the descendants of Kohath by their clans and their families! ³ Count all the men between thirty and fifty years of age who come on duty to work at the Tent of Meeting! ⁴ In the Tent of Meeting the work of the descendants of Kohath shall be the care of the most holy things! ⁵ When the camp is going to move, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the curtain that serves as a screen and shall cover the Ark of the Testimony with it! ⁶ They shall put over the Ark a covering of dolphin-skin, shall spread over the top of that a cloth made entirely of purple wool and insert the poles of the Ark! ⁷ They shall spread a cloth of purple wool over the table of the Presence and put on it the dishes, the basins, the offering-bowls and the jars for the drink offerings! The bread that is regularly laid out shall also remain on it! ⁸ Then they shall spread over them a

cloth that has been dyed red, shall cover this with a wrapper of dolphin skins and insert the poles of the table! ⁹ Then they shall take a cloth of purple wool and cover the lampstand that provides the light, its lamps, its snuffers, its fire-pans and all the olive-oil containers with which the lamp is supplied! ¹⁰ They shall put the lampstand and all its accessories into a covering of dolphin skins and shall put it on the carrying frame! ¹¹ They shall spread a cloth of purple wool over the golden altar, cover that with a wrapper of dolphin skins and insert the poles of the altar! ¹² They shall take all the utensils that are used for the ministering that is done in the Holy Place, put them in a cloth of purple wool, cover them with a wrapper of dolphin skins and put them on the carrying frame! ¹³ They shall clear away the fatty ashes from the bronze altar and spread a maroon woollen cloth over it! ¹⁴ Then they shall place on the altar all its utensils, with which ministry is performed on it, the fire-pans, the meat-forks, the fire-shovels, the bowls used for pouring and all the utensils of the altar! They shall spread over it a covering of dolphin skins and insert the poles of the altar! ¹⁵ After Aaron and his sons have finished covering the Holy Place and all the articles of the Holy Place and the camp starts moving, then the descendants of Kohath shall come to carry them! However, they shall not touch anything holy or they will die! These are the things in the Tent of Meeting that are carried by the descendants of Kohath.

¹⁶ “Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, shall be in charge of the olive-oil for the light, the fragrant perfumes, the regular grain-offering and the anointing oil! He shall be in charge of the whole Tabernacle and everything in it, the Holy Place and its equipment!”

¹⁷ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ¹⁸ “Do not cut off the tribal clans of the Kohathites from the Levites! ¹⁹ Do this for them, that they may live and not die when they come near the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and assign to each of them the work that he shall do and what he shall carry! ²⁰ However, the Kohathites shall not go in to look at the holy things even for a moment or they will die!”

The duties of the families of the Levites descended from Gershon

²¹ The LORD told Moses: ²² “Take a census also of the descendants of Gershon by their families and their clans! ²³ You shall count all the men from thirty to fifty years of age who come in to perform the service, to carry out the work at the Tent of Meeting! ²⁴ This is the service of the Gershonite clans, the work that they shall do and the loads that they shall carry. ²⁵ They shall carry the curtain material of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, its covering, its outer covering made of dolphin skins and the curtain for the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, ²⁶ the curtains of the courtyard and the curtain for the entrance at the gate of the courtyard, which surround the Tabernacle and the altar, the ropes for them and all the equipment

used in their upkeep! The Gershonites shall attend to everything that needs to be done with these things! ²⁷ Aaron and his sons shall supervise all the work of the descendants of Gershon, everything that they must carry and everything that they must do! You shall assign to them the carrying of all the loads for which they are responsible! ²⁸ This shall be the work of the Gershonite clans at the Tent of Meeting! Ithamar, the son of Aaron, the priest, shall supervise their duties!

The duties of the families of the Levites descended from Merari

²⁹ “You shall count the descendants of Merari by their clans and their families! ³⁰ You shall count all the men from thirty to fifty years of age who enter the service, to carry out the work at the Tent of Meeting! ³¹ In all their work for the Tent of Meeting their duty shall be to carry the following: the planks of the Tabernacle, its crossbars, its posts, its pedestals, ³² the posts of the surrounding courtyard, their pedestals, their tent-pegs, their ropes, with all their equipment and all their accessories! You shall assign to each man by name the articles that he is required to carry! ³³ This is the service of the Merarite clans in all the work they have to do in the Tent of Meeting. It shall be under the supervision of Ithamar, the son of Aaron, the priest!”

The register of the families descended from Kohath

³⁴ Moses, Aaron and the leaders of the congregation counted the descendants of Kohath by their clans and their families, ³⁵ all the men from thirty to fifty years of age who could come on duty to work in the Tent of Meeting. ³⁶ Those who were counted according to their clans totalled two thousand, seven hundred and fifty. ³⁷ This was the total of all those in the Kohathite clans who were serving in the Tent of Meeting. Moses and Aaron counted them as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

The register of the families descended from Gershon

³⁸ The descendants of Gershon were counted according to their clans and their families, ³⁹ all the men from thirty to fifty years of age who entered the service to work in the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁰ Those who were counted according to their clans and their families totalled two thousand, six hundred and thirty. ⁴¹ This was the total of all those in the clans of the descendants of Gershon who were serving in the Tent of Meeting. Moses and Aaron counted them, as the LORD had commanded.

The register of the families descended from Merari

⁴² The descendants of Merari were counted according to their clans and their families, ⁴³ all the men from thirty to fifty years of age who could come on duty to work in the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁴ Those who were counted according to their clans totalled three thousand, two hundred. ⁴⁵ This was the total of those in the clans of the descendants of Merari. Moses and Aaron counted them as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

⁴⁶ All the Levites whom Moses, Aaron and the leaders

of Israel counted according to their clans and their families, ⁴⁷ all the men from thirty to fifty years of age who came to do the work of serving and carrying the Tent of Meeting, totalled eight thousand, five hundred and eighty. ⁴⁹ As the LORD had commanded through Moses, Moses assigned each man to his task of serving or carrying his load. So, Moses counted them, as the LORD had commanded him.

5

The instruction to remove unclean persons outside the camp — compare Leviticus 15:1-33

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Command the Israelites to put outside the camp anyone who has an infectious skin-disease, everyone who has a discharge and everyone who has become unclean through contact with a dead body! ³ You shall put them outside the camp, both male and female, that they may not defile their camps, among which I am dwelling!”

⁴ The Israelites did this and put them outside the camp. The Israelites did just as the LORD had told Moses.

Confession and restitution, to right wrongs — Leviticus 6:1-7

⁵ The LORD told Moses: ⁶ Tell the Israelites: ‘When any man or woman does any of the sins that people commit and so is unfaithful to the LORD, so that that person has become guilty, ⁷ he shall confess the sin that he has committed and make full restitution for his wrong! He shall also add one fifth to the restitution and give it to the person whom he has wronged!

The allocation of contributions to the priests

⁸ “‘However, if the man has no close relative to whom restitution for the wrong can be made, the amount for the wrong that is being repaid shall belong to the LORD! It shall be given to the priest, in addition to the ram of the atonement, with which the priest makes atonement for him! ⁹ Any contribution among all the holy things of the Israelites, which they bring to the priest, shall belong to him! ¹⁰ Each person shall keep his holy donations! What any person gives to the priest shall belong to the priest!’”

Instruction about a woman who is suspected of adultery

¹¹ The LORD told Moses: ¹² “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When any man’s wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, ¹³ and another man has intercourse with her and this is hidden from her husband and her impurity is not detected and there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in adultery, ¹⁴ if then feelings of jealousy come over her husband and he suspects his wife when she has become unclean or if feelings of jealousy come over him and he suspects his wife although she has not become unclean, ¹⁵ the man shall bring his wife to the priest! He shall also bring four litres of barley flour, as the gift required for her! He shall not pour olive-oil on it or put frankincense on it! For it is a grain-offering for jealousy, a grain-offering of confession of sin, which makes known some wrong. ¹⁶ The priest shall bring her forward and have her stand before the LORD!

¹⁷ Then the priest shall take holy water in a clay jar and the priest shall take some dust that is on the floor of the Tabernacle and put it in the water! ¹⁸ When the priest makes the woman stand before the LORD, he shall untie the hair of her head and place in her hands the grain-offering for confession of sin, which is the grain-offering of jealousy! Meanwhile, the priest shall hold in his hand the bitter water, which brings a curse!

¹⁹ The priest shall make the woman take an oath, saying to her: "If no other man has had intercourse with you and you have not gone astray and become unclean while you have been married to your husband, be exempt from this bitter water, which brings a curse!

²⁰ However, if you have gone astray while you have been married to your husband, have become unclean and some man other than your husband has had intercourse with you" — ²¹ here the priest shall have the woman swear and bind herself with the curse! The priest shall tell the woman: "May the LORD cause an imprecatory oath to be brought down against you among your people by making your thigh waste away and your abdomen swell up! ²² May this water, which brings a curse, go into your bowels to make your abdomen swell and make your thigh waste away!" Then the woman shall say, "Amen. Amen!"

²³ "Then the priest shall write these curses on a scroll and wash them off into the bitter water! ²⁴ Then he shall make the woman drink the bitter water, which brings a curse! The water, which brings a curse, will enter her and cause bitter pain. ²⁵ The priest shall take from the woman's hand the grain-offering of jealousy, move the grain-offering back and forth before the LORD and take it to the altar! ²⁶ The priest shall take a handful of the grain-offering as a memorial portion of it and burn it on the altar! After that, he shall make the woman drink the water! ²⁷ When he has made her drink the water, if she has become unclean by being unfaithful to her husband, the water that brings a curse will enter her and cause bitter pain. Her abdomen will swell, her thigh will waste away and the woman will be accursed among her people. ²⁸ However, if the woman has not defiled herself but is pure, she will be exempt from the oath and be able to become pregnant."

²⁹ This is the Law in cases of jealousy, when a woman goes astray while she is married to her husband and defiles herself ³⁰ or when feelings of jealousy come over a man because he suspects his wife. He shall make the woman stand in the presence of the LORD, and the priest shall apply all this Law to her! ³¹ The man shall be free from guilt, but the woman shall bear her own guilt!

6

Instructions about the vow to live as a Nazirite

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: 'When a man or a woman makes an extraordinary vow, a vow to be separate to the LORD

as a Nazirite, ³ **he shall abstain from wine** and other **intoxicating drink!** He shall not drink any vinegar made from wine or from any other intoxicating drink! He shall not drink any kind of grape juice! He shall not eat any fresh grapes or raisins! ⁴ All the time he is consecrated as a Nazirite, he shall not eat anything made from the grapevine, not even unripe grapes or seeds and skins! ⁵ All the time he is under his consecration-vow, no razor shall be used on his head! He shall be holy and let the hair on his head grow long and loose, until the period for which he has accepted the obligations of a Nazirite to the LORD is over! ⁶ Throughout the period for which he accepts the obligations of a Nazirite to the LORD he shall not go near a dead body! ⁷ He shall not make himself ceremonially unclean for his father, mother, brother or sister when they die, because his consecration to God is on his head! ⁸ Throughout the period of his consecration he shall be holy to the LORD!

⁹ "When somebody near him dies very suddenly and makes his consecrated head unclean, he shall **shave his head** on the day when he is purified! He shall shave it on the seventh day! ¹⁰ On the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting!

¹¹ The priest shall prepare the one as a sin-offering and the other as a burnt offering and shall make atonement for him because he has sinned in connection with the dead body! He shall consecrate his head on the same day! ¹² He shall accept the obligations of a Nazirite to the LORD for the period for which he was consecrated! He shall also bring a one-year-old male lamb as a guilt-offering! The first period shall lapse, because his consecration has become unclean!

¹³ "This also is the Law for the Nazirite when the **period** of his consecration **is over**: He shall proceed to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, ¹⁴ and offer, as his gift to the LORD, a one-year-old male lamb without blemish as a burnt offering, a one-year-old female lamb without blemish as a sin-offering and one ram without blemish as a peace-offering, ¹⁵ a basket of bread without yeast, ring-shaped loaves of fine wheat flour, mixed with olive-oil, wafers without yeast smeared with olive-oil, together with their grain-offering and their drink offerings! ¹⁶ The priest shall present these before the LORD and prepare his sin-offering and his burnt offering! ¹⁷ He shall prepare the ram as a peace-offering to the LORD together with the basket of bread without yeast! The priest shall also prepare its grain-offering and its drink offering!

¹⁸ Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting! He shall take the hair of his head, which he had consecrated, and put it on the fire that is under the peace-offering! ¹⁹ After the Nazirite **has shaved the hair** from his consecrated head, the priest shall take a boiled shoulder of the ram, one ring-shaped loaf of bread without

yeast from the basket and one wafer without yeast and put them in the hands of the Nazirite! ²⁰ The priest shall move them back and forth as a wave offering before the LORD! They shall be holy and belong to the priest, together with the brisket of the wave offering and the hind leg that has been contributed! After that, the Nazirite may drink wine.”

²¹ This is the Law for the Nazirite. However, if he vows an offering to the LORD in addition to his Nazirite vow, as something else that he can afford, he shall do it in addition to the Law for the Nazirite in exact accordance with the vow that he takes!

The blessing of the Israelites by Aaron and his sons

²² The LORD told Moses, ²³ “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is how you shall bless the people of Israel. Say to them: ²⁴ “The LORD bless you and keep you! ²⁵ The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you! ²⁶ The LORD look on you with favour and give you peace!”

²⁷ ““In this way they will put My name on the people of Israel and I shall bless them.””

7

Offerings from the leaders of each tribe for the dedication of the Tent of Meeting and the altar

¹ On the day when Moses had finished setting up the Tabernacle and had anointed and consecrated it and all its equipment, the altar and all its utensils, which he had also anointed and consecrated, ² the leaders of Israel, the heads of their families, who had been the tribal leaders in charge of the census, came forward.

³ They brought, as their gifts before the LORD, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for each two leaders and an ox for each one of them. They presented them in front of the Tabernacle.

⁴ The LORD told Moses: ⁵ “Take these from them and let them be used for doing the work at the Tent of Meeting! You shall give them to the Levites, as each man needs them for his work!”

⁶ Moses took the wagons and the oxen and gave them to the Levites. ⁷ He gave two wagons and four oxen to the descendants of Gershon for the work that they had to do. ⁸ He gave four wagons and eight oxen to the descendants of Merari for the work they had to do under the supervision of Ithamar, the son of Aaron, the priest. ⁹ However, he did not give any to the descendants of Kohath, because their work involved responsibility for the holy things, which they used to carry on their shoulders.

¹⁰ When the altar was anointed, the leaders also presented gifts to dedicate it. The leaders presented their gift in front of the altar. ¹¹ The LORD told Moses, “A different leader on each day shall present his gift to dedicate the altar.”

¹² The one who presented his gift on the first day was Nahshon, the son of Amminadab from the tribe of Judah. ¹³ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram and five hundred and sixty grams and one silver

bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, for a grain-offering, ¹⁴ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ¹⁵ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ¹⁶ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ¹⁷ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Nahshon, the son of Amminadab.

¹⁸ On the second day Nethanel, the son of Zuar, the leader of Issachar, presented his gift. ¹⁹ He presented, as his gift, one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams and one silver sprinkling-basin weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, for a grain-offering, ²⁰ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ²¹ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ²² one male goat, for a sin-offering, ²³ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Nethanel, the son of Zuar.

²⁴ On the third day, the leader of the descendants of Zebulun, Eliab, the son of Helon, presented his gift.

²⁵ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams, one silver bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, for a grain-offering, ²⁶ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ²⁷ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ²⁸ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ²⁹ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Eliab, the son of Helon.

³⁰ On the fourth day, the leader of the descendants of Reuben, Elizur, the son of Shedeur, presented his gift.

³¹ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams, one silver bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, for a grain-offering, ³² one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ³³ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ³⁴ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ³⁵ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Elizur, the son of Shedeur.

³⁶ On the fifth day the leader of the descendants of

Numbers

Simeon, Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai, presented his gift. ³⁷ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams, one silver bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, for a grain-offering, ³⁸ one gold basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ³⁹ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁴⁰ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁴¹ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai.

⁴² On the sixth day the leader of the descendants of Gad, Eliasaph, the son of Deuel, presented his gift.

⁴³ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams, one silver bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, for a grain-offering, ⁴⁴ one gold basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ⁴⁵ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁴⁶ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁴⁷ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Eliasaph, the son of Deuel.

⁴⁸ On the seventh day the leader of the descendants of Ephraim, Elishama, the son of Ammihud, presented his gift. ⁴⁹ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams, one silver bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, for a grain-offering, ⁵⁰ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ⁵¹ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁵² one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁵³ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Elishama, the son of Ammihud.

⁵⁴ On the eighth day the leader of the descendants of Manasseh, Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur, presented his gift. ⁵⁵ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams and one silver bowl used for pouring, weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil for a grain-offering, ⁵⁶ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ⁵⁷ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁵⁸ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁵⁹ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats

and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur.

⁶⁰ On the ninth day the leader of the descendants of Benjamin, Abidan, the son of Gideoni, presented his gift. ⁶¹ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams and one silver bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil for a grain-offering, ⁶² one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ⁶³ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁶⁴ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁶⁵ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Abidan, the son of Gideoni.

⁶⁶ On the tenth day the leader of the descendants of Dan, Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai, brought his gift. ⁶⁷ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams and one silver bowl used for pouring weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil for a grain-offering, ⁶⁸ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ⁶⁹ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁷⁰ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁷¹ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai.

⁷² On the eleventh day the leader of the descendants of Asher, Pagiel, the son of Ocran, presented his gift.

⁷³ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams and one silver bowl used for pouring, weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil for a grain-offering, ⁷⁴ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ⁷⁵ one young bull from the herd, one ram and one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁷⁶ one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁷⁷ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Pagiel, the son of Ocran.

⁷⁸ On the twelfth day the leader of the descendants of Naphtali, Ahira, the son of Enan, presented his gift.

⁷⁹ His gift was one silver dish weighing one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams and one silver bowl used for pouring, weighing eight hundred and forty grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place, both of which were filled with fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil for a grain-offering, ⁸⁰ one golden basin weighing one hundred and twenty grams, filled with incense, ⁸¹ one young bull from the herd, one ram and

one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering, ⁸² one male goat, for a sin-offering, ⁸³ and, for a peace-offering, two bulls, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs a year old. This was the gift of Ahira, the son of Enan.

⁸⁴ This was the gift of the leaders of Israel to dedicate the altar at the time when it was anointed: twelve silver dishes, twelve silver sprinkling-basins and twelve golden basins. ⁸⁵ Each silver dish weighed one kilogram, five hundred and sixty grams and each bowl used for pouring weighed eight hundred and forty grams. The total weight of the silver vessels was twenty-eight kilograms and eight hundred grams, according to the weight used in the Holy Place. ⁸⁶ Each of the twelve golden basins filled with incense weighed one hundred and twenty grams according to the weight used in the Holy Place. The total weight of the golden basins was one kilogram, four hundred and forty grams. ⁸⁷ The total number of the animals for burnt offerings was twelve young bulls from the herd, twelve rams, twelve male lambs a year old, with their grain-offerings and twelve male goats for sin-offerings. ⁸⁸ The total number of the animals for peace-offerings was twenty-four bulls, sixty rams, sixty male goats and sixty male lambs a year old. This was the gift to dedicate the altar after it was anointed.

⁸⁹ When Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with God, he heard the Voice speaking to him from above the propitiatory cover that was on the Ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim. Then God spoke to him.

8

The arrangement of the seven lamps in the Tent of Meeting — Exodus 25:31-40

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Speak to Aaron and tell him: ‘When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps shall throw their light towards the front of the lampstand!’”

³ Aaron did that. He set up the lamps in such a way that they faced toward the front of the lampstand, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁴ This is how the lampstand was made: It was made of hammered gold. It was hammered work from its foot to its flower-shaped ornaments. Moses made the lampstand according to the pattern that the LORD had shown him.

The preparation of the Levites to serve at the Tent of Meeting

⁵ The LORD told Moses: ⁶ “Take the Levites from among the other Israelites and make them ceremonially clean! ⁷ You shall do this to make them clean: Sprinkle on them the water that purifies from sin, and they shall shave their whole bodies, wash their clothes and so purify themselves! ⁸ They shall take from the herd a young bull with its grain-offering of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, and you shall take a second young bull from the herd for a sin-offering! ⁹ Then you shall bring the Levites forward to the front of the

Tent of Meeting and gather together the whole congregation of the Israelites! ¹⁰ You shall present the Levites before the LORD, and the Israelites shall lay their hands on the Levites! ¹¹ Aaron shall present the Levites before the LORD as a wave offering from the Israelites that they may become men who perform the service of the LORD! ¹² Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls from the herd and prepare the one as a sin-offering and the other as a burnt offering to the LORD to make atonement for the Levites! ¹³ You shall then make the Levites stand before Aaron and his sons and present them as a wave offering to the LORD! ¹⁴ In this way you shall separate the Levites from the other Israelites, that the Levites may be Mine! ¹⁵ After that, the Levites shall go in to serve at the Tent of Meeting! In this way you shall purify them and present them as a wave offering! ¹⁶ For they have been completely given to Me from among the rest of the Israelites. I have taken them to be My own instead of all the first-born, the first male offspring from all the Israelite women. ¹⁷ For every first-born male among the Israelites, whether human being or animal, is Mine. On the day when I struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I consecrated them to be Mine. ¹⁸ I have taken the Levites instead of all the first-born among the Israelites. ¹⁹ I have completely given the Levites from among the Israelites to belong to Aaron and his sons, to perform the service of the Israelites in the Tent of Meeting and to make atonement for the Israelites, that there may be no plague among the Israelites when the Israelites approach the Holy Place.”

²⁰ Moses, Aaron and the whole congregation of Israel did to the Levites exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites. This is what the Israelites did to them. ²¹ The Levites purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes. Then Aaron presented them as a wave offering before the LORD and Aaron made atonement for them to make them ceremonially clean. ²² After that, the Levites went in to perform their service at the Tent of Meeting under the supervision of Aaron and his sons. They did to the Levites just as the LORD had commanded Moses about them.

Instructions about retirement for the Levites

²³ The LORD told Moses: ²⁴ “This shall apply to the Levites: Everyone twenty-five years old and more shall come in to do duty in the work at the Tent of Meeting! ²⁵ However, when he is fifty years old, he shall retire from serving in this work and shall not serve any longer! ²⁶ He may assist the other Levites in performing their duties at the Tent of Meeting but shall not perform any service! This is how you shall deal with the Levites regarding their responsibilities!”

9

The observance at Mount Sinai of the second Passover — compare Exodus 12:1-20

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt. He said, ² “The Israelites shall celebrate the Passover at the time appointed for it! ³ You shall celebrate it at the time appointed for it, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month! You shall celebrate it according to all the Statutes for it and all the Decisions about it!”

⁴ So, Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, ⁵ and they celebrated the Passover in the Wilderness of Sinai at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Israelites did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁶ However, when there were some men who had become unclean by touching the dead body of a human being, so that they could not celebrate the Passover on that day, they came before Moses and Aaron that day.

⁷ These men told him: “We are ceremonially unclean because we have touched a human corpse. However, why should we be disadvantaged, that we may not offer the gift of the LORD at the appointed time together with the rest of the Israelites?”

⁸ Moses answered them, “Wait here, until I find out what the LORD will command about you!”

⁹ The LORD told Moses: ¹⁰ “Tell the Israelites, ‘When anyone of you or your descendants becomes unclean by touching a dead body or is far away on a journey, he shall celebrate the Passover of the LORD!

¹¹ Such people shall celebrate it at twilight on the fourteenth day of the second month! They shall eat it together with bread without yeast and with bitter herbs! ¹² **They shall not leave any of it until morning and shall not break any bone in it!** They shall celebrate the Passover according to all the Statutes for it!

¹³ However, if a man is ceremonially clean and not on a journey and yet fails to celebrate the Passover, that person shall be cut off from his people! For he has not offered his gift to the LORD at the time appointed for it. That man shall bear the consequences of his sin!

¹⁴ When a foreigner is living among you and celebrates the Passover of the LORD, he shall celebrate it according to the Statute for the Passover and according to the specifications for it! You shall apply the same Statute for the foreigner as for the Israelite born in the land!”

God’s leading of the Israelites in the wilderness by cloud and fire — Exodus 13:21-22, Exodus 40:34-38

¹⁵ On the day when the Tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the Tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony. From evening until morning the cloud used to look like fire above the Tabernacle. ¹⁶ It continued to be like that. The cloud used to cover it and at night it looked like fire. ¹⁷ Whenever the cloud rose from above the tent the Israelites used to set out, and wherever it settled the Israelites used to pitch camp.

¹⁸ When the LORD gave His Command, the Israelites used to set out, and when the LORD gave His Command they used to pitch camp. They used to remain in

camp for while the cloud stayed over the Tabernacle.

¹⁹ When the cloud remained over the Tabernacle for a long time, the Israelites observed the Commandment of the LORD and did not break camp. ²⁰ Sometimes, when the cloud used to stay over the Tabernacle for only a few days, they used to remain in the camp, at the Direction of the LORD, and, when the LORD directed them, they used to break camp. ²¹ Sometimes the cloud stayed from evening until morning. When the cloud rose in the morning, they used to break camp. Whether it was by day or by night, whenever the cloud rose they used to break camp. ²² Whether the cloud remained over the Tabernacle for two days or a month or a longer time, the Israelites used to stay in camp and did not set out, but when it rose, they used to break camp. ²³ They used to camp at the Direction of the LORD and set out at the Direction of the LORD. They observed what the LORD commanded them to do, according to the Direction that the LORD gave through Moses.

10

The provision for two silver trumpets to give signals

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Make yourself two trumpets! You shall make them by hammering them out of silver, that you may use them to call the congregation together and to tell the camps when to set out! ³ When both of them are blown, the whole congregation shall gather around you at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting! ⁴ If only a single trumpet is blown, the leaders, the heads of the tribes of Israel, shall gather before you! ⁵ When an alarm is blown, the camps that are situated on the eastern side shall set out! ⁶ When you blow a second alarm, the camps that are situated on the southern side shall set out! The blowing of an alarm shall signal them to set out! ⁷ However, when you call the assembly together, you shall give a trumpet blast without sounding an alarm! ⁸ The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets! The trumpets shall be a permanent Statute for you throughout your coming generations! ⁹ When you go into battle in your own country against an enemy who is oppressing you, you shall blow the alarm on the trumpets! Then you will be remembered before the LORD, your God and be saved from your enemies. ¹⁰ In addition, on the days when you are rejoicing, on your appointed festivals and on your New Moon festivals, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and your peace-offerings! The blowing of trumpets shall be a memorial before your God! I am the LORD, your God.”

The departure of the Israelites from Mount Sinai

¹¹ On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud rose from above the Tabernacle of the Testimony. ¹² So, the Israelites set out on their stages from the Wilderness of Sinai, until the cloud settled down in the Wilderness of Paran. ¹³ They broke camp, this first time, according to the Command

of the LORD through Moses. ¹⁴ The tribal division of the camp of Judah set out first, in their military companies. Nahshon, the son of Amminadab, was in command of its military force. ¹⁵ Nethanel, the son of Zuar, was in command of the military division of the tribe of Issachar. ¹⁶ Eliab, the son of Helon, was in command of the division of the tribe of Zebulun. ¹⁷ The Tabernacle was then taken down and the descendants of Gershon and of Merari set out, carrying the Tabernacle. ¹⁸ Then the tribal division of the camp of Reuben set out in their military divisions. Elizur, the son of Shedeur, was in command of its force. ¹⁹ Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai, was in command of the military division of the tribe of Simeon. ²⁰ Eliasaph, the son of Deuel, was in charge of the military division of the tribe of Gad. ²¹ Then the descendants of Kohath set out, carrying the holy things. They set up the Tabernacle before the rest arrived. ²² Then the tribal division of the camp of Ephraim set out in their military divisions. Elishama, the son of Ammihud, was in charge of its force. ²³ Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur, was in charge of the military division of the tribe of Manasseh. ²⁴ Abidan, the son of Gideon, was in charge of the military division of the tribe of Benjamin. ²⁵ Then the tribal division of the camp of Dan used to form the rear-guard for all the camps in their military divisions. Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai, was in charge of its force. ²⁶ Pagiël, the son of Ocran, was in charge of the military division of the tribe of Asher. ²⁷ Ahira, the son of Enan, was in charge of the military division of the tribe of Naphtali. ²⁸ This was the order of departure when the Israelites set out in their military divisions when they broke camp.

²⁹ Moses told Hobab, the son of his father-in-law Reuel, the Midianite: "We are setting out for the place about which the LORD promised, 'I shall give it to you.' Come along with us! We shall treat you well. For the LORD has promised good things to Israel."

³⁰ However, Hobab answered him, "I shall not go. Rather, I shall go to my own land and to my relatives."

³¹ Moses said: "Please do not leave us! For, because you know the places in the wilderness where we can camp, you should be our guide! ³² If you come with us, we shall treat you well with the same good things with which the LORD treats us well."

³³ So, they set out from the mountain of the LORD and travelled for three days. The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD went ahead of them during that journey of three days, to search for a place for them to rest.

³⁴ The cloud of the LORD was above them during the day when they set out from the camp.

³⁵ When the Ark set out, Moses used to say: "Rise up, O LORD! May Your enemies be scattered, and may those who hate You flee before You!" ³⁶ When it came to rest, he used to say: "Return, O LORD, to the

large numbers of the clans of Israel!"

11

The people's craving for meat to eat

¹ When the people complained about their misfortunes, the LORD heard it and was displeased. The anger of the LORD flared out, and fire from the LORD blazed up among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp. ² When the people cried out to Moses, Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire died down. ³ That place was named "Taberah,"^{*67} because the fire of the LORD had been burning among them.

⁴ The non-Israelite rabble among them began to **have a strong craving**, and the Israelites wept again and said: "If only we had meat to eat!" ⁵ We remember the fish that we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the watermelons, the leeks, the onions and the garlic. ⁶ Now, however, our appetites are shrivelled. There is nothing but this manna to look at!"

⁷ The manna was like coriander seed and looked like a gum resin. ⁸ The people used to go around and gather it, grind it in hand-mills or crush it in mortars, boil it in cooking-pots and make bread-cakes with it. It tasted like cakes baked with olive-oil. ⁹ When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna fell with it.

¹⁰ Moses heard the people weeping in their family groups, everyone at the door of his tent. The LORD became exceedingly angry, and Moses was upset.

¹¹ Moses asked the LORD: "Why have You brought trouble on Your servant and why are You not kindly disposed towards me? You are placing the burden of all these people on me! ¹² Have I fathered all these people? Have I given birth to them, that You should tell me: 'Carry them in your arms, like a nurse carrying a baby, to the land that You have promised by an oath to their fathers'?" ¹³ Where can I get meat to give to all these people? For they are weeping beside me and saying, 'Give us meat to eat!' ¹⁴ I alone cannot carry all these people. For they are too heavy for me. ¹⁵ If You are going to treat me like this, and, if You are kindly disposed towards me, please just kill me outright and let me not look at my misery!"

The appointment of seventy elders to help Moses

¹⁶ The LORD answered Moses: "Gather together for Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you know to be elders of the people and officers over them! Bring them to the Tent of Meeting, that they may stand there with you! ¹⁷ I shall come down and speak with you there. I shall take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will carry the burden of the people with you, that you may not carry it alone. ¹⁸ You shall also tell the people: 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow! You will eat meat. For you have been weeping in the hearing of the LORD and asking: "Who will give us meat to eat? For we were

⁶⁷ Taberah means, "burning."

better off in Egypt.” The LORD will give you meat to eat. ¹⁹ You will not eat it for one day or for two days or for five days or for ten days or for twenty days.

²⁰ Rather, you will eat it for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and you become sick of it, because you have been rejecting the LORD, who is among you, and have been weeping before Him, asking: “Why did we ever come out of Egypt?””

²¹ Moses said: “The people who are with me number six hundred thousand men on foot, and yet You have said, ‘I shall give them meat to eat for a whole month!’ ²² Could flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, would they be enough for them? Or could all the fish in the sea be caught for them, and would they be enough for them?”

²³ However, the LORD asked Moses: “Is the arm of the LORD too short? Now you will see whether what I have said will come true for you or not.”

The descent of the Spirit on seventy elders

²⁴ Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. He also gathered seventy men from the elders of the people and made them stand around the tent. ²⁵ Then the LORD came down in a cloud and spoke to him and took some of the Spirit who was on Moses and put Him on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied but did not continue to do it. ²⁶ Two men, the one named Eldad and the other named Medad, had remained in the camp. The Spirit also rested on them. They had been among those who had been listed but had not gone out to the tent. However, they prophesied in the camp.

²⁷ Then a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp!”

²⁸ Joshua, the son of Nun, who had been Moses’ assistant since he had been a young man, spoke up and said, “My master, Moses, stop them!”

²⁹ Moses asked him: “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the people of the LORD were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit on them!”

³⁰ Then Moses and the elders of Israel went back to the camp.

The sending of quails around the camp

³¹ Then a wind from the LORD sprang up and drove quails in from the sea. It threw them down over the camp about a day’s walk in any direction around the camp, about one metre above the surface of the ground. ³² The people went out and all that day and night and all the next day they gathered the quails. The one who gathered the least collected thirty-eight litres. They kept spreading them out for themselves around the camp.

The sending of a plague

³³ The meat was still between their teeth and not yet chewed up, when the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and the LORD struck the people down with a very severe plague. ³⁴ That place was

named “Kibroth-Hattaavah,”⁶⁸ because there they buried the people **who had been craving** for other food.

³¹ From Kibroth-Hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazereth and then stayed at Hazereth.

12

The opposition of Miriam and Aaron to Moses

¹ Miriam and Aaron criticised Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married. For Moses had married a Cushite woman.

² They asked: “Can it be that the LORD has spoken only through Moses? Has He not also spoken through us?”

The LORD heard this. ³ Now Moses was a very humble man, humbler than anyone else on the surface of the earth. ⁴ Suddenly the LORD spoke to Moses, Aaron and Miriam: “Come out, you three, to the Tent of Meeting!”

So, the three of them went out. ⁵ Then the LORD came down in the pillar of a cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent. He called, “Aaron and Miriam!”

So, the two of them went out to him. ⁶ He said: “Please listen to what I say! If you have a prophet, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision. I speak to him in a dream. ⁷ This is not so with **My servant Moses**. He is **faithful in My whole family**.

⁸ I speak to him face to face, clearly, and not in riddles. He sees the form of the LORD. Why, then, have you not been afraid to speak against My servant Moses?”

⁹ The anger of the LORD burned against them, and He departed. ¹⁰ When the cloud had moved away from the tent, Miriam was seen to be struck with an infectious skin-disease, as white as snow. Aaron turned to Miriam and saw that she had been struck with a skin-disease. ¹¹ Aaron asked Moses: “With your permission, please do not hold this sin against us! We have proved ourselves foolish and sinned by what we have done. ¹² Please do not let her be like a stillborn infant, who comes from its mother’s womb with its flesh half eaten away!”

¹³ Moses cried out to the LORD, “Please, God, please heal her!”

¹⁴ The LORD told Moses: “If her father had only spit in her face, would she not be in disgrace for seven days? Let her be shut outside of the camp for seven days! After that she may be brought in again.”

¹⁵ So, Miriam was shut outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not set out on the march until Miriam had been brought in again. ¹⁶ After that the people set out from Hazereth and pitched camp in the Wilderness of Paran.

13

The sending of twelve spies into Canaan — Deuteronomy 1:19-33

⁶⁸ Kibroth-Hattaavah means, “Graves of greed.”

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Send some men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites! You shall send one man from each ancestral tribe! Each one shall be one of their leaders!”

³ So, Moses sent them from the Wilderness of Paran, as the LORD had commanded him. All of them were leaders of the Israelites. ⁴ These were their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua, the son of Zaccur; ⁵ from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat, the son of Hori; ⁶ from the tribe of Judah, Caleb, the son of Jephunneh; ⁷ from the tribe of Issachar, Igal, the son of Joseph; ⁸ from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea, the son of Nun; ⁹ from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti, the son of Raphu; ¹⁰ from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel, the son of Sodi; ¹¹ from the tribe of Joseph, that is, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi, the son of Susi; ¹² from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel, the son of Gemalli; ¹³ from the tribe of Asher, Sethur, the son of Michael; ¹⁴ from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi, the son of Vophsi; ¹⁵ from the tribe of Gad, Geuel, the son of Machi. ¹⁶ These were the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. Moses called Hoshea, the son of Nun, “Joshua.”

¹⁷ When Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, he told them: “Go up here through the Negev and then go up into the hill-country! ¹⁸ See what the land is like! See whether the people who are living there are strong or feeble, few or many! ¹⁹ See whether the land in which they are living is good or bad! See whether the cities in which they are living are camps or fortified places! ²⁰ See whether the soil is fertile or lean! See whether there are trees there or not! Have courage and bring back some of the fruit of the land!”

It was the season for the first ripe grapes. ²¹ So, they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near the entrance to Hamath. ²² They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, lived (Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt). ²³ When they reached the Valley of Eshcol,⁶⁹ they cut off a branch there with a single cluster of grapes, and two of them carried it on a pole. They also brought some pomegranates and some figs. ²⁴ That place was called “the Valley of Eshcol” because of the cluster of grapes that the Israelites had cut off there.

²⁵ Forty days later they came back from spying out the land. ²⁶ They came to Moses and Aaron and the whole congregation of the Israelites at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Paran. They brought them and the whole congregation a report and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷ They reported to Moses: “We came to the land to which you sent us, and it truly does flow with milk and honey. Here is some of its

fruit. ²⁸ Nevertheless, the people who are living in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw the descendants of Anak there.

²⁹ The Amalekites are living in the Negev. The Hittites, the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill-country, and the Canaanites are living near the sea and beside the bank of the Jordan.”

³⁰ However, Caleb silenced the people in front of Moses. He said: “Let us by all means go up and take possession of the land! For we shall certainly be able to conquer it.”

³¹ Nevertheless, the men who had gone up with him said: “We shall not be able to attack the people. For they are stronger than we are.”

³² They spread among the Israelites an untruthful report about the land that they had spied out. They said: “The land, through which we have passed, and which we have been spying out, is one that devours those who are living there. All the people we saw in it are unusually tall. ³³ We saw the Nephilim there. The sons of Anak have descended from the Nephilim. We felt like locusts and seemed like locusts to them.”

14

The rebellion of the people

¹ Then the whole congregation broke into loud crying and the people wept that night. ² All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation told them: “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness!

³ Why is the LORD bringing us into this land just to fall by the sword? Our wives and little ones will be taken as plunder! Would it not be better for us to **go back to Egypt?**”

⁴ They said to one another, “Let us appoint a leader and let us **go back to Egypt!**”

⁵ Moses and Aaron fell face-down in front of the whole assembly of the congregation of the Israelites.

⁶ Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, who had been among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes. ⁷ They told the whole congregation of the Israelites: “The land through which we passed, and which we spied out, is good! The land is very, very good! ⁸ If the LORD takes pleasure in us, He will bring us into this land. He will give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey.

⁹ Only do not rebel against the LORD! You should not be afraid of the people of the land! For we can eat them like bread. Their protection has left them. The LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them!”

¹⁰ However, the whole congregation talked about stoning them. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to all the Israelites at the Tent of Meeting. ¹¹ The LORD asked Moses: “How long will these people scornfully reject Me? How long are they going to refuse to believe in Me, despite all the miraculous signs that I have been performing among them? ¹² I shall

⁶⁹ “Eshcol” means, “cluster.”

strike them down with a plague and disinherit them. Then I shall make you into a greater and mightier nation than they are.”

Moses' intercession for the Israelites

¹³ Nevertheless, Moses replied to the LORD: “Then the Egyptians will hear about this! For by Your power You have brought these people up from among them.

¹⁴ They will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that You, the LORD, are among the Israelites, that You, O LORD, have been appearing face to face, that Your cloud is standing over them and that You are going before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.

¹⁵ If You kill all these people as one man, then the nations who have been hearing this report about You will say: ¹⁶ ‘Because the LORD has not been able to bring these people into the land that He had sworn to give them, He has **slaughtered them in the wilderness.**’ ¹⁷ Now then, please let the strength of my Lord be great! You promised just this when You said:

¹⁸ ‘The LORD is slow to become angry and abounding in mercy. He forgives wrongdoing and rebellion. He certainly does not declare anyone exempt from punishment. He avenges the wrongdoing of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.’

¹⁹ Please forgive the wrongdoing of these people, according to Your great mercy and as You have been pardoning this people from Egypt even until now!”

God's threat of judgment on the Israelites

²⁰ Then the LORD said: “I have forgiven them, as you have asked. ²¹ Nevertheless, as surely as I live, and as surely as the glory of the LORD will fill the whole earth, ²² truly, none of the men who have seen My glory and the miraculous signs that I have performed in Egypt and in the wilderness and yet have put Me to the test ten times and have been **refusing to obey Me,** ²³ will see the land that I promised with an oath to their fathers. None of those who are scornfully rejecting Me will see it. ²⁴ However, I shall take My servant Caleb into the land to which he has gone, because he has had a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully. His descendants will also take possession of it. ²⁵ Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn and set out toward the wilderness tomorrow, along the road to the Red Sea!”

The condemnation to forty years of wandering in the wilderness

²⁶ Then the LORD asked Moses and Aaron: ²⁷ “How long shall I put up with this wicked congregation, which keeps on grumbling against Me? I have been hearing the complaints that the Israelites are making against Me. ²⁸ Tell them: ‘As surely as I live,’ the LORD has said, ‘I shall certainly do to you what I heard you saying! ²⁹ **Your bodies will fall dead in this wilderness.** Because you have been grumbling against Me, absolutely none of you who were counted in your entire census, from twenty years old and more, ³⁰ will enter the land where I swore with a raised hand I would let you live, except Caleb, the son of

Jephunneh and Joshua, the son of Nun. ³¹ As for your little ones, who, you said, would be taken as plunder, I shall bring them in, that they become acquainted with the land that you have rejected. ³² However, your own bodies will fall in this wilderness. ³³ Your children will be shepherds **in the wilderness for forty years.** They will suffer because of your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies have died in the wilderness. ³⁴ You will suffer for your offences according to the number of days during which you spied out the land. You spied for forty days. You will suffer a year for each day, for forty years. You will experience My opposition. ³⁵ I, the LORD, have spoken. I shall certainly do this to this whole wicked congregation, which has banded together against Me. They will perish in this wilderness and there they will die.”

³⁶ Therefore, the men whom Moses had sent to spy out the land, who had returned and made the whole congregation grumble against him by spreading an untruthful report about the land, ³⁷ these men, who had authored the bad report about the land, died of a plague before the LORD. ³⁸ Only Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, survived out of those men, after they had gone to spy out the land.

The unauthorised attempt to enter Canaan and its defeat — Deuteronomy 1:41-45

³⁹ When Moses reported this to all the Israelites, the people mourned bitterly. ⁴⁰ They got up early the next morning and went up to the top of the hill-country. They said, “Here we are. We shall go up to the place that the LORD has promised. For we have sinned.”

⁴¹ However, Moses asked: “Why then do you keep on transgressing against the Command of the LORD? This will not be successful! ⁴² Do not go up! For the LORD is not among you. Desist, that your enemies may not defeat you! ⁴³ For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there to face you, and you will fall by the sword. For the LORD will not be with you, because you have turned away from following the LORD.”

⁴⁴ Nevertheless, they had the audacity to go up to the top of the hill-country, although neither the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD nor Moses left the camp. ⁴⁵ Then the Amalekites and Canaanites who were living in that hill-country came down, defeated them and scattered them as far as Hormah.

15

Instructions about the offering of grain and wine with sacrifices

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When you come into the land where you will live, which I am giving to you, ³ and you prepare an offering made by fire to the LORD, from the herd or the flock, either a burnt offering or a sacrifice to fulfil a vow or a freewill offering or an offering at your appointed festivals, to make a soothing aroma to the LORD, ⁴ then the one who presents his gift shall also offer to the LORD, as a grain-offering, four

litres of fine wheat flour mixed with one litre of olive-oil! ⁵ You shall also prepare, as a drink offering, one litre of wine for each lamb as an addition to the burnt offering or the sacrifice! ⁶ If it is an addition to a ram, you shall prepare, as a grain-offering, eight litres of fine wheat flour mixed with one litre and two hundred and seventy millilitres of olive-oil! ⁷ You shall also offer, for a drink offering, one litre and two hundred and seventy millilitres of wine, as a soothing aroma to the LORD!

⁸ “When you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering or as a sacrifice to fulfil a vow or as a peace-offering to the LORD, ⁹ twelve litres of fine wheat flour mixed with two litres of olive-oil shall be offered as an addition to the young bull! ¹⁰ You shall also present two litres of wine as a drink offering! It will be a sacrifice made by fire as a soothing aroma to the LORD.

¹¹ Each bull, each ram, each lamb or each young goat shall be prepared in this manner! ¹² Whatever number you prepare, you shall do this for each one of them!

¹³ Every native-born Israelite shall do these things in this way when he presents a sacrifice made by fire for a soothing aroma to the LORD! ¹⁴ When a stranger is residing among you or when anyone else is living permanently among you in your coming generations and prepares a sacrifice made by fire as a soothing aroma to the LORD, he shall do it in the same way as you do it! ¹⁵ The same Statute shall apply to your congregation and to the foreigner who is residing among you! The same Statute shall apply permanently throughout your coming generations! The foreigner shall be as you are before the LORD! ¹⁶ The same Law and the same Regulation shall apply both to you and to the stranger who is residing among you!”

The requirement to give the first dough to God

¹⁷ The LORD told Moses: ¹⁸ “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When you come into the land to which I am bringing you, ¹⁹ and when you eat any of the bread of the land, you shall present a contribution to the LORD! ²⁰ You shall present a ring-shaped loaf from the first of your dough as a contribution and present it as a contribution from the threshing floor! ²¹ You shall give some of the first of your dough as a contribution to the LORD throughout your coming generations!

Offerings after unintentional sins

²² “When you do wrong involuntarily by failing to observe any of these Commandments, which the LORD has spoken to Moses — ²³ any of the Commandments that the LORD has given you through Moses, from the day when the LORD gave His Commandments and then on throughout your coming generations — ²⁴ if it has been committed inadvertently and the congregation has not been aware of it, the whole congregation shall prepare one young bull from the herd as a burnt offering, as a soothing aroma to the LORD! You shall prepare it with its accompanying

grain-offering and drink offering, as prescribed and one male goat as a sin-offering! ²⁵ The priest shall make atonement for the whole congregation of the Israelites! Then they will be forgiven. For the sin had been unintentional, and they had presented their gift as a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD and had brought their sin-offering before the LORD because of their unintentional sin. ²⁶ So, the whole congregation of the Israelites will be forgiven, together with the foreigner who is living among them. For all the people had been involved in the unintentional wrong.

²⁷ “However, if one person sins unintentionally, he shall present a one-year old female goat as a sin-offering! ²⁸ The priest shall make atonement before the LORD for the person who has sinned inadvertently! When the priest has made atonement for him, he will be forgiven.

²⁹ “You shall have the same Law for the person who commits a sin in ignorance, whether he is a native-born Israelite or he is a foreigner who is living among them!

The consequence of deliberate sin

³⁰ “However, the person who sins deliberately, whether he is a native-born Israelite or a foreigner, and insults the LORD, that person shall be cut off from his people! ³¹ For he has despised the Word of the LORD and has broken His commandment. That person shall certainly be cut off! His guilt shall remain on him!”

The stoning of a man for breaking the Sabbath — Exodus 31:12-17

³² While the Israelites were in the wilderness, they found a man collecting pieces of wood on the Sabbath day. ³³ Those who had found him collecting pieces of wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole congregation. ³⁴ They put him in custody, because it had not been explained what should be done to him.

³⁵ The LORD told Moses: “The man shall certainly be put to death! The whole congregation must stone him outside the camp!”

³⁶ The whole congregation took him outside the camp and stoned him to death as the LORD had commanded Moses.

The command to the Israelites to wear fringes on their garments

³⁷ The LORD told Moses: ³⁸ “Speak to the Israelites and tell them to make tassels for themselves on the corners of their garments throughout their coming generations and to attach a cord of purple wool to the tassel on each corner! ³⁹ They shall become your tassels! You shall look at them and remember all the Commandments of the LORD, that you may obey them and may not eagerly go after what you desire in your hearts and what your eyes see! You used to run wantonly after these things. ⁴⁰ Do this, that you may remember to obey all My Commandments and may be holy to your God! ⁴¹ I am the LORD, your God, and I have brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD, your God.”

16

The rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram

¹ Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, who were Reuben's descendants, gathered a following. ² They rebelled against Moses, along with two hundred and fifty other Israelites. They were well-known leaders of the congregation and had been appointed by the assembly.

³ They gathered together against Moses and Aaron. They told them: "You have taken on too much! For the whole congregation is holy, every member of it, and the LORD is among them. Why, then, are you putting yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?"

⁴ When Moses heard this, he fell face-down. ⁵ He told Korah and all his company: "In the morning **the LORD will show who is His** and who is holy and will cause that person to come near to Him. He will cause the man whom He chooses to come near to Him.

⁶ You, Korah, and all your followers should do this: Take fire-pans, ⁷ put fire in them tomorrow and put incense on them before the LORD! Then the man whom the LORD chooses will be the holy one. You Levites have taken on too much!"

⁸ Moses told Korah: "Now listen, Levites! ⁹ Is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has selected you from the congregation of Israel and has brought you near to Himself to work in the service of the Tabernacle of the LORD and to stand before the congregation to minister to them? ¹⁰ He has brought you near Himself with all of your fellow Levites, but now you are demanding the priesthood as well! ¹¹ Therefore, it is against the LORD that you and all your company are gathering together. As for Aaron, what is he, that you should be grumbling against him?"

¹² Moses sent someone to summon Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab. However, they answered: "We shall not come! ¹³ Is it not enough that you have brought us out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, that you must also keep on lording it over us? ¹⁴ Besides, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards! Will you gouge out the eyes of these men? We shall not come."

¹⁵ Then Moses became very angry and said to the LORD: "Do not pay attention to their grain-offering! I have not taken as much as one donkey from them or harmed any of them."

¹⁶ Moses told Korah: "Tomorrow you and all your followers shall appear before the LORD — both you, they, and Aaron! ¹⁷ Each of you shall bring his fire-pan and you shall all put incense on them! Then each of you shall present his fire-pan before the LORD, two hundred and fifty fire-pans in all! You and Aaron shall also come, each with his fire-pan!"

¹⁸ So, each man took his fire-pan. They all put fire in them, laid incense on them and, together with Moses

and Aaron, they stood at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁹ When Korah had gathered the entire congregation against them at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, the glory of the LORD appeared to the whole congregation.

²⁰ The LORD told Moses and Aaron, ²¹ "Separate yourselves from this congregation, that I may suddenly destroy them!"

²² However, Moses and Aaron fell face-down and said: "O God, the God of the breath of life inside all mankind! When one man sins, will You be angry with the whole congregation?"

²³ Then the LORD instructed Moses, ²⁴ "Tell the congregation: 'Move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram!'"

²⁵ Then Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram and the elders of Israel followed him. ²⁶ He told the congregation: "Please move back from the tents of these wicked men and do not touch anything belonging to them, that you may not be swept away because of all their sins!"

²⁷ So, they withdrew from the tents of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram had come out and were standing at the entrances to their tents with their wives, their children and their little ones.

²⁸ Moses said: "This will show you that the LORD has sent me to do all these things and that I have not done them of my own accord. ²⁹ If these people die as all other human beings die, and, if what happens to all other human beings happens to them, then the LORD has not sent me. ³⁰ However, if the LORD creates something new and the ground opens up its mouth and swallows them and everything that belongs to them and they go down alive into Sheol, then you will know that these men have scornfully rejected the LORD."

³¹ As soon as he had finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open.

³² The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their families and all the other people who were with Korah, together with all their property. ³³ They went down alive to Sheol with everything that belonged to them. The ground closed over them, and so they perished and were gone from the assembly. ³⁴ All the people of Israel who were around them ran away when they heard their cries. For they thought, "We do not want the ground to swallow us, too!"

³⁵ Then a fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.

³⁶ Then the LORD instructed Moses: ³⁷ "Tell Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, to pick the fire-pans out of the smouldering remains and scatter the fire elsewhere! For the fire-pans have become holy. ³⁸ The fire-pans of these men, who have sinned at the cost of their lives, shall be hammered into plates to cover the altar! For they have brought the fire-pans before the

LORD, so that they have become holy. Let them become a sign to the Israelites!”

³⁹ So, Eleazar the priest took the bronze fire-pans, which the men who were burned up had presented, and they were hammered out to make a covering for the altar. ⁴⁰ The covering became a reminder to the Israelites that no unauthorised person, who was not a descendant of Aaron, should come near to burn incense before the LORD, that he might not become like Korah and his company. This was done as the LORD had directed Eleazar through Moses.

⁴¹ The next day the whole congregation of the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron. They said, “You have killed the people of the LORD.”

⁴² However, when the congregation had gathered together against Moses and Aaron and turned toward the Tent of Meeting, they saw that the cloud had covered it and that the glory of the LORD had appeared.

⁴³ Then Moses and Aaron went to the front of the Tent of Meeting. ⁴⁴ The LORD told Moses, ⁴⁵ “Move away from this congregation, that I may destroy them at once!”

They fell face-down. ⁴⁶ Moses told Aaron: “Take the fire-pan and put fire from the altar on it! Lay incense on it, and hurry into the congregation and make atonement for them! For wrath has come out from the LORD. The plague has begun.”

⁴⁷ Aaron took it, as Moses had told him, and ran into the middle of the congregation. Indeed, the plague had already begun among the people. Aaron put on the incense and made atonement for the people. ⁴⁸ He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was brought to a standstill. ⁴⁹ The people who died in the plague numbered fourteen thousand, seven hundred, in addition to those who had died in the affair of Korah. ⁵⁰ Then Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. For the plague had been brought to a standstill.

17

The silencing of complaints by the growing and blossoming of Aaron's staff

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Speak to the Israelites and get from them one staff from each paternal family, one each from all the leaders of their paternal families, twelve staffs! You shall write each man's name on his staff! ³ You shall write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi! For there shall be one staff for the head of each paternal family! ⁴ You shall place them in front of the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony, where I appear to you! ⁵ The staff belonging to the man whom I choose will sprout, and I shall rid Myself of the grumblings that the Israelites are making against both of you.”

⁶ So, Moses spoke to the Israelites, and all their leaders gave him a staff, one staff for each leader of their paternal families. There were twelve staffs and Aaron's staff was among them. ⁷ Moses placed the staffs

before the LORD in the tent of the Testimony. ⁸ The next day Moses went into the tent of the Testimony and saw that **Aaron's staff** for the family of Levi **had sprouted and** that, after it had sprouted, it had blossomed and produced ripe almonds. ⁹ Moses brought out all the staffs from the presence of the LORD to all the Israelites. They looked at them, and each man took his own staff. ¹⁰ The LORD told Moses: “Put **Aaron's staff** back in front of the Testimony, to be kept there as a sign to obstinate people! In this way you will bring their grumblings against Me to an end, that they may not die.”

¹¹ Moses did that. He did as the LORD had commanded him.

¹² The Israelites told Moses: “Look! We are as good as dead! We have perished! All of us have perished!

¹³ Anyone who even goes near the Tabernacle of the LORD will die. Are we all going to die?”

18

The responsibilities of the Levites and the priests

¹ The LORD told Aaron: “You, together with your sons and your father's family, will be responsible for any sins connected with the Holy Place. You together with your sons will be responsible for any sins associated with your work as priests. ² Bring with you also your relatives from the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may join you and assist you and your sons before the tent of the Testimony! ³ They shall fulfil their responsibilities to you and to the whole tent but shall not come near the equipment of the Holy Place or the altar, that both they and you may not die!

⁴ They shall join you and attend to the needs of the Tent of Meeting, including all the service at the tent! However, no unauthorised person shall come near you! ⁵ You people shall attend to the duties of the Holy Place and the altar, that the Israelites may not incur wrath again! ⁶ Be aware that I Myself have chosen your relatives, the Levites, from among the Israelites. They are a gift to you and allotted to the LORD, to attend to the service at the Tent of Meeting.

⁷ However, you and your sons shall carry out your priestly work, in connection with everything at the altar and inside the curtain! You shall attend to the service as a gift! I shall give you your priestly work. However, any unauthorised person who comes near shall be put to death!”

The support of the priests and Levites through the contributions of the people

⁸ The LORD told Aaron: “Look! I Myself have given you the responsibility for the contributions made to Me in connection with all the holy offerings of the Israelites. I have given them as a portion to you and your descendants as a permanent rule. ⁹ This is what shall belong to you out of the most holy offerings, kept back from the fire! All their gifts, including all their grain-offerings, all their sin-offerings and all their guilt-offerings, which they render to Me, shall be

most holy, belonging to you and your sons! ¹⁰ You shall eat it in a most holy place! Any male may eat it. You shall regard it as holy!

¹¹ “This also is yours: whatever gifts the Israelites contribute in connection with all their wave offerings. I have given them to you, your sons and your daughters as your regular portion. Any ceremonially clean person in your family may eat them. ¹² I have given to you all the best of the olive-oil, all the best wine and grain that they give to the LORD as their first-fruits.

¹³ The first products of everything that is in their land, which they will bring to the LORD, shall be yours! Any ceremonially clean person in your family may eat them. ¹⁴ Everything set apart for holy use in Israel shall be yours! ¹⁵ Every first-born of any living thing, both man and animal, which they will bring to the LORD, shall be yours! Nevertheless, you shall certainly redeem the first-born of human beings and redeem the first-born of any unclean animal! ¹⁶ When a boy is one month old, you shall redeem him at the ransom value of sixty grams of silver according to the shekel at the Holy Place, which weighs twenty gerahs!

¹⁷ Nevertheless, you shall not redeem the first-born of a cow, a sheep or a goat! They are holy. You shall pour their blood out against the altar and burn their fat as an offering made by fire, for a soothing aroma to the LORD! ¹⁸ Their meat shall be yours, just as the brisket of the wave offering and the right leg are yours! ¹⁹ I have given to you, to your sons and to your daughters, as a regular portion, all the holy contributions that the Israelites offer to the LORD. It shall be an everlasting Covenant of salt before the LORD, for you and for your descendants!”

²⁰ The LORD told Aaron: “You shall have no inheritance in their land or any share among them! I am your Share and your Inheritance among the Israelites. ²¹ Be aware that I have given to the Levites every tithe in Israel as their inheritance, as compensation for their service, which they are carrying out, the service at the Tent of Meeting. ²² The other Israelites shall never again come near the Tent of Meeting! Otherwise, they will bring sin on themselves and die. ²³ The Levites are the ones who shall carry out the service at the Tent of Meeting! They shall be responsible for any guilt on their part! This shall be a permanent Statute throughout your coming generations! They shall not inherit any property among the Israelites! ²⁴ For I have given to the Levites, as their inheritance, the tithe, which the Israelites will contribute to the LORD. That is why I have said about them, ‘They will not inherit any property among the Israelites.’”

²⁵ The LORD told Moses: ²⁶ “You shall speak to the Levites and tell them: ‘When you receive from the Israelites the tithe, which I have given you from them as your inheritance, you shall present a tenth out of the tithe as the contribution of the LORD! ²⁷ Your contribution will be credited to you as if it were grain

from the threshing floor or as full yield from the winepress. ²⁸ In this way you yourselves will also present a contribution to the LORD out of all the tithes that you will receive from the Israelites. Out of these tithes you shall give the contribution of the LORD to Aaron the priest! ²⁹ You shall present every contribution to the LORD out of all the choicest parts of all your gifts, as the holiest parts of them!

³⁰ “You shall also tell them: ‘When you present the choicest parts of them, the rest shall be reckoned as the property of the Levites, as if it were the produce of the threshing floor or of the winepress! ³¹ You may eat it anywhere with your families. For it is your wages to compensate for your service at the Tent of Meeting. ³² You will not bear sin because of it when you have presented the best part out of it. Then you will not profane the holy offerings of the Israelites and you will not die.’”

19

The cleansing of persons who become ceremonially unclean through contact with a dead body

¹ The LORD told Moses and Aaron: “This is the requirement of the Law that the LORD has commanded: ‘Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer that has no defect or blemish in it and that has never had a yoke on it! ³ You people shall give it to Eleazar the priest, and he shall take it outside the camp, and it shall be slaughtered in his presence! ⁴ Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven times in the direction of the front of the Tent of Meeting! ⁵ The heifer shall be burnt while he watches! Its hide, its meat, its blood, as well as the contents of its stomach shall be burnt! ⁶ The priest shall take cedar-wood, hyssop and a crimson yarn and throw them into the fire that is burning the heifer! ⁷ Then the priest shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water! After that he may come into the camp. However, the priest shall be ceremonially unclean until the evening. ⁸ The one who burns the heifer shall also wash his clothes in water, bathe his body in water and be ceremonially unclean until the evening! ⁹ Then a man who is ceremonially clean shall gather **the ashes of the heifer** and put them in a clean place outside the camp! They shall be preserved for the congregation of the Israelites for use in the water to remove impurity! It is for purification from sin. ¹⁰ The man who gathers **the ashes of the heifer** shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening! This shall be a permanent Statute for the Israelites and for the stranger who is living among them!

¹¹ “Whoever touches the dead body of any human person shall be unclean for seven days! ¹² He shall free himself from sin with the water on the third day and the seventh day! Then he will be clean. However, if he does not free himself from sin on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not become clean. ¹³ Whoever touches the body of any human person

who dies and does not free himself from sin, has profaned the Tabernacle of the LORD. That person shall be cut off from Israel! For the water to remove impurity has not been poured out on him. He shall be unclean! His uncleanness remains on him. ¹⁴ This is the Law when a human being dies in a tent: Everyone who enters the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean for seven days! ¹⁵ Every open container that has no lid fastened on it by a cord shall be unclean! ¹⁶ Everyone in the open field who touches someone who has been killed with a sword or who has died or touches a human bone or a grave shall be unclean for seven days! ¹⁷ For such an unclean person, people shall take some ashes left by the burning of the sin-offering and pour fresh water over them in a container! ¹⁸ Then a ceremonially clean person shall take some hyssop, dip it in the water and sprinkle the tent, all the furnishings and all the persons who were there, and anyone who has touched the bone or the person who has been slain or the person who has died or the grave! ¹⁹ The clean person shall sprinkle it on the unclean person on the third day and on the seventh day and so shall free him from sin by the seventh day! Then he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water! Then in the evening he will be clean. ²⁰ However, any person who becomes unclean and does not free himself from sin shall be cut off from the congregation! For he has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD. The water to remove impurity has not been poured out on him. He is unclean. ²¹ This shall be a permanent Statute for them! The one who sprinkles the water to remove impurity shall wash his clothes and anyone who touches the water to remove impurity shall be unclean until the evening! ²² Everything that the unclean person touches shall be unclean, and any person who touches him shall be unclean until the evening!"

20

The supply of water from a rock and Moses' disobedience — Deuteronomy 3:23-29, — compare Exodus 17:1-7

¹ The whole congregation of the Israelites came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month and the people stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

² The congregation had no water and the people gathered against Moses and Aaron. ³ The people quarrelled with Moses. They said: "We wish that we had died when our fellow-Israelites died before the LORD! ⁴ Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, so that we and our livestock should die here? ⁵ Why have you people made us come up out of Egypt to bring us into this unfavourable place? The place has no grain, figs, grapes or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink!"

⁶ Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. They fell face-down, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them.

⁷ The LORD told Moses: ⁸ "You and your brother Aaron, take the staff and gather the congregation!

Speak to that rock while they are watching you! Then it will yield its water. You will bring water out of the rock for them and provide drink to the congregation and their livestock."

⁹ Moses took the staff from the presence of the LORD as He had commanded him. ¹⁰ Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock. He told them, "Just listen, rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?"

¹¹ Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff. A great deal of water gushed out, and the congregation and their livestock drank.

¹² However, the LORD told Moses and Aaron: "Because you have not trusted Me, so that you should treat Me as holy while the Israelites were watching, you will not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."

¹³ That was the water of Meribah,^{*70} where the Israelites quarrelled with the LORD and where He proved Himself holy among them.

The refusal of the Edomites to allow Israel to pass through their country

¹⁴ Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom, to tell him: "This is what your brother Israel has said: 'You know all the hardship that we have endured. ¹⁵ Our fathers went down to Egypt, and we lived in Egypt for a long time. The Egyptians mistreated our fathers and us. ¹⁶ We cried out to the LORD, and He heard our cry, sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. Now we are here in Kadesh, a city on the edge of your territory. ¹⁷ Please let us pass through your country! We shall not go through any field or vineyard or drink water from any well. We shall go along the King's Highway and not turn aside to the right or the left until we have passed through your territory.'"

¹⁸ However, Edom answered him: "You shall not pass through my land! If you try, I shall come out against you with the sword."

¹⁹ So, the Israelites told him: "We shall go along the formed road and, if we or our livestock drink any of your water, we shall pay for it. We merely want to pass through on foot, nothing else."

²⁰ Edom answered, "You shall not pass through!"

Then Edom came out against them with a large and powerful army. ²¹ When the Edomites refused to allow Israel to pass through their territory, Israel turned away from them.

The death of Aaron

²² The whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor. ²³ At Mount Hor, near the border of the land of Edom, the LORD told Moses and Aaron: ²⁴ "Aaron will be gathered to his people. For he will not enter the land that I have given to the Israelites, because you people rebelled against My Word at the water of Meribah. ²⁵ Take Aaron and his son Eleazar and bring them up on

⁷⁰ "Meribah" means, "Quarrelling."

Mount Hor! ²⁶ Remove Aaron's garments and put them on his son Eleazar! Then Aaron will be gathered to his people and die there."

²⁷ Moses did as the Lord had commanded. They went up on Mount Hor while the whole congregation was watching. ²⁸ Moses removed Aaron's garments and put them on his son Eleazar. Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. ²⁹ When the whole congregation learned that Aaron had died, the entire household of Israel mourned for Aaron for thirty days.

21

The defeat of the Canaanite king of Arad

¹ When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming along the road to Atharim, he fought against Israel and captured some of them. ² Then Israel made this vow to the LORD: "If You indeed deliver these people into our hands, I shall completely destroy their cities."

³ The LORD heard Israel's request and delivered the Canaanites to them. Israel devoted them and their cities to destruction and named the place "Hormah."^{*71}

The setting up of a bronze snake on a pole — compare John 3:14

⁴ Then they journeyed from Mount Hor on the road to the Red Sea to go around the land of Edom, but the people grew impatient on the way. ⁵ The people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread or water, and we detest this wretched food."

⁶ Then the LORD sent poisonous snakes among the people. They bit the people, and many of the people of Israel died. ⁷ Then the people came to Moses and said: "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that He may take the snakes away from us!"

So, Moses prayed for the people. ⁸ The LORD told **Moses**: "Make a fiery **snake** and **put it on** a pole! Anyone who has been bitten should look at it! Then he **will live**."

⁹ Therefore, Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then, when anyone who had been bitten by a snake looked at the bronze snake, he lived.

The journey of the Israelites past Edom and to the east of Moab

¹¹ The Israelites moved on and camped at Oboth.

¹¹ After they left Oboth, they camped at Iye-Abarim in the wilderness that faces Moab on the eastern side.

¹² From there they moved on and camped in the Zered Valley. ¹³ They set out from there and camped on the other side of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that extends out from the border of the Amorites. For the Arnon is Moab's border between Moab and the Amorites. ¹⁴ This is why it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD: "Waheb in Suphah and the ravines, the Arnon, ¹⁵ and the slopes of the ravines that

extend toward the site of Ar and that lean on the border of Moab."

¹⁶ From there they went to Beer. This was the well where the LORD told Moses: "Gather the people together, that I may give them water!"

¹⁷ Then Israel kept singing this song: "Spring up, O well! Sing about it, ¹⁸ the well that princes have sunk, that the nobles of the people have dug with their sceptres and their staffs!"

Then they went from the wilderness to Mattanah.

¹⁹ From Mattanah they moved to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth, ²⁰ and from Bamoth to the valley that is in the open country of Moab, beside the top of Pisgah, where it looks down on the wilderness.

The defeat of Sihon, the king of the Amorites — Deuteronomy 2:24-37, Joshua 12:1-6

²¹ Then Israel sent messengers to tell Sihon, the king of the Amorites: ²² "Let me pass through your land! We shall not turn aside into any field or vineyard. We shall not drink water from any well. We shall go along the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory."

²³ However, Sihon did not permit Israel to pass through his territory. Sihon gathered his whole army and came out into the wilderness against Israel. When he reached Jahaz, he fought against Israel.

²⁴ Nevertheless, Israel struck him down with the edge of the sword and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok but only as far as the Ammonites. For the Ammonite border was fortified. ²⁵ Israel captured all these cities and Israel settled in all the cities of the Amorites, including Heshbon and all its neighbouring settlements. ²⁶ For Heshbon had been the city of Sihon, the Amorite king. He had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken from him all his land as far as the Arnon. ²⁷ That is why those who compose proverbs say:

"Come to Heshbon! Let it be rebuilt! Let the city of Sihon be restored!

²⁸ For fire has come out of Heshbon, flame from the city of Sihon. It has consumed Ar of Moab, the land-owners on the heights of the Arnon.

²⁹ How terrible for you, Moab! You have perished, people of Chemosh! Chemosh has yielded up his sons as fugitives and his daughters as captives of Sihon, the king of the Amorites.

³⁰ However, we have shot arrows on them. Heshbon has been destroyed as far as Dibon. We have laid waste as far as Nophah, which reaches as far as Medeba."

³¹ So, Israel settled in the land of the Amorites.

The defeat of Og, the king of Bashan — Deuteronomy 3:1-22

³² Then Moses sent some men to spy out Jazer and they captured its neighbouring settlements and drove out the Amorites who were there. ³³ Then they turned and went up along the road towards Bashan. Og, the king of Bashan, came out with his whole army to meet them in battle at Edrei. ³⁴ The LORD told Moses: "Do

⁷¹ Hormah means, "Banned to destruction."

not be afraid of him! For I have put him, all his people and his land into your hands. Do to him what you have done to Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who used to live in Heshbon!”

³⁵ So, they struck him down, together with his sons and his whole army, so that he had no survivors, and took possession of his land.

22

The refusal of Balaam to come to Moab to curse the Israelites

¹ Then the Israelites moved and camped on the waterless plains of Moab, on the opposite side of the Jordan from Jericho. ² Balak, the son of Zippor, saw everything that Israel had done to the Amorites, ³ and Moab was very afraid of the people because there were so many of them. Moab felt disgust with the Israelites. ⁴ The Moabites told the elders of Midian, “Now this crowd of people will lick up everything around us like an ox licking up the grass in the field.”

At that time Balak, the son of Zippor, was the king of Moab. ⁵ He sent messengers to Balaam, the son of Beor, at Pethor, which was in his people’s land near the Euphrates, to summon him. Balak said: “Look! A people has come out of Egypt. Indeed, they have covered the surface of the land and are settling in front of me. ⁶ So now, please come! Curse this people for me! For they are too powerful for me. Then perhaps I shall prevail, that I may defeat them and that I may drive them out of the land. For I know that the one whom you bless is blessed and that the one whom you curse is cursed.”

⁷ The elders of Moab and the elders of Midian left with the fees for sorcery in their hands. They came to Balaam and told him what Balak had said. ⁸ He told them: “Stay here tonight! I shall report to you the reply that the LORD makes to me.”

So, the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam. ⁹ God came to Balaam and asked, “Who are these men with you?”

¹⁰ Balaam replied to God: “Balak, the son of Zippor, the king of Moab, has sent them to me. ¹¹ He says, ‘Look! This people has come out of Egypt and are covering the surface of the land. Come now! Curse them for me! Perhaps I shall be able to fight them, that I may drive them away.’”

¹² God told Balaam: “You shall not go with them! You shall not curse the people! For they are blessed.”

¹³ When Balaam got up in the morning, he told Balak’s princes: “Go to your own land! For the LORD has refused to allow me to go with you!”

¹⁴ The princes of Moab left and came to Balak! They said, “Balaam has refused to come with us!”

¹⁵ Balak again sent other princes, this time a larger group, which was higher in rank than the others were.

¹⁶ When they came to Balaam, they told him: “This is what Balak, the son of Zippor, has said: ‘Please do not let yourself be deterred from coming to me! ¹⁷ For I

shall reward you very richly. I shall also do whatever you ask me. So, please come! Curse these people for me!’”

¹⁸ Balaam answered Balak’s officials: “If Balak were to give me his palace full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the Directions of the LORD, my God, to do anything less or more. ¹⁹ So now you, too, please stay here tonight, that I may find out what else the LORD will tell me!”

²⁰ God came to Balaam at night and told him: “If the men have come to summon you, leave and go with them! However, you shall do only what I tell you!”

Balaam’s journey to Moab and his donkey’s rebuke to him

²¹ When Balaam got up in the morning, he saddled his donkey and went with the princes of Moab. ²² However, God’s anger was aroused because he was going, and the Angel of the LORD took His stand on the road to oppose him. He was riding his donkey, and his two servants were with him. ²³ When the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD standing on the road with His drawn sword in His hand, the donkey turned off the road and went into a field. Balaam hit the donkey to turn her back onto the road. ²⁴ Then the Angel of the LORD stood on a narrow path between vineyards where there was a stone wall on each side. ²⁵ When the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam’s foot against the wall. Then he hit her again. ²⁶ Then the Angel of the LORD moved on again and stood in a narrow place, where there was no room to turn to the right or to the left. ²⁷ When the donkey saw the Angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam. Balaam’s anger was aroused and he hit the donkey with his staff. ²⁸ Then the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and she asked Balaam, “What have I done to you, that you have hit me these three times?”

²⁹ Balaam told the donkey: “Because you have made a fool of me! If only I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you now.”

³⁰ The donkey asked Balaam: “Am I not your donkey, which you have always ridden until today? Have I really been in the habit of doing this kind of thing to you?”

He answered, “No.”

³¹ Then the LORD opened Balaam’s eyes, and he saw the Angel of the LORD standing on the road with His drawn sword in His hand. He fell face-down and worshipped. ³² The Angel of the LORD asked him: “Why did you hit your donkey these three times? Look! I have come out Myself to oppose you, because your path against Me has been a steep one. ³³ When the donkey saw Me, she turned away from Me these three times. If she had not turned away from Me, I would have killed you by now and would have let her live.”

³⁴ Balaam told the Angel of the LORD: “I have sinned. For I did not know that You were standing on the road to oppose me. However, now, if this dis-

pleases You, I shall go back.”

³⁵ Nevertheless, the Angel of the LORD told Balaam, “Go with the men but speak only the Word that I shall speak to you!”

So, Balaam went on with the princes of Balak.

The King of Moab's disappointment with Balaam

³⁶ When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at the city of Moab that is on the border at the Arnon, at the edge of his territory. ³⁷ Balak asked Balaam: “Did I not send men urgently to you to summon you? Why did you not come to me? Am I really unable to honour you?”

³⁸ Balaam told Balak: “You see that I have come to you now. Have I any ability of my own to say anything? I shall be speaking only what God puts in my mouth.”

³⁹ Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriath-Huzoth. ⁴⁰ Balak sacrificed cattle and sheep and sent some of them to Balaam and the princes who were with him. ⁴¹ The next morning Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamoth-Baal, from where he could see the nearest part of the people.

23

The first prophecy of Balaam

¹ Balaam told Balak, “Build me seven altars here and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me here!”

² Balak did what Balaam had asked, and Balak and Balaam sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar!

³ Balaam told Balak: “Stand beside your burnt offering that I may go away! Perhaps the LORD will make Himself available to meet me. I shall tell you whatever Word He reveals to me.”

Then he went away along a bare track. ⁴ God met Balaam, and Balaam told Him: “I have set out the seven altars and have sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar.”

⁵ The LORD put a Message into Balaam's mouth. He said, “Go back to Balak and speak this Message!”

⁶ So, he went back to him and found him standing beside his burnt offering with all the princes of Moab.

⁷ Then Balaam pronounced his Oracle:

“Balak has brought me from Aram, Balak the king of Moab, from the mountains of the east: ‘Come! Curse Jacob for me! Come! Condemn Israel!’

⁸ “How shall I curse those whom God has not cursed? How shall I condemn those whom the LORD has not condemned?”

⁹ “For I see them from the top of the rocks and gaze on them from the hills. Look! They are a people dwelling alone and do not count themselves among the nations.

¹⁰ “Who can count the dust particles of Jacob? Or who can number the fourth part of Israel? May I die the death of righteous people and may my end be like theirs!”

¹¹ Balak asked Balaam: “What have you done to me? I have brought you here to curse my enemies. Howev-

er, look! You have done nothing but bless them!”

¹² Balaam answered: “Shall I not faithfully speak what the LORD puts in my mouth?”

The second prophecy of Balaam

¹³ Balak told him: “Please come with me to another place, from where you can see them! You will see only the nearest part of them. You will not see them all. Curse them for me from there!”

¹⁴ So, he took him to the Field of Zophim on the top of Pisgah, built seven altars and sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar. ¹⁵ Then Balaam told Balak, “Stand here beside your burnt offering and let me make myself available there!”

¹⁶ The LORD met Balaam, put a Message in his mouth and said, “Go back to Balak and speak in this way!”

¹⁷ Balaam went to Balak and found him standing beside his burnt offering with the princes of Moab. Balak asked him, “What has the LORD said?”

¹⁸ Then he pronounced his Oracle:

“Rise up, Balak, and listen! Hear me, son of Zippor!

¹⁹ “God is not a man, that He should lie or a son of man, that He should change His mind. If He says something, will He not do it? If He speaks, will He not carry it out?”

²⁰ “You see! I have received a Command to bless. If He blesses, I shall not reverse it.

²¹ “He has not observed calamity in Jacob. He has not seen misfortune in Israel. The LORD, their God, is with them and the shout of a King is among them.

²² “God has brought them out of Egypt and He is, for them, the horns of an Arabian antelope.

²³ “For there is no magic curse against Jacob and there is no divination against Israel. It will now be said about Jacob and about Israel: ‘See what God has done!’

²⁴ “Look! A people will rise up like a lioness. They will lift themselves up like a lion. It will not lie down until it devours the prey and drinks the blood of creatures that it has killed.”

²⁵ Then Balak told Balaam, “You shall neither curse them at all nor bless them at all!”

²⁶ Balaam answered Balak, “Have I not told you, ‘I shall do everything that the LORD says’?”

²⁷ Then Balak told Balaam: “Please come! Let me take you to another place! Perhaps God will consider it right if you curse them for me from there.”

²⁸ So, Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, which overlooks the nearest part of the wasteland. ²⁹ Balaam told Balak, “Build me seven altars here and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me here!”

³⁰ Balak did what Balaam had told him and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

24

The third prophecy of Balaam

¹ When Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not resort to magic curses as he had done

before but turned his face toward the wilderness.

² When Balaam looked out and saw that Israel was camping in their separate tribes, God's Spirit came on him, ³ and he proclaimed his Oracle:

"This is the Declaration of Balaam, the son of Beor. This is the Declaration of the man whose eye sees clearly:

⁴ "This is the Declaration of him who hears the Words of God. He sees a vision from the Almighty. When he falls down, he has open eyes:

⁵ "How attractive are your tents, O Jacob, and your dwelling places, O Israel!

⁶ "They are like streambeds that have spread out, like gardens beside a river, like aloes that the LORD has planted, like cedar trees beside the waters.

⁷ "Water will flow down from His leather buckets, and His seed will have abundant water. His king will rise higher than Agag, and His kingdom will be exalted.

⁸ "God has brought Him out of Egypt. He has the strength of an Arabian antelope for them. He will devour nations who are His enemies. He will gnaw His bones and pierce them with His arrows.

⁹ "They have crouched and lain down like a lion and, like a lioness, who will rouse them? Blessed is the one who blesses You and cursed is the one who curses You!"

¹⁰ Balak became very angry with Balaam and clapped his hands. Balak told Balaam: "I have summoned you to curse my enemies but look! You have continued to bless them these three times. ¹¹ So now, leave at once and go back home! I had promised that I would certainly honour you, but, you see, the LORD has prevented you from being honoured."

¹² Balaam answered Balak "Did I not already tell your messengers, whom you sent to me, ¹³ 'If Balak were to give me his palace full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the Directions of the LORD to do anything good or bad of my own accord. I shall speak only what the LORD speaks'? ¹⁴ So now, you see, I am going back to my people. Come! Let me advise you what these people will do to your people in the future!"

The fourth prophecy of Balaam

¹⁵ Then he proclaimed his Oracle:

"This is the Oracle of Balaam, the son of Beor, the Oracle of the man whose eye sees clearly, ¹⁶ the Declaration of him who hears the Words of God, who has knowledge from the Most High, who sees a vision from the Almighty. When he falls down, he has open eyes:

¹⁷ "I shall see Him who is not here now. I shall gaze on Him who is not near. A Star will come from Jacob. A Sceptre will rise from Israel. He will beat to pieces the heads of Moab and the skulls of all the sons of Sheth.

¹⁸ "Edom will be occupied land, and Seir, Edom's

enemy, will be occupied land, but Israel will gain strength.

¹⁹ "One from Jacob will rule and will destroy the survivors from the city."

²⁰ Then Balaam looked at Amalek and proclaimed his Oracle:

"Amalek was first among the nations but in the end he will be destroyed."

²¹ Then he looked at the Kenites and proclaimed his Oracle:

"Your dwelling-place is permanent. Your nest is set on a rock.

²² "However, it will fall into ruin, O Kenite. How long until Asshur takes you away as a captive?"

²³ Then he proclaimed his Oracle:

"How terrible! Who will live because God has appointed this to happen?

²⁴ "Ships will come from the coast of Cyprus. They will humiliate Asshur and humiliate Eber. However, they too will be destroyed."

²⁵ Then Balaam left and went back home and Balak also went his way.

25

The worship of Baal by the Israelites at Peor

¹ While Israel was staying at Shittim, the people began to **sin sexually** with Moabite women. ² The women invited the people to **the sacrifices to their gods**. The people ate food and worshipped their gods.

³ When the Israelites attached themselves to the Baal of Peor, the anger of the LORD burned against Israel.

⁴ The LORD told Moses: "Take all the leaders of these people and expose them with broken limbs in the light of the sun before the LORD, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel!"

⁵ So, Moses told the judges of Israel: "Each of you, kill those of your men who have attached themselves to the Baal of Peor!"

⁶ Indeed, an Israelite man came and brought to his kinsmen a Midianite woman in plain view of Moses and of the whole congregation of the Israelites while they were weeping at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ⁷ When Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw this, he left the congregation and took a spear in his hand. ⁸ He followed the Israelite man into the women's quarters and pierced both of them, through the Israelite man and into the woman's belly. So, the plague against the Israelites was stopped. ⁹ Nevertheless, those who died in the plague numbered twenty-four thousand.

The Covenant of God with the priest Phinehas

¹⁰ Then the LORD told Moses: ¹¹ "Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, turned My anger away from the Israelites when he eagerly supported My jealousy among them. As a result, I did not, in My jealousy, completely destroy the Israelites.

¹² Announce, therefore: 'Look! I am making My Covenant of peace with him! ¹³ He and his descendants

after him will have a Covenant that ensures a permanent priesthood, because he was zealous for his God and made atonement for the Israelites.”

¹⁴ The name of the Israelite man who was killed, the one killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, the leader of a clan of Simeon. ¹⁵ The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur, who was a tribal chief of a Midianite clan.

¹⁶ Then the LORD told Moses: ¹⁷ “Treat the Midianites as enemies and attack them! ¹⁸ For they have treated you as enemies with their cunning schemes, by which they have tricked you in the incident at Peor and in the affair of Cozbi, the daughter of the prince of Midian.”

She was one of their women, who was killed at the time when the plague struck because of what happened at Peor.

26

The census of the new generation of the Israelites — compare Numbers 1

¹ After the plague the LORD told Moses and Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest: ² “Take a census of the whole congregation of the Israelites, of the people who are twenty years old or more, according to their clans, everyone in Israel who can serve in the army!”

³ Moses and Eleazar the priest told them, in the waterless regions of Moab near the Jordan across from Jericho: ⁴ “Take a census of the people who are twenty years or more, as the LORD has commanded Moses!” The Israelites, who had come from the land of Egypt, were as follows. ⁵ Reuben was Israel’s first-born. The descendants of Reuben were: from Hanoah the clan of the Hanoahites; from Pallu the clan of the Palluites; ⁶ from Hezron the clan of the Hezronites; from Carmi the clan of the Carmites. ⁷ These were the clans of Reuben. Those of them who were counted were forty-three thousand, seven hundred and thirty. ⁸ Eliab was the son of Pallu, ⁹ and the sons of Eliab were Nemuel, Dathan and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram were the men whom the congregation had chosen, and who had quarrelled with Moses and Aaron. They had been in Korah’s band when they quarrelled with the LORD.

¹⁰ The ground had opened its mouth and swallowed them along with Korah, when his band had died as the fire consumed the two hundred and fifty men. They had served as a warning. ¹¹ However, the sons of Korah did not die.

¹² The descendants of Simeon by their clans were: from Nemuel the clan of the Nemuelites, ¹³ from Jamin the clan of the Jaminites; from Jachin the clan of the Jachinites; ¹³ from Zerah the clan of the Zerahites; and from Shaul the clan of the Shaulites. ¹⁴ These were the clans of Simeon. They totalled twenty-two thousand, two hundred.

¹⁵ The descendants of Gad by their clans were: from Zephon the clan of the Zephonites; from Haggai the

clan of the Haggites; from Shuni the clan of the Shunites; ¹⁶ from Ozni the clan of the Oznites; from Eri the clan of the Erites; ¹⁷ from Arod the clan of the Arodites; and from Areli the clan of the Arelites. ¹⁸ These were the clans of the sons of Gad. Those of them who were counted totalled forty thousand, five hundred.

¹⁹ Er and Onan were sons of Judah but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan. ²⁰ The descendants of Judah by their clans were: from Shelah the clan of the Shelanites; from Perez the clan of the Parzites; from Zerah the clan of the Zerahites. ²¹ The descendants of Perez were: from Hezron the clan of the Hezronites; from Hamul the clan of the Hamulites. ²² “These were the clans of Judah. Those of them who were counted totalled seventy-six thousand, five hundred.

²³ The descendants of Issachar by their clans were: from Tola the clan of the Tolaites; from Puah the clan of the Punites; ²⁴ from Jashub the clan of the Jashubites; from Shimron the clan of the Shimronites. ²⁵ These were the clans of Issachar. Those of them who were counted totalled sixty-four thousand, three hundred.

²⁶ The descendants of Zebulun by their clans were: from Sered the clan of the Sardites; from Elon the clan of the Elonites; from Jahleel the clan of the Jahleelites. ²⁷ These were the clans of Zebulun. Those of them who were counted totalled sixty thousand, five hundred.

²⁸ The descendants of Joseph by their clans through Manasseh and Ephraim were: ²⁹ the descendants of Manasseh: from Machir, the clan of the Machirites, and Machir was the father of Gilead; and from Gilead the clan of the Gileadites. ³⁰ These were the descendants of Gilead: from Iezer the clan of the Iezerites; from Helek the clan of the Helekites; ³¹ from Asriel the clan of the Asrielites; from Shechem the clan of the Shechemites; ³² from Shemida the clan of the Shemidaites; and from Hopher the clan of the Hopherites. ³³ Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, had no sons but only daughters. The names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. ³⁴ These were the clans of Manasseh. Those of them who were counted totalled fifty-two thousand, seven hundred.

³⁵ These were the descendants of Ephraim by their clans: from Shuthelah the clan of the Shuthalmites; from Becher the clan of the Bachrites; and from Tahan the clan of the Tahanites. ³⁶ These were the descendants of Shuthelah: from Eran the clan of the Eranites. ³⁷ These were the clans of the sons of Ephraim. Those of them who were counted totalled thirty-two thousand, five hundred. These were the descendants of Joseph by their clans.

³⁸ The descendants of Benjamin by their clans were: from Bela the clan of the Belaites; from Ashbel the clan of the Ashbelites; from Ahiham the clan of the

Ahiramites; ³⁹ from Shupham the clan of the Shuphamites; and from Hupham the clan of the Huphamites. ⁴⁰ The descendants of Bela through Ard and Naaman were: from Ard the clan of the Ardites and from Naaman the clan of the Naamanites. ⁴¹ These were the descendants of Benjamin by their clans. Those of them who were counted totalled forty-five thousand, six hundred.

⁴² These were the descendants of Dan by their clans: from Shuham the clan of the Shuhamites. These were the clans of Dan by their clans. ⁴³ All of them were Shuhamite clans. Those of them who were counted totalled sixty-four thousand, four hundred.

⁴⁴ The descendants of Asher by their clans were: from Imnah the clan of the Imnites; from Ishvi the clan of the Ishvites; from Beriah the clan of the Beriites.

⁴⁵ The descendants of Beriah were: from Heber the clan of the Heberites and from Malchiel the clan of the Malchielites. ⁴⁶ The name of the daughter of Asher was Serah. ⁴⁷ These were the clans of the sons of Asher. Those of them who were counted totalled fifty-three thousand, four hundred.

⁴⁸ The descendants of Naphtali by their clans were: from Jahzeel the clan of the Jahzeelites; from Guni the clan of the Gunites; ⁴⁹ from Jezer the clan of the Jezerites: from Shillem, the clan of the Shillemites.

⁵⁰ These were the clans of Naphtali by their clans. Those of them who were counted totalled forty-five thousand, four hundred.

⁵¹ The total of Israelites who were counted was six hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and thirty.

⁵² Then the LORD told Moses: ⁵³ "The land shall be allotted as an inheritance among these according to the number of names! ⁵⁴ You shall give a larger inheritance to a large tribe and a smaller inheritance to a small one! Each tribe shall be given its inheritance according to the number of those who have been counted! ⁵⁵ However, the land shall be distributed by lot! The people shall obtain their inheritance according to the names of the tribes of their fathers! ⁵⁶ Each inheritance shall be distributed by lot among the larger and smaller clans!"

⁵⁷ These were the Levites who were counted by their clans: from Gershon the clan of the Gershonites, from Kohath the clan of the Kohathites, from Merari the clan of the Merarites. ⁵⁸ These also were Levite clans: the clan of the Libnites, the clan of the Hebronites, the clan of the Mahlites, the clan of the Mushites and the clan of the Korahites. Kohath was the ancestor of Amram. ⁵⁹ The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, a female descendant of Levi, who was born to the Levites in Egypt. To Amram she bore Aaron, Moses and their sister Miriam. ⁶⁰ Aaron was the father of Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ⁶¹ However, Nadab and Abihu had died when they had offered unauthorised fire before the LORD. ⁶² Those of the males who were counted, from one month old and more, totalled

twenty-three thousand. They were not counted along with the other Israelites, because they were not given any inheritance among the other Israelites. ⁶³ These were the people whom Moses and Eleazar the priest counted when they counted the Israelites on the waterless plains of Moab near the Jordan across from Jericho. ⁶⁴ Among these there was not a single man whom Moses and Aaron the priest had counted when they had counted the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. ⁶⁵ For the LORD had told them: "They will certainly die in the wilderness!"

So, not one of them was left except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

27

Permission to the daughters of Zelophehad to inherit their father's property — Numbers 26:33, Numbers 36:1-12

¹ The daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, members of the clans of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, came forward. These were the names of the daughters of Zelophehad: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. ² They stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders and the whole congregation at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. They said, ³ "Our father died in the wilderness. He was not in the company that gathered together against the LORD in the company of Korah but died for his own sin. He had no sons. ⁴ Why should our father's name be removed from his clan because he had no son? Give us property among our father's relatives!"

⁵ Moses brought their case before the LORD. ⁶ The LORD told Moses: ⁷ "What the daughters of Zelophehad are saying is right. You shall certainly give them property as an inheritance among their father's relatives and transfer their father's inheritance to them! ⁸ You shall also tell the Israelites: 'When any man dies and has no son, you shall transfer his inheritance to his daughter! ⁹ If he has no daughter, you shall give his inheritance to his brothers! ¹⁰ If he has no brothers, you shall give his inheritance to his father's brothers! ¹¹ If his father has no brothers, you shall give his inheritance to the closest relative to him in his clan, that he may possess it! This shall be the legal Statute for the Israelites, as the LORD has commanded Moses!"

The appointment of Joshua to succeed Moses — Deuteronomy 31:1-8

¹² The LORD told Moses: "Go up this mountain in the Abarim range and see the land that I have given to the Israelites! ¹³ When you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was. ¹⁴ For both of you rebelled against My Command in the wilderness of Zin when the congregation quarrelled. You did not treat Me as holy in their sight at the water. This was the water of Meribah, at Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin."

¹⁵ Moses answered the LORD: ¹⁶ "Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint over the

congregation a man ¹⁷ who will go out and come in before them and who will lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be **like sheep without a shepherd!**"

¹⁸ The LORD told Moses: "Take Joshua, the son of Nun with you! He is a man who has the Spirit in him! You shall lay your hand on him! ¹⁹ You shall have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole congregation and appoint him in their presence! ²⁰ You shall invest him with some of your authority, that the whole congregation of the Israelites may obey him! ²¹ He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who will inquire for him by the Decision of the Urim before the LORD! Then at his command he and the whole congregation of the Israelites with him will go out, and at his command they will come in."

²² Moses did as the LORD had commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole congregation. ²³ He laid his hands on him and appointed him, as the LORD had directed through Moses.

28

The daily sacrifices — Exodus 29:38-46

¹ The LORD told Moses. ² "Give this Command to the Israelites and tell them: 'You shall be careful to offer My gift to Me, My food, which is made by fire as a pleasing aroma, that you may offer it to Me at the appointed time!' ³ You shall tell them, 'This is the offering made by fire, which you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs a year old without blemish as a regular burnt offering each day! ⁴ You shall prepare the one lamb in the morning and the other lamb at the twilight, ⁵ with four litres of fine wheat flour, mixed with one litre of oil from beaten olives, as a grain-offering! ⁶ This is the regular burnt offering, which has been appointed at Mount Sinai, a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD for a soothing aroma. ⁷ Its accompanying drink offering shall be one litre for each lamb! Pour out the intoxicating drink offering to the LORD in the Holy Place! ⁸ You shall prepare the second animal in the twilight, with the same grain-offering and its accompanying drink offering as in the morning! You shall prepare it as an offering made by fire to the LORD for a soothing aroma!

The sacrifices on the Sabbath

⁹ "On the Sabbath day you shall prepare two male lambs one year old without blemish and eight litres of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil as a grain-offering, with its accompanying drink offering! ¹⁰ This is the burnt offering for every Sabbath day, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.

The sacrifices on each New Moon

¹¹ "On the first day of each of your months you shall offer to the LORD a burnt offering of two young bulls from the herd, one ram and seven male lambs a year old without blemish! ¹² With each bull you shall pre-

pare twelve litres of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil as a grain-offering! With each ram you shall prepare eight litres of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil as a grain-offering! ¹³ With each one-year-old lamb you shall prepare four litres of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil as a grain-offering! It is a burnt offering for a soothing aroma, a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD. ¹⁴ With each bull there shall be its accompanying drink offering of two litres of wine! With each ram, there shall be one litre and two hundred and seventy millilitres! With each lamb there shall be one litre! This is the monthly burnt offering to be made at each New Moon during the year. ¹⁵ In addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering, one male goat shall be prepared as a sin-offering to the LORD!

The annual sacrifices — the Passover, Leviticus 23:5-14

¹⁶ "On the fourteenth day of the first month there is the Passover of the LORD. ¹⁷ On the fifteenth day of that month there shall be a festival when bread without yeast shall be eaten for seven days! ¹⁸ On the first day there shall be a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work on it! ¹⁹ You shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD, as a sacrifice made by fire, two young bulls from the herd, one ram and seven male lambs one year old! You shall use animals that are without blemish! ²⁰ Their accompanying grain-offerings shall be fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil! You shall prepare twelve litres with each bull and eight litres with each ram! ²¹ You shall prepare four litres with each of the seven lambs! ²² You shall also use one male goat as a sin-offering to make atonement for yourselves! ²³ You shall prepare these in addition to the morning burnt offering, which is the regular burnt offering! ²⁴ In this way you shall prepare, on each of the seven days, the food for the offering made by fire, for a soothing aroma to the LORD! It shall be prepared in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering! ²⁵ On the seventh day you shall have a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work on it!

The sacrifices on the Festival of Weeks (Pentecost or Harvest) — Leviticus 23:15-22, Deuteronomy 16:9-12

²⁶ "On the day of first-fruits, when you present to the LORD a grain-offering of new grain during the Festival of Weeks, you shall hold a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work on it! ²⁷ You shall offer, as a burnt offering for a soothing aroma to the LORD, two young bulls from the herd, one ram and seven one-year-old male lambs! ²⁸ With their accompanying grain-offering of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil there shall be twelve litres with each bull, eight litres with each ram, ²⁹ and four litres with each of the seven lambs! ³⁰ You shall also use one male goat to make atonement for yourselves! ³¹ You shall use animals that are without blemish! You shall prepare them together with their drink offerings, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering!

29

The sacrifices for the Festival of Trumpets — compare Leviticus 23:23-25

1 “On the first day of the seventh month you shall have a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work on it! It shall be a day for you to sound the trumpets! 2 You shall prepare, as a burnt offering for a soothing aroma to the LORD, one young bull, one ram and seven one year-old male lambs without blemish! 3 Their accompanying grain-offering of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil shall be twelve litres with the bull, eight litres with the ram 4 and four litres with each of the seven lambs! 5 You shall also use one male goat as a sin-offering to make atonement for yourselves! 6 These shall be in addition to the burnt offering of the New Moon with its grain-offering and the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and their drink offerings as they are prescribed, as a soothing aroma! They are sacrifices made by fire to the LORD.

The sacrifices on the Day of Atonement — compare Leviticus 16: 1-34, Leviticus 23:26-32

7 “On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall hold a holy assembly! You shall humble yourselves by fasting! You shall not do any work! 8 You shall present, as a burnt offering to the LORD for a soothing aroma, one young bull from the herd, one ram and seven male lambs a year old! You shall use animals that are without blemish! 9 As their accompanying grain-offerings of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil, you shall prepare twelve litres for the bull, eight litres for the one ram, 10 and four litres with each of the seven lambs! 11 You shall also use one male goat as a sin-offering, in addition to the sin-offering for making atonement, the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and their drink offerings!

The offerings on the Festival of Tabernacles (or the Festival of Booths or the Ingathering) —Leviticus 23:33-34, Deuteronomy 16:13-17, Zechariah 14:16-19

12 “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall hold a holy assembly! You shall not do any regular work but shall celebrate a festival to the LORD for seven days! 13 You shall present, as a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire for a pleasing aroma to the LORD, thirteen young bulls from the herd, two rams and fourteen male lambs a year old! They shall be without blemish! 14 Their accompanying grain-offerings of fine wheat flour mixed with olive-oil shall be twelve litres with each of the thirteen bulls, eight litres with each of the two rams, 15 and four litres with each of the fourteen lambs! 16 You shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and its drink offering!

17 “On the second day you shall prepare twelve young bulls from the herd, two rams and fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish! 18 You shall prepare their accompanying grain-offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams and for the lambs according to the quantity specified! 19 You

shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and their drink offerings!

20 “On the third day you shall prepare eleven bulls, two rams and fourteen one-year-old lambs without blemish! 21 You shall prepare their accompanying grain-offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams and for the lambs according to the quantity specified! 22 You shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and its drink offerings!

23 “On the fourth day you shall prepare ten bulls, two rams and fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish! 24 You shall prepare their accompanying grain-offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams and for the lambs according to the quantity specified! 25 You shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and its drink offering!

26 “On the fifth day you shall prepare nine bulls, two rams and fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish! 27 You shall prepare their accompanying grain-offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams and for the lambs according to the quantity specified! 28 You shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and its drink offering!

29 “On the sixth day you shall prepare eight bulls, two rams and fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish! 30 You shall prepare their accompanying grain-offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams and for the lambs according to the quantity specified! 31 You shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and its drink offerings!

32 “On the seventh day you shall prepare seven bulls, two rams and fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish! 33 You shall prepare their accompanying grain-offering and their drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams and for the lambs according to the quantity specified! 34 You shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and its drink offering!

35 “On the eighth day have a festive assembly! You shall not do any regular work! 36 You shall present, as a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire for a pleasing aroma to the LORD, one bull, one ram and seven male lambs a year old without blemish! 37 Their accompanying grain-offerings and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram and for the lambs shall be according to the quantity specified! 38 You shall use one male goat as a sin-offering in addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain-offering and its drink offering! 39 You shall prepare these for the LORD on your appointed festivals as your burnt offerings, as your grain-offerings, as your drink offerings and as your peace-offerings, in addition to the offerings that you

vow and your freewill offerings!”

⁴⁰ Moses spoke to the Israelites exactly as the LORD had commanded him.

30

Regulations for vows made by women — Deuteronomy 23:21-23

¹ Moses told the heads of the tribes of the Israelites: “This is what the LORD has commanded: ² ‘When a man makes a vow to the LORD or swears pledges by an oath not to do something, he shall not break his word! He shall do exactly as he has promised!

³ “When a woman makes a **vow to the LORD** or pledges herself not to do something while she is in her father’s home, in her youth, ⁴ and her father hears about her vow and about her pledge, by which she has bound herself, but her father has let her do it without objection, all her vows and every pledge by which she has bound herself shall be valid! ⁵ However, if her father has overruled her on the day when he has heard about them, none of her vows and no pledge by which she has bound herself shall be valid! The LORD will forgive her, because her father has overruled her.

⁶ “If, when she has married, she has placed herself under vows or has uttered any rash promise by which she has bound herself ⁷ and her husband hears about it but has let her do it without objection on the day when he heard about it, her vows and her pledges, by which she has bound herself, shall be valid! ⁸ However, if her husband overrules her on the day when he hears about it, he invalidates her vow, which obligates her and the rash utterance, by which she has bound herself. The LORD will forgive her.

⁹ “However, any vow of a widow or a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, shall be valid for her!

¹⁰ “If a woman has made a vow in her husband’s home or has bound a pledge on herself with an oath

¹¹ and her husband hears about it, lets her do it without objection and has not overruled her, all her vows shall be valid and every pledge by which she has bound herself shall be valid! ¹² However, if her husband invalidates them on the day when he hears about them, nothing that she has uttered in her vows or in any pledge on herself shall be valid! Her husband has invalidated them. The LORD will forgive her. ¹³ Her husband may confirm any vow or any binding oath that she makes to humble herself and her husband may also invalidate them. ¹⁴ However, if her husband has indeed let her do it without objection from day to day, he confirms all her vows or all her pledges, which obligate her. He has confirmed them, because he let her do it without objection on the day when he heard about them. ¹⁵ However, if he has indeed invalidated them some time after he has heard about them, he shall be responsible for her guilt!”

¹⁶ These are the Statutes that the LORD commanded Moses, to decide matters between a man and his wife and between a father and his daughter while she is in

her youth in her father’s home.

31

The defeat of the Midianites by Israel

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Take revenge on the Midianites for what they did to the Israelites! After that you will be gathered to your people.”

³ Moses told the people: “Prepare some of your men to go to war and let them go against the Midianites to take revenge for the LORD on Midian! ⁴ You shall send into battle one thousand men from each of the tribes of Israel!”

⁵ So, from the clans of Israel one thousand men were chosen from each tribe. Twelve thousand men were ready for battle. ⁶ Then Moses sent them to the war, one thousand from each tribe. He sent them to the war with Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest. Phinehas took with him articles from the sanctuary and the trumpets for signalling. ⁷ They went to war against Midian, as the LORD had commanded Moses, and killed every man. ⁸ Together with the rest who were slain, they killed the kings of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba, the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam, the son of Beor, with the sword.

⁹ The Israelites captured the women and children of the Midianites and took all their animals, all their herds and all their goods as plunder. ¹⁰ They also burned down all the cities where the Midianites lived and all their camps. ¹¹ They took all the plunder and all the booty of war, including the people and the animals, ¹² and brought the captives, the booty of war and the plunder to Moses, Eleazar and the congregation of the Israelites at the camp on the waterless plains of Moab, which was beside the Jordan across from Jericho.

The aftermath of the war against the Midianites

¹³ Moses, Eleazar the priest and all the leaders of the congregation went outside the camp to meet them.

¹⁴ Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who were returning from service in the war.

¹⁵ Moses asked them: “Have you let all the women live? ¹⁶ Look! They were the ones who, at Balaam’s advice, became the occasion for the Israelites to fall away from the LORD in the incident at Peor, so that the plague came on the congregation of the LORD.

¹⁷ Now then, kill every boy among the children and kill every woman who has had sexual relations with a man, ¹⁸ but keep alive for yourselves every young girl who has not had sexual relations! ¹⁹ Each of you who has killed anyone and everyone who has touched a person who has been killed must stay outside the camp for seven days! Both you and your captives shall purify yourselves on the third day and on the seventh day! ²⁰ You shall also purify every garment, as well as every leather article, everything made of goat hair and everything made of wood!”

²¹ Eleazar the priest told the soldiers who had gone to

the battle: “This is the requirement of the Law, which the LORD has commanded Moses: ²² ‘You shall put through fire only the gold, the silver, the copper, the iron, the tin and the lead! ²³ You shall heat everything else that can withstand fire, that it may be clean! The water used to cleanse impurity shall purify everything else from sin! You shall pass through that water everything that cannot withstand fire! ²⁴ You shall also wash your clothes on the seventh day, that you may be clean! After that you may come into the camp.’”

The instructions about the sharing of captives and plunder

²⁵ The LORD told Moses: ²⁶ “You, Eleazar the priest and the heads of the families of the congregation, should count up how many people and animals you have captured! ²⁷ You shall then divide what you have taken as plunder between those who have taken part in the war by going out to battle and all the rest of the congregation! ²⁸ From what belongs to the soldiers who have gone out to battle you shall set aside, as a tribute for the LORD, one individual out of every five hundred of the persons, the cattle, the donkeys and the flocks! ²⁹ You shall take it from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest as the contribution offered to the LORD! ³⁰ From the Israelites’ half you shall take one individual drawn out of every fifty persons, cattle, donkeys, flocks and all other animals and give them to the Levites, who care for the service of the Tabernacle of the LORD!”

³¹ Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³² The rest of the booty that the soldiers had taken as plunder totalled six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, ³³ seventy-two thousand cattle, ³⁴ sixty-one thousand donkeys, ³⁵ and thirty-two thousand human beings in all, consisting of the women who had not had sexual relations. ³⁶ The half-share of the men who had gone out to the battle totalled three hundred and thirty-seven thousand, five hundred sheep. ³⁷ The tribute to the LORD from the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five. ³⁸ The cattle totalled thirty-six thousand and the tribute to the LORD from them was seventy-two. ³⁹ The donkeys totalled thirty thousand, five hundred, and the tribute to the LORD from them was sixty-one. ⁴⁰ The human beings totalled sixteen thousand and the tribute to the LORD out of them was thirty-two persons. ⁴¹ Moses gave the tribute, which was the contribution that was due to the LORD, to Eleazar the priest, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁴² From the half share belonging to the Israelites, which Moses had separated from that of the soldiers, ⁴³ that is, the half belonging to the congregation, there were three hundred and thirty-seven thousand, five hundred sheep, ⁴⁴ thirty-six thousand cattle, ⁴⁵ thirty thousand, five hundred donkeys, ⁴⁶ and sixteen thousand human beings. ⁴⁷ From the Israelites’ half Moses took away one drawn out of every fifty of the human

beings and of the animals and gave them to the Levites, who were taking care of the service at the Tabernacle of the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁴⁸ Then the officers, who had been over the regiments of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, came to Moses. ⁴⁹ They told him: “Your servants have counted all the soldiers who were under our command, and not one of us is missing. ⁵⁰ Therefore, we have brought, as a gift to the LORD, the articles of gold, armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings and necklaces, which each of us has found, to make atonement for our lives before the LORD.”

⁵¹ Moses and Eleazar the priest received all the golden crafted articles from them. ⁵² All the gold from the contribution that the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds made to the LORD weighed two hundred and one kilograms. ⁵³ Each of the soldiers had taken plunder for himself. ⁵⁴ Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds and brought it into the Tent of Meeting, as a memorial for the Israelites before the LORD.

32

The allocation of land east of the Jordan River to two and a half tribes — Deuteronomy 3:12-22

¹ The tribes of Reuben and Gad had very large numbers of livestock and saw that the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead were indeed good places for livestock.

² So, the tribes of Gad and Reuben came to Moses, Eleazar the priest and the other leaders of the congregation and said: ³ “Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo and Beon, ⁴ the land that the LORD defeated before the congregation of Israel, is a good land for livestock, and we, your servants, have livestock.”

⁵ They added: “If you are kindly disposed towards us, let your servants be given this land as their possession! Do not make us cross the Jordan!”

⁶ Moses asked the tribes of Gad and Reuben: “While your countrymen go to war, will you yourselves stay here? ⁷ Why, then, will you discourage the other Israelites from going across into the land that the LORD has given to them? ⁸ This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-Barnea to look at the land. ⁹ After they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the Israelites from going into the land that the LORD had given them. ¹⁰ On that day the anger of the LORD was aroused, and He swore this oath: ¹¹ ‘None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and older, will see the land that I promised with an oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because they have not followed Me fully, ¹² except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua, the son of Nun, because they have followed the LORD completely. ¹³ The anger of

the LORD burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness for forty years, until the whole generation of those who had done this thing, which the LORD regarded as evil, had gone. ¹⁴ Now look! You have risen in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the LORD towards Israel. ¹⁵ For, if you turn away from following Him, He will again abandon all these people in the wilderness, and you will be the cause of their destruction!"

¹⁶ They came up to him and said: "We shall build stone sheep-pens here for our livestock and cities for our women and children. ¹⁷ However, we ourselves shall quickly prepare ourselves and go ahead of the other Israelites until we have brought them to their place. Meanwhile our women and children will live in the fortified cities, out of reach of other people living in the land. ¹⁸ We shall not return to our homes until every Israelite has obtained possession of his inheritance. ¹⁹ We shall not receive any inheritance with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond that, because our inheritance has come to us on this eastern side of the Jordan."

²⁰ Moses told them: "If you do this, if you prepare yourselves before the LORD for the war, ²¹ and, if all your men cross the Jordan before the LORD ready for battle until He has driven His enemies before Him, ²² and, if the land has been subjugated before the LORD, after that you may return. Then you will be free from your obligation to the LORD and to Israel. Then this land will be your possession before the LORD. ²³ However, if you do not do this, be aware that you will have sinned against the LORD! Then be sure that your sin will find you out! ²⁴ Build yourselves cities for your women and children and stone pens for your flocks but carry out your verbal promises!"

²⁵ The tribes of Gad and Reuben told Moses: "We, your servants, shall do as you, our master, command.

²⁶ Our children, our wives, our flocks and all our cattle will remain here in the cities of Gilead.

²⁷ Meanwhile we, your servants, shall all cross over as an army ready for battle before the LORD into the war, as you, our master, command."

²⁸ So, Moses gave commands about them to Eleazar the priest, Joshua, the son of Nun, and the family heads of the ancestral tribes of the Israelites. ²⁹ Moses told them: "If the tribes of Gad and Reuben all cross over the Jordan with you, ready for the war before the LORD, and the land has been conquered before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as their possession! ³⁰ However, if they do not cross over with you ready for battle, then they shall be settled among you in the land of Canaan!"

³¹ The tribes of Gad and Reuben answered: "We shall do just as the LORD has told us, your servants. ³² We shall cross over ready for battle before the LORD into

the land of Canaan. However, the property that we inherit shall remain with us on this side of the Jordan!"

³³ So, Moses gave the kingdom of Sihon, the king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, to the tribes of Gad and Reuben and half of the tribe of Manasseh, the son of Joseph. He gave them the whole land with its cities inside the borders, the cities of the surrounding territory. ³⁴ The tribe of Gad rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, ³⁵ Atroth-Shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, ³⁶ Beth-Nimrah and Beth-Haran as fortified cities, as well as stone pens for sheep.

³⁷ The tribe of Reuben rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kir-iathaim, ³⁸ as well as Nebo and Baal-Meon with their names changed and Sibmah. They gave different names to the cities that they rebuilt.

³⁹ The descendants of Machir, the son of Manasseh, went to Gilead, captured it and drove out the Amorites who were there. ⁴⁰ So, Moses gave Gilead to Machir, the son of Manasseh, and his descendants lived there.

⁴¹ Then Jair, the descendant of Manasseh, went and captured their tent-villages and called them "Havvoth-Jair." ⁴² Nobah went and captured Kenath and its surrounding settlements and called it "Nobah," after his own name.

33

Summary of the stages of Israel's journey after leaving Egypt

¹ These are the stages in the journey of the Israelites when they came out of the land of Egypt in their military divisions under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. ² Moses wrote down the starting places of their journeys as the LORD directed them. These are their journeys according to their starting places. ³ The Israelites set out from Rameses in the first month. It was on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. The Israelites came out boldly in full view of all the Egyptians. ⁴ The Egyptians were burying all their first-born, whom the LORD had struck down among them, after the LORD had carried out acts of judgment on their gods.

⁵ The Israelites set out from Rameses and camped at Succoth. ⁶ They set out from Succoth and camped at Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness. ⁷ They set out from Etham and turned back to Pi-Hahiroth, which is opposite Baal-Zephon, and camped in front of Migdol. ⁸ They set out from in front of Pi-Hahiroth and passed through the middle of the sea into the wilderness. Then they travelled for three days in the wilderness of Etham and camped at Marah. ⁹ They set out from Marah and came to Elim. At Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm-trees, and they camped there. ¹⁰ They set out from Elim and camped beside the Red Sea. ¹¹ They set out from the Red Sea and camped in the wilderness of Sin. ¹² They set out from the Wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. ¹³ They set out from Dophkah and camped

at Alush. ¹⁴ They set out from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink. ¹⁵ They set out from Rephidim and camped in the Wilderness of Sinai. ¹⁶ They set out from the Wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth-Hattaavah. ¹⁷ They set out from Kibroth-Hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth. ¹⁸ They set out from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah. ¹⁹ They set out from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-Perez. They set out from Rimmon-Perez and camped at Libnah. ²¹ They set out from Libnah and camped at Rissah. ²² They set out from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah. ²³ They set out from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher. ²⁴ They set out from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. ²⁵ They set out from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. ²⁶ They set out from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. ²⁷ They set out from Tahath and camped at Terah. ²⁸ They set out from Terah and camped at Mithkah. ²⁹ They set out from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. ³⁰ They set out from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth. ³¹ They set out from Moseroth and camped at Bene-Jaakan. ³² They set out from Bene-Jaakan and camped at Hor-Haggidgad. ³³ They set out from Hor-Haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah. ³⁴ They set out from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah. ³⁵ They set out from Abronah and camped at Ezion-Geber. ³⁶ They set out from Ezion-Geber and camped in the Wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh. ³⁷ They set out from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor on the border of the land of Edom. ³⁸ Then Aaron the priest went up on Mount Hor at the Command of the LORD and died there on the first day of the fifth month in the fortieth year after the Israelites had come out of the land of Egypt. ³⁹ Aaron was one hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.

⁴⁰ The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev in the land of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming.

⁴¹ They set out from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. ⁴² They set out from Zalmonah and camped at Punon. ⁴³ They set out from Punon and camped at Oboth. ⁴⁴ They set out from Oboth and camped at Iye-Abarim on the border of Moab. ⁴⁵ They set out from Iyim and camped at Dibon-Gad. ⁴⁶ They set out from Dibon-Gad and camped at Almon-Diblathaim. ⁴⁷ They set out from Almon-Diblathaim and camped in the Mountains of Abarim, in front of Nebo. ⁴⁸ They set out from the Mountains of Abarim and camped on the waterless plains of Moab beside the Jordan across from Jericho. ⁴⁹ They camped beside the Jordan from Beth-Jeshimoth as far as Abel-Shittim on the waterless plains of Moab.

Instructions about the Canaanites and the division of their land

⁵⁰ The LORD told Moses on the waterless plains of Moab beside the Jordan across from Jericho:

⁵¹ “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵² you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you! You shall destroy all their carved images! You shall destroy all their images of cast metal! You shall demolish all their high places! ⁵³ You shall take possession of the land and live there! For I have given you the land to possess. ⁵⁴ You shall receive hereditary possession of the land by lot according to your clans! You shall give a larger inheritance to a large clan and a smaller one to a small clan! Each one shall have what falls to him by lot! You shall receive hereditary possession according to the tribes of your fathers! ⁵⁵ However, if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land before you, then those of them whom you allow to remain in the land will be thorns in your eyes and barbs in your sides. They will be in a state of conflict with you in the land in which you are living. ⁵⁶ Then I shall do to you what I had planned to do to them.’”

34

The borders of the land of Israel

¹ The LORD told Moses: ² “Command the Israelites and tell them: ‘When you enter the land of Canaan, this is the land that will be apportioned to you as an inheritance, the land of Canaan inside its boundaries.

³ Your southern border will be from the Wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom. Your southern border will extend from the far end of the Salt Sea on the east. ⁴ Then your border will change direction south of the Ascent of Akrabbim, will continue over to Zin, and its limit will be south of Kadesh-Barnea. Then it will extend to Hazar-Addar and continue on to Azmon. ⁵ The border will change direction from Azmon to the Brook of Egypt and will end at the Sea.

⁶ “Your western border will be the Great Sea. This will be your western border.

⁷ “This will be your northern border: you shall mark out your border from the Great Sea to Mount Hor.

⁸ From Mount Hor you shall mark out your border to Lebo-Hamath, and the boundary will end at Zedad.

⁹ From there the border will extend to Ziphron and will end at Hazar-Enan. This will be your northern border.

¹⁰ “You shall desire to have your eastern border from Hazar-Enan to Shepham! ¹¹ From Shepham the border will go down to Riblah, on the eastern side of Ain. Then the border will go down and adjoin the eastern shoulder of the Sea of Chinnereth. ¹² Then the border will go down the Jordan and will end at the Salt Sea. This will be your land with its surrounding boundaries.’”

¹³ Moses commanded the Israelites: “This is the land that you shall receive by lot as your hereditary possession. The LORD has commanded it to be given to the nine and a half tribes. ¹⁴ For the paternal families of

the tribe of Reuben, the paternal families of the tribe of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance. ¹⁵ These two and a half tribes have received their inheritance along the eastern side of the Jordan across from Jericho, toward the sunrise.”

The appointment of men to apportion the land

¹⁶ The LORD told Moses: ¹⁷ “These are the names of the men who shall assign your hereditary possession of the land: Eleazar the priest and Joshua, the son of Nun. ¹⁸ You people shall also take one leader from each tribe to assign hereditary possession of the land! ¹⁹ These are the names of the men: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb, the son of Jephunneh; ²⁰ from the tribe of the descendants of Simeon, Shemuel, the son of Ammihud; ²¹ and from the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad, the son of Chislon. ²² From the tribe of the descendants of Dan the leader shall be Bukki, the son of Jogli! ²³ From the descendants of Joseph: from the tribe of the descendants of Manasseh the leader shall be Haniel, the son of Ephod, ²⁴ and from the tribe of Ephraim the leader shall be Kemuel, the son of Shiphtan! ²⁵ From the tribe of the descendants of Zebulun the leader shall be Elizaphan, the son of Parnach! ²⁶ From the tribe of the descendants of Issachar the leader shall be Paltiel, the son of Azzan! ²⁷ From the tribe of the descendants of Asher the leader shall be Ahihud, the son of Shelomi! ²⁸ From the tribe of the descendants of Naphtali the leader shall be Pedahel, the son of Ammihud! ²⁹ These were the men whom the LORD commanded to assign hereditary possession to the Israelites in the land of Canaan.

35

The allocation of cities to the Levites — Joshua 21

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses on the waterless plains of Moab beside the Jordan across from Jericho: ² “Out of the property that the Israelites inherit, command them to give cities to the Levites to live in! You shall also give the Levites pasturelands around the cities! ³ They shall have the cities to live in, and their cattle, flocks and other livestock shall have pasturelands! ⁴ The pasturelands of the cities, which you give to the Levites, shall extend outwards from the wall of the city for five hundred metres on all sides! ⁵ Outside the city you shall also measure off one thousand metres on the eastern side, one thousand metres on the southern side, one thousand metres on the western side and one thousand metres on the northern side, with the city in the middle! These areas shall belong to them as pasturelands for their cities! ⁶ “You shall appoint six of the cities that you give to the Levites as cities of refuge! A person who has killed someone may flee to them. In addition to these cities you shall give the Levites forty-two other cities! ⁷ The total of the cities that you give to the Levites shall be forty-eight! You shall allocate the cities together with their pasturelands! ⁸ You shall allot more

of the cities that you give to the Levites from the property of the Israelites from the larger tribes and fewer cities from the smaller tribes! Each shall give some of its cities to the Levites in proportion to its hereditary possession, which it receives!”

The allocation of cities of refuge — Deuteronomy 4:41-43, 19:1-14, Joshua 20:1-9

⁹ The LORD told Moses: ¹⁰ “Speak to the Israelites and tell them: ‘When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ¹¹ you shall select cities that will serve as your cities of refuge, that a person who has killed someone accidentally may flee there! ¹² You shall use the cities as places of refuge from an avenger, that a person who kills someone may not die before he has stood on trial before the congregation! ¹³ You shall allocate six cities to be your cities of refuge! ¹⁴ You shall allocate three cities on this side of the Jordan and three cities in the land of Canaan to serve as cities of refuge! ¹⁵ These six cities shall be places for Israelites, foreigners and any other people living among them to take refuge in, that anyone who has accidentally killed another person may flee there!

Regulations about murder and unintentional homicide

¹⁶ “However, if someone has struck another with an iron object, so that he dies, he is a murderer. A murderer shall certainly be put to death! ¹⁷ If anyone has struck another with a stone in his hand that could cause death and the other dies, he is a murderer. A murderer shall certainly be put to death! ¹⁸ Or if anyone has had a wooden object in his hand that could cause death and has hit someone so that he dies, he is a murderer. A murderer shall certainly be put to death! ¹⁹ The avenger of blood himself shall put the murderer to death! When he meets him, he shall put him to death! ²⁰ Or if a person has shoved another out of hatred or has thrown something at him with premeditated malice, so that he dies, ²¹ or if in enmity a person has struck another with his fist, so that he dies, the one who has struck him shall certainly be put to death! He is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him! ²² However, if he has pushed him suddenly and without hostility or has thrown any object at him without intended malice ²³ or, if he has dropped on him any kind of stone that could kill him without seeing him and he dies, when he has not been his enemy and has not tried to harm him, ²⁴ the congregation shall decide according to these Regulations between the man who has struck the blow and the avenger of blood! ²⁵ The congregation shall rescue the man who has done the killing from the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall bring him back into the city of refuge to which he has fled! Then he shall live there until the death of the High Priest, who has been anointed with the holy oil! ²⁶ However, if the one who has done the killing ever goes beyond the limits of his city of refuge, to which he has fled, ²⁷ and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge and kills the man

who has done the killing, then the avenger of blood is not guilty of murder. ²⁸ For the man shall stay in his city of refuge until the High Priest dies! However, after the High Priest dies, the man who has done the killing may return to the land that he owns. ²⁹ These shall be your legal Requirements, for you and for your coming generations, wherever you live!

³⁰ “Whoever kills another person shall be put to death as a murderer only on the testimony of witnesses! However, one witness alone shall not be sufficient to confront another person to put him to death! ³¹ You shall not accept a ransom for the life of a murderer, who is guilty and deserves to die! Rather, he shall certainly be put to death! ³² You shall not accept a ransom from anyone who has fled to his city of refuge to allow him to return to live in the land before the death of the High Priest! ³³ You shall not defile the land in which you live, because it is bloodshed that defiles the land! Atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed except by the blood of the person who has shed it. ³⁴ You shall not defile the land in which you are living, because I too am dwelling in it! For I am the LORD and I am dwelling among the Israelites.”

36

Instructions for retaining inherited property in a tribe — Numbers 27:1-11

¹ The family leaders of the clans of the descendants of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, who belonged to the clans of the descendants of Joseph, approached Moses and spoke in his presence and in the presence of the other leaders, the heads of the other Israelite clans. ² They said: “The LORD has commanded you, my master, to allocate the land by lot to the Israelites as a hereditary possession. Furthermore, the LORD has commanded you, my master, to allocate the hereditary possession of our fellow-countryman, Zelophehad, to his daughters. ³ Now if they marry any men from the other tribes of the Israelites, their hereditary possession will be taken away

from the hereditary possession of our fathers and will be added to the hereditary possession of the tribe into which they marry. Then part of our allotted hereditary possession will be taken away. ⁴ Even when the Year of Jubilee of the Israelites comes, the women’s hereditary possession will be added to the hereditary possession of the tribe into which they marry. Their hereditary possession will be taken away from the hereditary possession of the tribe of our forefathers.”

⁵ Moses then gave the Israelites this Command, as the LORD had told him: “What the tribe of the descendants of Joseph is saying is correct. ⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded about Zelophehad’s daughters: ‘They may marry anyone whom they think best, except that they shall marry men who belong to the family of the tribe of their father!’ ⁷ In this way hereditary property of the Israelites will not be transferred from one tribe to another. For each Israelite will hold onto the hereditary possession of the tribe of his fathers. ⁸ Every daughter who inherits property in any Israelite tribe shall marry someone belonging to the family of her father’s tribe, that each Israelite may possess the hereditary property of his fathers! ⁹ No hereditary property shall be transferred from one tribe to another tribe! For each Israelite tribe shall retain its hereditary property!”

¹⁰ The daughters of Zelophehad did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹¹ Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, married their cousins on their father’s side. ¹² They married inside the clans of the descendants of Manasseh, the son of Joseph. So, their hereditary property remained in the tribal family to which their father belonged.

¹³ These are the Commandments and the Decisions that the LORD commanded the Israelites through Moses on the waterless plains of Moab beside the Jordan across from Jericho.

DEUTERONOMY

1

Moses' explanation of the Law on the plains of Moab, forty years after leaving Egypt

¹ This is the speech that Moses gave to all Israel east of the Jordan, in the wilderness, in the waterless region opposite Suph, between Paran, Tophel, Laban, Hazereth and Dizahab. ² It takes eleven days to go from Horeb by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-Barnea.

³ In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses told the Israelites everything that the LORD had commanded him concerning them. ⁴ This was after they had defeated Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon and after they had, at Edrei, defeated Og, the king of Bashan, who lived at Ashtaroth.

Reminder about the events at Mount Horeb

⁵ There in the country of Moab, east of the Jordan, Moses began to explain this Law. He said, ⁶ "The LORD, our God, told us at Horeb: 'You have stayed at this mountain long enough. ⁷ Move on and set out! Go into the hill-country of the Amorites and to all the neighbouring people in the waterless region, the hill-country, the lowlands, the Negev and the seacoast, the land of the Canaanites, and to the Lebanon range, as far as **the great river, the Euphrates!** ⁸ See! I have set the land before you. Go and take possession of the land that the LORD promised with an oath to give to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to their descendants after them!'

The appointment of leaders in the tribes— Exodus 18:13-26, Deuteronomy 16:18-20

⁹ "At that time I told you, 'I cannot support you alone. ¹⁰ The LORD, your God, has made you so numerous that here you are today, as many as the stars in the sky. ¹¹ May the LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are and may He bless you as He has promised you! ¹² How could I alone bear your load, your burden and your litigation? ¹³ Choose men who are wise, perceptive and experienced for your tribes, that I may appoint them as your leaders!'

¹⁴ "You answered me, 'What you have proposed to do is good.'

¹⁵ "So, I took the leaders of your tribes, men who were wise and experienced, and appointed them over you as leaders, as commanders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens and as officers for your tribes. ¹⁶ At that time I commanded your judges: 'Hear the cases between your fellow-countrymen and judge fairly between one man and his countryman and between one of them and a foreigner who is with him!'

¹⁷ When you judge, you shall not be partial to anyone but hear an insignificant person in the same way as an important person! You shall not be intimidated by anyone! For the decision belongs to God Himself. You shall bring to me any case that is too hard for you, and

I shall hear it!' ¹⁸ At that time I gave you commands about everything that you had to do.

Reminder about the sending of the spies into Canaan from Kadesh-Barnea

¹⁹ "When we set out from Horeb, we went through all that vast and terrible wilderness, which you saw on the way to the hill-country of the Amorites, as the LORD, our God, had commanded us, and so we arrived at Kadesh-Barnea. ²⁰ Then I told you, 'You have reached the hill-country of the Amorites, which the LORD, our God, is giving to us. ²¹ Look! The LORD, your God, has set the land before you. Go up and take possession of it as the LORD, the God of your forefathers, has promised you. Do not be afraid or terrified!'

²² Then all of you approached me. You said, 'Let us send some men ahead of us, to spy out the land for us and to bring back a report to us about the route by which we should go up and about the cities into which we shall come!' ²³ The suggestion seemed good to me. So, I chose twelve of your men, one man from each tribe. ²⁴ They left, went up into the hill-country, went as far as the Valley of Eshcol and spied it out. ²⁵ They also took some of the fruit of the land with them, brought it down to us and reported to us. They said, 'The land that the LORD, our God, is giving to us is good.'

Reminder about the Israelites' refusal to enter Canaan— Numbers 13:1-33

²⁶ "However, you refused to go up and rebelled against the Command of the LORD, your God. ²⁷ You appeared sullen in your tents. You said, 'Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us. ²⁸ To what kind of place are we going up? Our fellow-Israelites have made our courage melt by saying: "The people are stronger and taller than we are, and the cities are large with walls up to the sky. We have even seen the descendants of Anak there!"'

²⁹ "However, I told you, 'You must not be terrified or afraid of them! ³⁰ The LORD, your God, who is going ahead of you, will Himself fight for you, exactly as He did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes, ³¹ and **in the wilderness**. There you have seen that the LORD, your **God, has been carrying you**, like a man carrying his son, all the way you have been travelling, until you have arrived at this place.'

³² "However, although I told you that, you would not trust the LORD, your God, ³³ who has been going ahead of you on the journey, to search out a place for you to camp. He has been providing the fire by night, that you may see on the way on which you have been going, and the cloud by day.

The penalty for Israel's rebellion — Numbers 14:20-45

³⁴ When the LORD heard what you were saying, He became angry and swore this oath: ³⁵ 'Truly not one of these men from this wicked generation will see the good land that I promised with an oath to give to your forefathers, ³⁶ except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. He

will see it, and I shall give to him and to his descendants the land on which he has walked, because he has followed the LORD completely!

³⁷ “On account of you the LORD was also angry with me. He said, ‘You will not go in there, either.

³⁸ Joshua, the son of Nun, who is your assistant, will go in there. Encourage him! For he will give hereditary possession of it to Israel. ³⁹ However, your little ones, who you said would be taken as plunder, and your children, who today do not know good and evil, will go in there. I shall give it to them, and they will take possession of it. ⁴⁰ However, as for you, turn back and set out toward the wilderness on the road to the Red Sea!’

Reminder to Israel about their defeat by the Amorites — Numbers 14:39-45

⁴¹ “Then you answered me, ‘We have sinned against the LORD! We ourselves shall go up and fight, just as the LORD, our God, has commanded us!’ Each of you fastened on his weapons, and you thought that it would be easy to go up into the hill-country.

⁴² However, the LORD told me, ‘Tell them: “You shall not go up or fight! For I shall not be among you. If you do, your enemies will defeat you.”’

⁴³ “So, I spoke to you, but you would not listen. You rebelled against the Command of the LORD and arrogantly went up into the hill-country. ⁴⁴ The Amorites who were living in that hill-country came out against you, chased you like bees and struck you down in Seir as far as Hormah. ⁴⁵ Then you came back and wept before the LORD. Nevertheless, the LORD did not hear what you were asking and did not listen to you. ⁴⁶ Then you stayed at Kadesh all the time that you did.”

2

A reminder about the journeys in the wilderness, the events at Mount Seir and the prohibition against fighting against Edom, Moab and Ammon — Numbers 20:14-21, 21:11-20

¹ “Then we turned back and set out toward the wilderness on the road to the Red Sea, as the LORD had told me. For a long time we went around the hill-country of Seir.

² “Then the LORD told me: ³ ‘You have been going around this hill-country long enough. Turn to the north. ⁴ Command the people: “You are about to pass through the territory of your relatives, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be afraid of you. So, be very careful! ⁵ Do not venture into conflict with them! For I shall not give you any of their land, even as much as a foot-width. For I have given the hill-country of Seir to Esau as his property. ⁶ You shall purchase food from them with money, that you may eat and shall also purchase water from them with money, that you may drink! ⁷ For the LORD, your God, has been blessing you in everything that your hands have been doing. He has been taking care of your journey in this vast wilderness. For these forty years the LORD, your God, has been with you, and

you have not lacked anything.”’

⁸ “So, we moved away from our relatives, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. We left the road in the waterless region from Elath and Ezion-Geber. We changed direction and travelled along the road in the Wilderness of Moab.

⁹ “The LORD told me, ‘Do not show hostility towards the Moabites and do not venture into military conflict with them! For I shall not give you any of their land to possess. For I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as their property.’ ¹⁰ The Emities had lived there previously. They had been a mighty and numerous people and as tall as the Anakites. ¹¹ They used to be regarded as Rephaites, like the Anakites, but the Moabites used to call them ‘Emities.’ ¹² The Horites had previously been living in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them, destroyed them as they advanced and settled in their place, as Israel did to the land that they possessed, which the LORD had given to them.

¹³ “God said, ‘Now start out and cross over the Zered Valley!’ So, we crossed over the Zered Valley. ¹⁴ The time we took to come from Kadesh-Barnea until we crossed over the Zered Valley was thirty-eight years. We remained until that entire generation of the men who could fight was no longer present in the camp, as the LORD had sworn to them. ¹⁵ Indeed, the hand of the LORD was against them, to push them on, out of the camp, until they were annihilated.

Reminder to Israel about the Ammonites

¹⁶ “When the men who could fight had all died and were no more among the people, ¹⁷ the LORD told me: ¹⁸ ‘Now you are about to go past Ar, along the border of Moab. ¹⁹ When you come close to the Ammonites, do not trouble them or venture into conflict with them! For I shall not give you any land of the Ammonites as your property. For I have given it to the descendants of Lot as their property.’ ²⁰ (It had also been regarded as the land of the Rephaites, who had previously lived there, but the Ammonites used to call them ‘Zamzummites.’ ²¹ They had been a mighty and numerous people and as tall as the Anakites, but the LORD destroyed them as the Ammonites advanced, and the Ammonites dispossessed them and settled in their place. ²² The LORD had done the same for the descendants of Esau, who were living in Seir, when He destroyed the Horites as the descendants of Esau advanced. They dispossessed them, settled in their place and are still there today. ²³ As for the Avvites who had been living in unwalled settlements as far as Gaza, the Caphtorites, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and settled in their place.)

Reminder to Israel about the defeat of Sihon, the king of Heshbon — Numbers 21:21-32, Joshua 12:1-6, Judges 11:19-22

²⁴ “God said, ‘Move on, set out and cross over the stream of the Arnon! You see, I have handed over to you Sihon, the Amorite king of Heshbon and his land. Make a beginning, take possession and engage him in

battle! ²⁵ Today I shall begin to make all the nations under the sky fear you and be terrified of you. When they hear reports about you, they will tremble and squirm because of you.'

²⁶ "Then I sent messengers from the Wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon, the king of Heshbon, offering peace and saying: ²⁷ 'Let me pass through your land! I shall travel only on the road. I shall not turn aside to the right or to the left. ²⁸ I shall pay you with money for food, that I may eat and shall pay you with money for the water that you provide me, that I may drink. Only let me pass through on foot, ²⁹ as the descendants of Esau, who are living in Seir, and as the Moabites, who are living in Ar, have done for me, until I have crossed over the Jordan into the land that the LORD, our God, is giving to us!'

³⁰ "However, Sihon, the king of Heshbon, refused to let us pass through his territory. For the LORD, your God, had made him stubborn and had hardened his heart, that He might deliver him into your hands, as He now has done. ³¹ The LORD told me, 'Look! I have begun to place Sihon and his land before you. Go ahead! Take possession, that you may occupy his land!'

³² "Then Sihon and all his army came out to meet us in battle at Jahaz. ³³ However, the LORD, our God, delivered him over to us, and we defeated him with his sons and his whole army. ³⁴ At that time we captured all his cities and devoted every town, with men, women and children, to destruction. We left no survivors. ³⁵ We took only the livestock as plunder for ourselves, as well as the booty of the cities that we had captured. ³⁶ From Aroer, which is on the edge of the stream of the Arnon and from the city that is in the valley, as far as Gilead, there was no city that was too strongly fortified for us. The LORD, our God, gave them all to us as we advanced. ³⁷ However, you did not go near the land of the Ammonites, any land on the bank of the River Jabbok, the cities of the hill-country or anything else that the LORD, our God, had forbidden.

3

A reminder to Israel about the capture of the territory of Og, the king of Bashan — Numbers 21:33-35

¹ "When we turned and went up along the road toward Bashan, Og, the king of Bashan, came out with his whole army to meet us in battle at Edrei. ² The LORD told me, 'Do not be afraid of him! For I have put him, all his people and his land in your hands. You shall do to him what you have done to Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who used to live in Heshbon!' ³ The LORD, our God, also put Og, the king of Bashan and his whole army into our hands. We struck him down until he had no survivors left. ⁴ At that time we captured all his cities. There was not one of the sixty cities that we did not take from them. We captured the whole district of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Ba-

shan. ⁵ All these cities were fortified with high walls, gates and bars. Besides, there were very many unwalled villages. ⁶ We devoted them to destruction, as we had done to Sihon, the king of Heshbon. We devoted every city to destruction, including men, women and children. ⁷ However, we took all the livestock and the booty of the cities as plunder for ourselves.

⁸ "At that time we took the land from the two kings of the Amorites who were on this side of the Jordan, from the stream of the Arnon to Mount Hermon. ⁹ (The Sidonians call Hermon 'Sirion,' and the Amorites call it 'Senir'). ¹⁰ We took all the cities of the tableland, all Gilead and all Bashan, as far as Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. ¹¹ For only Og, the king of Bashan, was left from the remnant of the Rephaites. Indeed, his bedstead was made of iron. (Is it not still in Rabbah, the city of the Ammonites?) ¹² It is four-and-a-half metres long and two metres wide according to the standard length of the cubit. ¹² We took possession of this land at that time.

The allocation of land east of the Jordan to two and a half tribes — Numbers 32, Joshua 13:8-33

"I gave to Reuben and Gad the land from Aroer, beside the stream of the Arnon and half of the hill-country of Gilead, together with its cities. ¹³ I gave to half of the tribe of Manasseh the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan, the kingdom of Og. (The whole district of Argob, the whole of that part of Bashan, used to be called 'the Land of the Rephaites'). ¹⁴ Jair, the descendant of Manasseh, took the whole district of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites and called those places of Bashan by his own name, 'Havvoth-Jair,'⁷² and they are still called that today. ¹⁵ I also gave Gilead to Machir. ¹⁶ I gave to Reuben and Gad the land extending from Gilead as far as the stream of the Arnon, with the middle of the stream as the border, as far as the stream of the Jabbok, which is the border of the Ammonites. ¹⁷ I also gave them the waterless plain, with the Jordan as the border, from Chinnereth to the eastern side of the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, below the slopes of Pisgah.

¹⁸ "At that time I commanded you: 'The LORD, your God, has given you this land to possess. All your men qualified for military service shall cross over, ready for battle, ahead of your fellow-Israelites! ¹⁹ However, your wives, your children and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall stay in your cities, which I have given you, ²⁰ until the LORD gives rest to your fellow-Israelites as He has done to you and until they, too, have taken possession of the land that the LORD, your God, is giving to them on the other side of the Jordan! Then everyone may come back to his own hereditary property, which I have given to you.'

⁷² Havvoth-Jair means, "Tent-villages of Jair."

21 “At that time I also commanded Joshua: ‘You have witnessed personally everything that the LORD, your God, has done to those two kings. The LORD will do the same to all the kingdoms into which you will cross over. 22 You shall not be afraid of them! For the LORD, your God, is Himself fighting for you.’

The denial of Moses’ wish to enter Canaan, but his permission to view Canaan from Mount Pisgah — Numbers 20:1-13

23 “At that time I pleaded with the LORD for pity:

24 ‘Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant that You are great and that Your hand is strong. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the kinds of deeds and mighty acts that You have done?’

25 Please let me cross over and let me see the good land, which is on the other side of the Jordan, that fine hill-country and Lebanon!’

26 “However, the LORD was angry with me because of you and would not listen to me. The LORD told me: ‘Enough of that! Do not speak to Me about this matter any longer! 27 Go up to the top of Pisgah and look to the west, the north, the south and the east! See it with your own eyes! For you are not going to cross over the Jordan here. 28 Give instructions to Joshua, encourage him and strengthen him! For he will cross over at the head of these people. He will also give them hereditary possession of the land that you will see.’

29 “Then we stayed in the valley near Beth-Peor.

4

Instructions about how the Israelites should be loyal to the Law

1 “Now, Israel, listen to the Statutes and Decisions that I am teaching you to observe, that you may live, enter and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving to you! 2 You shall **not add anything** to the Word that I am commanding you and you shall **not take anything away from it**, that you may keep the Commandments of the LORD, your God, which I am commanding you!

3 “With your own eyes you saw what the LORD did at Baal-Peor. The LORD, your God, destroyed everyone from among you who went after the Baal of Peor.

4 However, you who were faithful to the LORD, your God, are all alive today. 5 Look! I have taught you Statutes and Decisions, as the LORD, my God, has commanded me, that you may live according to them in the land to which you are going to possess.

Admonition not to forget Mount Sinai — Exodus 19:18-25

6 “Therefore, you shall keep them and observe them! For this is your wisdom and your understanding that the other peoples should see. For, when they hear all these Statutes, they will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people!’ 7 For what other great nation has gods who are as near to it as the LORD, our God, has been in everything for which we have called on Him? 8 Or what other great nation is there that has Statutes and Decisions as righteous as all this teaching, which I am setting before you today?

9 Only be on your guard and watch yourself carefully, that you may not forget the things that you have seen with your own eyes and that you may not fail to keep them in mind all your life! You shall teach them to your children and to your grandchildren! 10 Teach them about the day when you stood before the LORD, your God, at Horeb! Then the LORD told me: ‘Gather the people before Me, that I may let them hear My Words, that they may learn to fear Me while they live on the earth and that they may teach their children!’

11 **You came near** and stood at the foot of the mountain while the mountain was **blazing** with **fire** up to the middle of the sky while it was **dark**, cloudy and **gloomy**.

12 Then the LORD spoke to you out of the fire. You **heard** a voice **speaking Words** but saw no form. You heard only a **voice**.

13 He declared to you His Covenant, the Ten Commandments, which He commanded you to carry out. He then wrote them on two stone tablets. 14 At that time the LORD commanded me to teach you Statutes and Decisions that you might carry them out in the land into which you are crossing over to possess.

15 You shall watch yourselves very carefully! For you did not see any form when the LORD spoke to you out of the fire at Horeb.

16 Do this, that you may not act corruptly and carve an idol for yourselves, an image of any shape, a **representation** of any male or female, 17 a representation of **any animal** that is on the earth, a representation of **any winged creature** that flies in the sky, 18 a representation of **any animal that creeps** on the ground or a representation of any fish that is in the water below the earth! 19 Be careful that, when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars, the whole array of the sky, you are not led astray and worship them and serve them! For the LORD, your God, has made them available to all the nations under the sky! 20 However, the LORD has taken you and has brought you out of Egypt, that iron-smelter, that you may be a **people that He inherits**, as you are today.

21 “However, the LORD was angry with me because of you and swore that I should not cross over the Jordan or enter the good land that the LORD, your God, is giving to you as an inheritance. 22 For I shall die in this land. I shall not cross over the Jordan. However, you will cross over and inherit that good land.

23 “Be careful that you do not forget the Covenant of the LORD, your God, which He has made with you! Do not carve an idol for yourselves or a representation of anything that the LORD, your God, has forbidden!

24 For the LORD, your **God, is a devouring fire**, a jealous God.

25 “If, when you have children and grandchildren and become familiar with the land, you act corruptly and carve an idol or a representation of anything and if you do what the LORD, your God, considers evil and provoke Him to rage, 26 today I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that you will certainly perish

quickly from the land into which you are crossing over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it but will certainly be destroyed. ²⁷ The LORD will scatter you among the other nations and only a few of you will survive among the nations to which the LORD will carry you away. ²⁸ There you will serve wooden and stone gods that human hands have made, which cannot see, hear, eat or smell.

²⁹ “However, when from there you look for the LORD, your God, you will find Him when you search for Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

³⁰ When you are in distress and all these things come on you in later years, you will come back to the LORD, your God, and listen to what He says. ³¹ For the LORD, your God, is a compassionate God. He will not abandon you, destroy you or forget the Covenant that He confirmed by an oath with your forefathers.

³² “For you should ask about former times, before your time, from the time when God created man on the earth! Ask from one end of the sky to the other! Has anything as grand as this ever happened? Or has anything like it ever been heard of? ³³ Has any other nation ever heard the voice of God speaking out of a fire, as you have heard it and survived? ³⁴ Or has any god ever tried to go and take for himself one nation out of another nation by trials, by miraculous signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm or by awesome terrors, like all the things that the LORD, your God, has done for you in Egypt, before your very eyes? ³⁵ You yourself were shown these things that you might know that the LORD is God. **There is no one else** besides Him.

³⁶ He caused you to hear His voice from heaven to train you. He showed you His great fire on the earth, and you heard His Words out of the middle of the fire.

³⁷ Moreover, because He loved your forefathers and chose their descendants after them, He brought you out of Egypt by His Presence and His great strength,

³⁸ to dispossess before you nations that are greater and mightier than you are, to bring you in and to give you their land as your inheritance, as He is doing today.

³⁹ “You shall acknowledge and take to heart today that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below! **There is no other.** ⁴⁰ You shall keep His Statutes and His Commandments, which I am giving you today, that it may be well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you for all time!”

The allocation of three cities of refuge east of the Jordan — Numbers 35:6-34, Deuteronomy 19:1-14, Joshua 20:1-9

⁴¹ Then Moses set aside three cities on the one side, the eastern side, of the Jordan, ⁴² to which a person might flee when he has killed another person unintentionally, when he had not hated him in the past. If he fled to one of these cities, he would stay alive. ⁴³ He chose Bezer in the wilderness, on the tableland, for Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead for Gad and Golan in Ba-

shan for Manasseh.

A reminder about the Ten Commandments — Exodus 20:1-21

⁴⁴ This is the Law that Moses set before the Israelites.

⁴⁵ These are the Testimonies, the Prescriptions and the Decisions that Moses spoke to the Israelites when they had come out of Egypt. ⁴⁶ They were on the eastern side of the Jordan in the valley near Beth Peor, in the land of Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who used to live in Heshbon. Moses and the Israelites had defeated him when they had come out of Egypt. ⁴⁷ They took possession of his land and the land of Og, the king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who had been on the eastern side of the Jordan. ⁴⁸ This land extended from Aroer, which is on the bank of the stream of the Arnon, as far as Mount Sion (that is, Hermon), ⁴⁹ and included all the waterless plain on the eastern side of the Jordan as far as the Sea of the Arabah, below the slopes of Pisgah.

5

¹ Moses summoned all Israel and told them: “Hear, O Israel, the Prescriptions and the Decisions that I am speaking today for you to hear! You shall learn them and be careful to carry them out! ² The LORD, our God, made a Covenant with us at Horeb. ³ He did not make this Covenant with our forefathers but with us, with all of us, who are alive here today. ⁴ The LORD spoke to you face to face from the middle of the fire on the mountain. ⁵ At that time I was standing between the LORD and you, to declare to you the Word of the LORD, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up on the mountain. He said: ⁶ ‘I am the LORD, your God, and I have brought you out of slave-quarters in the land of Egypt. ⁷ You shall not have any other gods before Me! ⁸ You shall not make any carved image for yourself or any likeness of anything that is in the sky above, that is on the earth below or that is in the water below the earth! ⁹ You shall not bow down to them or serve them! For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God. I punish the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me. ¹⁰ However, I show mercy to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My Commandments. ¹¹ You shall not use the name of the LORD, your God, in a wrong way! For the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who uses His name wrongly. ¹² Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD, your God, has commanded you! ¹³ You shall labour and do all your work for six days! ¹⁴ However, the seventh day is a Sabbath for the LORD, your God. You shall not do any work, you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your ox, your donkey, any of your domestic animals or your foreign resident, who is inside your gates, that your manservant and maidservant may rest, as you do! ¹⁵ You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD, your

God, brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm! Therefore, the LORD, your God, has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. ¹⁶ **Honour your father and your mother**, as the LORD, your God, has commanded you, that **your days may be prolonged** and that **it may be well with you in the land** that the LORD, your God, is giving you! ¹⁷ **You shall not murder!** ¹⁸ **You shall not commit adultery!** ¹⁹ **You shall not steal!** ²⁰ **You shall not give false witness** against your neighbour! ²¹ **You shall not selfishly desire** your neighbour's wife or wish that you had his home, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey or anything else that belongs to your neighbour!

The role of Moses as intermediary between God and the people — Exodus 20:18-21

²² “These are the Commandments that the LORD spoke in a loud voice to your whole assembly on the mountain, out of the fire, the cloud and the thick darkness. He added nothing more. Then He wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

²³ “However, when you heard the voice coming out of the darkness while the mountain was blazing with fire, all the leaders of your tribes and your elders came to me. ²⁴ You said, ‘Look! The LORD, our God, has shown us His glory and His majesty, and we have heard His voice from the fire. We have seen today that God may speak to a man and yet he may stay alive. ²⁵ Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the LORD, our God, yet again, we shall die. ²⁶ For what human being has ever heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the fire, as we have done and yet has stayed alive? ²⁷ You go near yourself and listen to everything that the LORD, our God, speaks! Then you shall speak to us everything that the LORD, our God, speaks to you! We shall listen and put it into practice.’

²⁸ “The LORD heard what you had said to me. The LORD told me, ‘I have heard what these people have said to you. They have been right in everything that they have said. ²⁹ I wish that they were always inclined to fear Me like this and always keep all My Commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children for ever! ³⁰ Go and tell them: “Return to your tents!”’ ³¹ However, you yourself, stay here with Me! I shall speak to you all the Commandments, the Prescriptions and the Decisions. Then you shall teach them to them, that they may observe them in the land that I am giving to them to possess!’

³² “Therefore, you shall be careful to do as the LORD, your God, has commanded you! You shall not turn aside to the right or to the left! ³³ You shall walk in the whole Way that the LORD, your God, has commanded you, that you may live, that it may be well with you and that you may live for a long time in the land that you will possess!

The Commandment to love God

¹ “These are the Commandments and these are the Prescriptions and the Decisions that the LORD, your God, has commanded me to teach you to observe in the land into which you are crossing over to occupy, ² that you, your children and your grandchildren may fear the LORD, your God, by keeping all His Statutes and His Commandments, which I am giving you, all the days of your life and that you may have a long life. ³ You shall hear, O Israel and shall be careful to do them, that all may be well with you and that you may become very numerous in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you!

⁴ “**Hear, O Israel! The LORD, our God, the LORD is one.** ⁵ **You shall love the LORD, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength!** ⁶ These Words, which I am commanding you today, shall be in your heart! ⁷ You shall recite them to your children and talk about them when you sit at home, when you walk on the road, when you lie down and when you get up! ⁸ You shall tie them as a sign on your wrist, and they shall become headbands on your forehead! ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates!”

A warning against disobedience

¹⁰ “When the LORD, your God, brings you into the land that He swore to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that He would give to you, there will be large and lovely cities, which you have not built. ¹¹ There will be houses full of all kinds of good things, which you have not filled. There will be cisterns already dug out, which you have not dug and vineyards and olive-trees, which you have not planted. Then you will have as much as you want. ¹² Be careful that you do not forget the LORD, who has brought you out of slave-quarters in the land of Egypt! ¹³ **You shall fear the LORD, your God, serve Him** and use His name when you swear your oaths!

¹⁴ “You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples that are around you! ¹⁵ For the LORD, your God, who is among you, is a jealous God. Otherwise, the anger of the LORD, your God, will burn against you, and He will destroy you from the face of the land.

¹⁶ “**You shall not test the LORD, your God**, as you tested Him at Massah! ¹⁷ You shall carefully keep the Commandments of the LORD, your God, His Testimonies and His Prescriptions, which He has commanded you! ¹⁸ You shall do what the LORD considers right and good, that it may be well with you and that you may go in and take possession of the good land that the LORD has promised with an oath to your forefathers, ¹⁹ that He may drive away all your enemies as you advance, as the LORD has promised! ²⁰ In the future, when your son asks you, ‘What is the meaning of these Testimonies, Prescriptions and De-

cisions, which the LORD, our God, has commanded you?’²¹ you shall tell your son, ‘We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand!’²² The LORD sent miraculous signs and great, destructive wonders against Egypt, against Pharaoh and against his whole family while we watched them.²³ Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in and give us the land that He promised with an oath to our forefathers.²⁴ The LORD commanded us to keep all these Prescriptions and to fear the LORD, our God, that we might always prosper, that He might preserve us alive, as He is doing today.²⁵ We shall be righteous if we are careful to observe all these Commandments before the LORD, our God, as He has commanded us.’

7

The Command to wipe out the Canaanites and their idols

¹ “When the LORD, your God, brings you to the land that you are about to enter to possess and when He drives out before you many nations, the Hittites the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, **seven nations** more numerous and stronger than you are,² and when the LORD, your God, delivers them to you and you defeat them, you shall destroy them completely! You shall not make a treaty with them or show mercy to them!³ You shall not become related to them by marriage! You shall not give your daughter to his son to marry! You shall not take his daughter for your son to marry!⁴ For they will turn your sons away from following Me and they will serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.⁵ Rather, this is how you shall treat them: You shall tear down their altars, you shall smash their sacred stones, you shall break their cultic posts in pieces and burn their idols with fire!

God’s desire for His people to be His own — Exodus 34:10-16

⁶ “For you are a people that is holy to the LORD, your God. The LORD, your God, has chosen you out of all the other peoples on the surface of the earth to be a people that is His personal property.⁷ The LORD has not clung to you and chosen you because you had been more numerous than all the other nations. For you were the smallest of all the nations.⁸ Rather, because the LORD loved you and kept the oath that He had made with your forefathers, the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from slave-quarters, from the power of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.⁹ Therefore, you shall know that the LORD, your God, is God, the faithful God, who keeps His Covenant and His mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and who keep His Commandments!¹⁰ However, He repays to his face and will destroy each of those who hate Him. He will not hold back from the person who hates Him. He will repay him to his face.

¹¹ “You shall keep the Commandments, the Prescrip-

tions and the Decisions, which I am giving you today, by putting them into practice!¹² Then, because you will listen to these Decisions and will be careful to observe them, the LORD, your God, will keep with you the Covenant and the mercy that He promised with an oath to your forefathers.¹³ He will love you, bless you and increase your numbers. He will bless the fruit of your womb, the crops of your land, your grain, your wine, your olive-oil, the offspring of your cattle and the increase of your flocks in the land that the LORD promised with an oath to your fathers to give to you.¹⁴ You will be more blessed than all other peoples will be. There will be no male without offspring and no female without offspring among you or among your livestock.¹⁵ The LORD will keep away from you every kind of illness. He will not inflict on you any of the severe Egyptian diseases with which you are familiar but inflict them on all who hate you.

¹⁶ “You shall consume all the peoples that the LORD, your God, is handing over to you! You shall not look compassionately on them or serve their gods! For that will be a snare to you.¹⁷ If you think: ‘These nations are more numerous than I am. How can I drive them out?’¹⁸ you shall not be afraid of them! You shall remember clearly what the LORD, your God, has done to Pharaoh and all the Egyptians!¹⁹ You saw with your own eyes the great trials, the miraculous signs, the omens, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm, with which the LORD, your God, brought you out. The LORD, your God, will do the same to all the peoples of whom you are afraid.²⁰ Moreover, the LORD, your God, will also make them discouraged, until the survivors and those who hide from you have perished.²¹ You shall not be terrified by them! For the LORD, your God, a great and awesome God, is among you.²² The LORD, your God, will only gradually drive these nations away. You will not be able to destroy them quickly. Otherwise the wild animals will become too many for you.²³ However, the LORD, your God, will hand them over to you and throw them into great confusion, until they are destroyed.²⁴ He will put their kings in your power, and you will wipe out their names from under the sky. No one will be able to stand up against you until you have exterminated them.²⁵ You shall burn up the images of their gods! You shall not try to acquire the silver and gold on them take them for yourself! Otherwise, they will ensnare you. For they are detestable to the LORD, your God.²⁶ You shall not bring any detestable thing into your home, that you may not be totally destroyed, like it! You shall thoroughly detest it and loathe it! For it is set apart for destruction.”

8

An admonition to remember past deliverance and not to forget God in times of prosperity

¹ “You shall be careful to carry out all the Com-

mandments that I am giving to you today, that you may live, become numerous, enter and take possession of the land that the LORD has promised with an oath to your forefathers! ² You shall also remember the whole journey on which the LORD, your God, led you through the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you and test you, that He might know what is in your hearts, whether you would keep His Commandments or not! ³ So, He humbled you, let you go hungry and fed you with manna, which neither you nor your forefathers had known about, to teach you that **a human being does not live by bread alone** but that a human being lives **by every Word that comes out of the mouth of the LORD.** ⁴ Your clothes did not wear out on you, and your feet did not swell during these forty years. ⁵ You shall know in your hearts that, as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD, your God, is disciplining you! ⁶ You shall keep the Commandments of the LORD, your God, by walking in His Ways and by fearing Him! ⁷ For the LORD, your God, is bringing you into a good land, a land with streams of water, springs and subterranean water, which flows out of valleys and hills. ⁸ It is a land with wheat and barley, grapevines, fig trees and pomegranates, a land with olive-oil and honey, ⁹ a land where you will eat bread without poverty, where you will lack nothing, a land the stones of which are iron and out of the hills of which you can dig copper. ¹⁰ You will eat all you want and bless the LORD, your God, for the good land that He has given to you.

¹¹ “Be careful that you do not forget the LORD, your God, by failing to keep His Commandments, His Decisions and His Statutes, which I am commanding you today! ¹² Otherwise you will eat all you want, build fine houses and live in them, ¹³ your herd and your flock will increase, you will acquire more and more silver and gold and everything that you have will increase, ¹⁴ and then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD, your God, who has brought you out of slave-quarters in the land of Egypt! ¹⁵ He has been the One who has been leading you through the great and terrible desert with venomous snakes and scorpions, a thirsty region without water. He is the One who made water come out of the flinty rock for you. ¹⁶ He is the One who has been feeding you in the wilderness with manna, which your forefathers had not known, to humble you, to test you and to do you good in the end. ¹⁷ If you think, ‘My power and my strong hand have produced this wealth for me,’ ¹⁸ then you shall remember the LORD, your God! For He is the One who is giving you the power to produce wealth, that He may fulfil His Covenant, which He made by an oath with your forefathers, as it is in effect today. ¹⁹ However, if you really do forget the LORD, your God, follow other gods, serve them and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will certainly be destroyed. ²⁰ Then you will be destroyed

like the nations whom the LORD is destroying ahead of you, because you refuse to listen to what the LORD, your God, says.”

9

A reminder that the Israelites will not inherit Canaan because of their goodness but because of God's mercy

¹ “Listen, Israel! You are now crossing over the Jordan to go in, force out nations that are greater and stronger than you are, with large cities, which are fortified up to the sky. ² They are a great and tall people, the Anakites, about whom you know. You yourself have heard it said, ‘Who can stand before the descendants of Anak?’ ³ You shall be aware today that the LORD, your God, is the One who is crossing over ahead of you like a consuming fire! He Himself will destroy them. He Himself will subdue them before you. You will dispossess them and quickly destroy them, as the LORD has promised you.

⁴ “**Do not think**, when the LORD, your God, drives them out ahead of you, ‘Because I am righteous, the LORD has brought me in to take possession of this land!’ No, the LORD is dispossessing these nations ahead of you because they are wicked. ⁵ It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land. Rather, because of the wickedness of these people, the LORD, your God, is dispossessing them ahead of you, and that the LORD may fulfil the promise that He made by an oath to your forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ⁶ Therefore, you shall understand that it is not because of your own righteousness that the LORD, your God, is giving you this good land to possess! For you are a stubborn people. ⁷ Remember and do not forget, that you provoked the LORD, your God, to anger in the wilderness! From the day when you came out of the land of Egypt until you arrived at this place you have been behaving rebelliously against the LORD.

A reminder about the worship of the golden calf — Exodus 32: 1-35

⁸ “Even at Horeb you provoked the LORD to anger, and the LORD became angry enough with you to destroy you. ⁹ When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the Covenant, which the LORD made with you, I stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. ¹⁰ The LORD gave me the two stone tablets, written with the finger of God. On them the Commandments were exactly as the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain from the middle of the fire on the day of the assembly. ¹¹ At the end of the forty days and forty nights, the LORD gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the Covenant. ¹² Then the LORD told me, ‘Get up! Go down from here at once! For your people, whom you have brought out of Egypt, have been acting corruptly. They have quickly turned away from the Way that I have commanded them. They have made a cast image for themselves.’

¹³ The LORD also told me, ‘I have seen these people and, indeed, they are a stubborn people. ¹⁴ Let Me alone, that I may destroy them and blot out their name under the sky! I shall make you into a nation that is stronger and more numerous than they are.’ ¹⁵ Then I turned and went down from the mountain, which was flaming with fire. The two tablets of the Covenant were in my two hands. ¹⁶ When I looked, I saw that you had been sinning against the LORD, your God. You had made a cast image of a calf for yourselves. You had quickly turned aside from the Way that the LORD had commanded you. ¹⁷ I took hold of the two tablets, flung them out of my two hands and broke them in pieces while you were watching. ¹⁸ I threw myself down before the LORD as I had done the first time, for forty days and forty nights. I did not eat bread or drink water because of all the sin that you had committed in doing what the LORD regarded as evil and in provoking Him to rage. ¹⁹ For **I was afraid** of the anger and wrath of the LORD, who was furious enough with you to destroy you. However, at that time also the LORD listened to me. ²⁰ The LORD was also very angry with Aaron, enough to destroy him. However, at that time I also prayed for Aaron. ²¹ I also took the calf, the wicked thing that you had made, and burned it up. I had beaten it in pieces and had ground it thoroughly until it was as fine as dust. Then I threw its dust into the stream that was flowing down from the mountain.

Other examples of the Israelites’ disobedience in the wilderness

²² “At Taberah, Massah and Kibroth-Hattaavah you kept on provoking the LORD to anger. ²³ When the LORD sent you out from Kadesh-Barnea, He said, ‘Go up and take possession of the land that I have given to you,’ but you behaved obstinately against the Command of the LORD, your God, and did not trust Him or listen to what He said. ²⁴ You have been behaving obstinately against the LORD ever since I have known you. ²⁵ I prayed before the LORD those forty days and forty nights while I lay prostrate, because the LORD had said that He would destroy you. ²⁶ I prayed to the LORD and said, ‘Lord GOD, do not destroy Your people, Your own inheritance, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and have brought out of Egypt with a strong hand! ²⁷ Remember Your servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! Overlook the stubbornness of these people, their wickedness and their sin! ²⁸ Otherwise, the land out of which You have brought us will say: “Because the LORD could not bring them into the land that He had promised to them because He hated them, He brought them out to kill them in the wilderness.” ²⁹ Nevertheless, they are Your people and Your inheritance, which You have brought out by Your great power and Your outstretched arm.’

10

The instruction for making the ark and God’s provision of two new tablets

— *Exodus 34:1-28*

¹ “At that time the LORD told me: ‘Hew out two stone tablets like the first ones and come up to Me on the mountain! You shall also make an Ark of wood!

² Then I shall write on the tablets the Words that were on the first tablets, which you broke. You shall place them in the Ark!’

³ “I made an Ark of acacia wood, hewed out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up on the mountain with the two tablets in my hands. ⁴ He wrote on the tablets the same as He had written on the first ones, the Ten Commandments, which the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the fire, on the day of the assembly. Then the LORD gave them to me. ⁵ I turned, came back down from the mountain and placed the tablets in the Ark, which I had made, as the LORD had commanded me, and they have remained there.

⁶ “The Israelites set out from the wells of Bene-Jaakan to Moserah. Aaron died there. He was buried and his son Eleazar succeeded him in performing the duties of a priest. ⁷ From there they journeyed to Gudgodah and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land with streams of water.

⁸ “At that time the LORD set the tribe of Levi apart to carry the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD, to minister to Him and to pronounce blessings using His name, as they still do today. ⁹ This is why Levi has had no share of property or inheritance among his fellow-Israelites. The LORD is his inheritance, as the LORD, your God, promised him.

¹⁰ “I stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights as I had done the first time. The LORD listened to me at this time also and the LORD consented not to destroy you. ¹¹ The LORD told me, ‘Get up and start out on your journey before the people, that they may go in and take possession of the land that I have sworn to give to their forefathers!’

An encouragement to Israel to love God and to follow His guidance

¹² “So now, Israel, what does the LORD, your God, ask of you but to fear the LORD, your God, to walk in all His Ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul ¹³ and to keep the Commandments of the LORD and His Statutes, which I am commanding you today for your own good? ¹⁴ Look! The heavens, the heaven of heavens, the earth and everything in it belong to the LORD, your God. ¹⁵ The LORD has set His affection only on your forefathers, to love them, and has chosen you, their descendants after them, rather than all the other nations, as is so today. ¹⁶ Therefore, circumcise your uncircumcised hearts! You shall not be stubborn any longer! ¹⁷ For the LORD, your God, is the God of gods and **the Lord of lords**, the great, the mighty and the awesome God, **who shows no partiality** and accepts no bribe. ¹⁸ He administers justice for the orphan and the widow. He loves the foreigner and gives

him food and clothing. ¹⁹ You shall also love the foreigner! For you were foreigners in the land of Egypt. ²⁰ You shall fear the LORD, your God! You shall serve Him! You shall be faithful to Him and use His name when you swear oaths! ²¹ He is the One whom you praise and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things, which you have seen with your own eyes. ²² Your forefathers numbered **seventy persons** when they went down into Egypt, and now the LORD, your God, has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.

11

A promise of blessings if the Israelites are obedient

¹ “Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God and always keep His Requirements, His Statutes, His Decisions and His Commandments! ² You shall be aware today that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known or experienced the discipline of the LORD, your God! You have experienced His majesty, His mighty hand and His outstretched arm, ³ His miraculous signs and His works, which He performed in the heart of Egypt to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and to his whole country. ⁴ You have experienced what He did to the army of Egypt, its horses and chariots, that He made the water of the Red Sea flood before them when they were pursuing you, and that the LORD destroyed them, to this day. ⁵ You have also experienced what He did for you in the wilderness until you arrived at this place. ⁶ You have experienced what He did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the descendant of Reuben, that the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their families, their tents and every living thing that followed them, in the middle of all Israel. ⁷ On the contrary, it was with your own eyes that you saw all the great work that the LORD has done.

⁸ “Therefore, you shall keep all the Commandments that I am now commanding you today that you may be strong and may go in and possess the land into which you are crossing over the Jordan to occupy! ⁹ Do this, that you may live for a long time in the land that the LORD swore to your forefathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey! ¹⁰ For the land that you are going to enter and possess is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you used to sow your seed and then water it with your foot like a vegetable garden. ¹¹ The land into which you are crossing over to occupy is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water that rains from the sky. ¹² It is a land for which the LORD, your God, cares. The eyes of the LORD, your God, are on it unceasingly, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

¹³ “If you listen intently to My Commandments, which I am ordering you today, to love the LORD, your God, and serve Him with all your heart and with

all your soul, ¹⁴ then I shall give you the rain for your land at the right time, the **Autumn-rain and the Spring-rain**, so that you gather in your grain, your wine and your olive-oil. ¹⁵ I shall give grass in your field for your livestock, and you will eat as much as you want.

¹⁶ “Be careful that your hearts are not easily deceived, that you may not turn away, serve other gods and worship them! ¹⁷ Otherwise, the anger of the LORD will burn against you, and He will shut up the sky, so that there will be no rain, the ground will not yield its produce and you will quickly perish from the good land that the LORD is giving to you.

¹⁸ “You shall put these Words of Mine in your hearts and minds! You shall tie them as signs on your wrists and wear them as headbands, as reminders! ¹⁹ You shall teach them to your children, speaking about them when you sit at home, when you walk along on the road, when you lie down and when you get up! ²⁰ Each of you shall write them on the doorposts of his home and on his gates, ²¹ that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD has sworn to your forefathers to give them and that you may live there for as long as the sky is over the earth! ²² For, if you carefully keep all these Commandments, which I am ordering you to carry out, so that you love the LORD, your God, walk in all His Ways and are faithful to Him, ²³ the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations that are greater and more numerous than you are. ²⁴ Every place on which the sole of your foot treads will be yours. Your territory will extend from the wilderness to Lebanon and from the Euphrates River to the Western Sea. ²⁵ No one will stand against you. The LORD, your God, will make people terrified of you on the surface of the whole land on which you tread, as He has promised you.

An instruction to recite the promises of blessing and the threats of curse — Deuteronomy 27:11-28:68, Joshua 8:30-35

²⁶ “Look! Today I am setting before you a blessing and a curse. ²⁷ I am setting before you the blessing if you keep the Commandments of the LORD, your God, which I am ordering you today. ²⁸ I am also setting the curse before you if you refuse to listen to the Commandments of the LORD, your God, and turn aside from the Way that I am commanding you today by following other gods, which you have not known. ²⁹ When the LORD, your God, brings you into the land that you are entering to possess, you shall recite the blessings from Mount Gerizim and the curses from Mount Ebal! ³⁰ Are they not on the other side of the Jordan, beyond the road that goes toward the setting sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the waterless region, opposite Gilgal, near the big trees at Moreh? ³¹ For you are crossing over the Jordan to go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you and you will take possession

of it and live in it. ³² However, you shall put into practice all the Prescriptions and the Decisions that I am setting before you today!”

12

A command to worship in only one place and to destroy pagan shrines

¹ “These are the Prescriptions and Decisions that you shall carefully put into practice in the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving to you to possess all your life in the land. ² You shall completely destroy all the places where the nations that you are driving out have been serving their gods, on the high mountains, on the hills and under every leafy tree!

³ You shall tear down their altars, you shall break to pieces their sacred stones, you shall burn up their cultic posts, cut down the images of their gods and destroy their names from each of those places! ⁴ You shall not do as they have been doing when you worship the LORD, your God! ⁵ Rather, you shall look for the place where the LORD, your God, will choose out of all your tribes to put His name for His dwelling and you shall go there! ⁶ You shall take to that place your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the contributions that you take in your hands, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings and the first-born of your herds and flocks! ⁷ You shall eat there in the presence of the LORD, your God, and rejoice together with your families over everything that you have undertaken, because the LORD, your God, has blessed you!

⁸ “You shall not in any way do what we are doing here today, where each one does what seems right to him! ⁹ For you have not yet come to the place of rest and the inheritance that the LORD, your God, is giving to you. ¹⁰ However, you will cross over the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you to inherit, and He will give you rest from all your enemies around you, so that you will live in safety. ¹¹ Then you shall bring, to the place where the LORD, your God, chooses to make His name dwell, everything that I am commanding you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the contributions that you bring in your hands and every choicest one of your offerings that you vow to the LORD! ¹² You shall rejoice before the LORD, your God, together with your sons, your daughters, your menservants, your maidservants and the Levite who lives inside your city! For he has no share of property or inheritance with you. ¹³ Be careful not to sacrifice your burnt offerings in any place that you see! ¹⁴ Instead, you shall sacrifice your burnt offerings at the place that the LORD chooses in one of your tribes and there you shall do everything that I am commanding you!

Regulations about the slaughter of meat away from the place of worship

¹⁵ “Nevertheless, you may slaughter and eat whatever meat your heart desires in any of your cities, as the LORD, your God, has blessed you. A ceremonially unclean person and a clean person may eat it as if it

were a gazelle or a deer. ¹⁶ However, you shall not eat the blood! You shall pour it on the ground like water!

¹⁷ You shall not dare to eat inside your cities the tithe of your grain, your wine or your olive-oil, the first-born of your herds or flocks, any offering that you have vowed, your freewill offerings or any contribution that you bring in your hands! ¹⁸ Instead, you shall eat these before the LORD, your God, at the place that the LORD, your God, chooses, together with your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant and the Levite who lives in your city! You shall rejoice before the LORD, your God, over everything that you undertake! ¹⁹ Be careful that you do not neglect the Levite all your life in your land!

²⁰ “When the LORD, your God, extends your territory, as He has promised you, and you say, ‘I should like to eat some meat,’ because you want to eat meat, then you may eat as much meat as your heart desires.

²¹ When the place where the LORD, your God, chooses to put His name is too far away, you may slaughter any of your herd or your flock, which the LORD has given you, in the way in which He has commanded you and you may eat as much as your heart desires in your city. ²² Indeed, you may eat it as you would eat a gazelle or a deer. A ceremonially unclean person as well as a clean person may eat it. ²³ Nevertheless, be determined not to eat the blood, because the blood is the life! You shall not eat the life with the meat! ²⁴ You shall not eat it but pour it on the ground like water! ²⁵ You shall avoid eating it, that it may be well with you and with your descendants after you! For you will be doing what the LORD considers right.

The use of blood and meat at the place of worship

²⁶ “However, you shall take the consecrated things that you have and the offerings that you have vowed and shall come to the place that the LORD chooses!

²⁷ You shall prepare your burnt offerings, both the meat and the blood, on the altar of the LORD, your God but you shall pour out the blood of your sacrifices against the altar of the LORD, your God! Then you may eat the meat. ²⁸ You shall listen carefully to all these things, which I am commanding you, that it may always go well with you and your descendants after you! For you shall do what the LORD, your God, considers good and right!

An admonition to avoid idolatrous worship

²⁹ “When the LORD, your God, cuts off before you the nations where you are going, to dispossess them, and you drive them out and settle in their land, ³⁰ be careful that you are not ensnared into imitating them after they have been destroyed ahead of you! Be careful not to inquire about their gods, asking, ‘How did these nations serve their gods, that I also may do the same?’ ³¹ You shall not worship the LORD, your God, as they have been worshipping their gods! For they have been doing to their gods everything that the LORD detests and hates. For they used to burn even

their sons and daughters in fire to their gods.

³² “You shall be careful to put into practice everything that I am commanding you! You shall not add to it or take anything away from it!

13

A command to kill any prophet who wants the Israelites to worship idols

¹ “When anyone appears among you as a **prophet** or a person with dreams and offers you a miraculous **sign** or a **wonder**, ² and the miraculous **sign** or **wonder** that he has promised you takes place and he says, ‘Let us follow other gods’ (which you have not known), ‘and let us serve them!’ ³ you shall not listen to what that prophet or that man who has dreams is saying! For the LORD, your God, is testing you, to find out if you love the LORD, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ It is the LORD, your God, whom you shall follow. You shall fear Him! You shall keep His Commandments, you shall listen to what He says, you shall serve Him and be faithful to Him! ⁵ That prophet or that man who has dreams shall be put to death! For he has preached apostasy against the LORD, your God, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt and has redeemed you from slave-quarters. He has been trying to lead you astray from the Way on which the LORD, your God, has commanded you to go. You shall completely **remove the evil** from among you!

⁶ “When your brother, your mother’s son, your son, your daughter, your wife, whom you love or your friend, who is as dear as your own life, secretly coaxes you: ‘Let us go and serve other gods!’ (which you and your forefathers have not known), ⁷ some of the gods of the nations that are around you, either near to you or far from you, from one end of the world to the other, ⁸ you shall not yield to him or listen to him! You shall not pity him, you shall not spare him or conceal him! ⁹ Rather, you shall certainly put him to death! Your hand shall be the first in putting him to death, and after that the hands of all the other people shall join you! ¹⁰ You shall stone him to death because he has tried to lead you astray from the LORD, your God, who has brought you out of slave-quarters in the land of Egypt! ¹¹ Then all Israel will hear about it, will be afraid and never again do such an evil thing among you.

¹² “When you hear it said about one of your cities, which the LORD, your God, is giving you to live in, ¹³ ‘Certain wicked men have come out from among you and have been leading astray the people who are living in their city, by saying, “Let us go and serve other gods!”’ (which you have not known), ¹⁴ then you shall make inquiries, you shall investigate and demand thorough information! If it is indeed true and it has been established that this detestable thing has been done among you, ¹⁵ you shall certainly strike down with the sword the people who live in this city! You shall devote it to destruction with everything in it, in-

cluding its livestock, with the edge of the sword!

¹⁶ You shall gather all the plunder from the city into the middle of its public square and completely burn up the city and all the plunder from it, as an offering to the LORD, your God! It shall always be a mound of ruins and never be rebuilt! ¹⁷ None of the condemned things shall cling to your hand, that the LORD may turn from His fierce anger, have compassion on you, show love for you and increase your numbers, as He has promised with an oath to your forefathers! ¹⁸ For you shall listen to what the LORD, your God, is telling you, so that you keep all His Regulations, which I am commanding you today, so that you do what the LORD, your God, considers right!

14

God’s desire for His people to be His personal property

¹ “You are the children of the LORD, your God. You shall not inflict cuts on yourselves or shave the fronts of your heads bare for a dead person! ² **For you are a people that is holy to the LORD, your God and the LORD has chosen you out of all the peoples that are on the surface of the earth to be a people that is His personal property.**

The command to eat only ceremonially clean animals — Leviticus 11: 1-47

³ “You shall not eat any detestable thing! ⁴ These are the animals that you may eat: an ox, a sheep, a goat, ⁵ a deer, a gazelle, a roebuck, a wild goat, a mountain goat, an antelope and a mountain sheep. ⁶ You may eat any animal that has a divided hoof and that has a hoof split into two parts and that brings up the cud. ⁷ However, among the animals that bring up the cud or that have a completely divided hoof you shall not eat the camel, the hare or the coney! Even though they chew the cud, they do not have a split hoof. They are ceremonially unclean for you. ⁸ The pig is also unclean. Even though it has a split hoof, it does not chew the cud. It is unclean for you. You shall not eat any of their flesh or touch their carcasses!

⁹ “Of all the creatures in the water you may eat anything that has fins and scales. ¹⁰ However, you shall not eat anything that has no fins and scales! It is unclean for you.

¹¹ “You may eat any clean bird. ¹² However, you shall not eat these: the eagle, the great bearded vulture, the black vulture, ¹³ the kite, the black kite, any kind of kite, ¹⁴ any kind of crow, ¹⁵ the horned owl, the screech owl, the seagull or any kind of falcon, ¹⁶ the little owl, the ibis, the barn owl, ¹⁷ the jackdaw, the carrion vulture, the cormorant, ¹⁸ the stork, any kind of plover, the hoopoe or the bat! ¹⁹ All swarming creatures that have wings are unclean for you. They shall not be eaten! ²⁰ You may eat any winged creature that is clean.

²¹ “You shall not eat anything that has died naturally! You may give it to the stranger who lives inside your city to eat or sell it to a foreigner. However, you are a people that is holy to the LORD, your God.

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk!

Regulations about the tithe — Numbers 18:21-29

22 “You shall certainly give one tenth of everything that your seed produces and that comes from your field every year! 23 You shall eat the tenth of your grain, your wine, your olive-oil and the first-born of your herd and flock before the LORD, your God, at the place where He chooses to make His name dwell, that you may learn to fear the LORD, your God always!

24 “When the journey is too far for you, so that you cannot take the tenth part there, because the place where the LORD, your God, chooses to put His name is too far away, then, when the LORD, your God, blesses you, 25 you shall exchange it for money and go with the money wrapped in your hand to the place that the LORD, your God, chooses! 26 You shall spend the money on anything that your heart desires: cattle, sheep, wine or other fermented drink or anything else that you wish! Then you and your family shall eat there in the presence of the LORD, your God and rejoice! 27 However, you shall not neglect the Levite who lives inside your city! For he has no share of property or inheritance with you.

28 “At the end of every three years you shall subtract the whole tenth part of your produce for that year and store it inside your city-gates, 29 so that, because the Levite has no share of property and inheritance with you, he may come, together with the foreigner, the orphan and the widow, who are in your cities, and that they may eat all that they want, that the LORD, your God, may bless you in all the manual work that you do!”

15

Regulations about the cancellation of debts every seventh year — Exodus 21:1-11, Leviticus 25:1-7

1 “At the end of every seven years you shall cancel debts! 2 This is the way in which debts shall be cancelled: Every creditor shall cancel a loan that he has made to his fellow-Israelite. He shall not press his fellow-Israelite, his brother, to repay it! For the remission of the LORD has been proclaimed. 3 You may press a foreigner for repayment. However, you shall cancel what your fellow-Israelite owes to you! 4 There is this exception, that there shall be no poor person among you. For the LORD, your God, will certainly bless you in the land that the LORD, your God, is giving to you to possess as your inheritance, 5 if only you strictly obey what the LORD, your God, is telling you and carefully put into practice all these Requirements, which I am commanding you today. 6 For the LORD, your God, has blessed you, as He has promised you, and you will lend to many nations but you yourself will borrow nothing. You will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

7 “When there is a fellow-Israelite among you who is poor in any of the cities in your land, which the

LORD, your God, is giving you, you shall not be unsympathetic! You shall not be tight-fisted toward a fellow-Israelite who is poor! 8 Rather, you shall certainly open your hand to him! You shall certainly lend him enough for whatever he needs! 9 Be careful that you do not have this wicked thought in your heart: ‘The seventh year, the year for cancelling debts, has come near,’ and have a mean attitude toward your poor fellow-Israelite and give him nothing! He will appeal to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin. 10 You shall give generously to him and shall not begrudge it when you give something to him! For the LORD, your God, will bless you because of this in everything that you do and in everything that you undertake! 11 For **there will always be poor people in the land!** Therefore, I am commanding you: ‘You shall certainly be open-handed to your fellow-Israelite, to the needy person and to the poor person in your land!’

Freedom for slaves — Exodus 21:2-6, Leviticus 25:38-55

12 “When your fellow-Israelite, a Hebrew man or Hebrew woman, sells himself to you, the person shall serve you for six years, and you shall let him go free from you in the seventh year! 13 However, when you release him, you shall not release him empty-handed! 14 You shall supply him liberally with something from your flock, from your threshing floor and from your winepress! You shall give him something with which the LORD, your God, has blessed you! 15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the LORD, your God, redeemed you! That is why I am commanding you today to do this.

16 “However, when he tells you, ‘I do not want to leave you,’ because he loves you and your family, since he is well off with you, 17 you shall take an awl and push it through his ear lobe into the door and he shall always be your slave! You shall also do the same with your maidservant! 17 You shall not consider it a hardship when you send your servant away free! For his service to you for six years has been worth twice as much as that of a hired hand. Besides, the LORD, your God, will bless you in everything that you do.

The reservation of the first-born of livestock to God — Exodus 13:1-2, 11-16, 34:19-20, Numbers 3:11-13, 40-51

19 “You shall treat every first-born male that is born in your herd and in your flock as consecrated to the LORD, your God! You shall not do any work with your first-born bull or shear the first-born of your sheep! 20 Every year you and your family shall eat them before the LORD, your God, in the place that the LORD will choose! 21 However, if it has any blemish, if it is lame or blind or has any other serious blemish, you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD, your God! 22 You shall eat it in your own city! Both a ceremonially unclean person and a clean person may eat it, as if it were a gazelle or a deer. 23 Nevertheless, you shall not eat its blood! You shall pour it out on the ground like water!

16

The observance of three festivals — Exodus 34:14-25

1) The Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread — Exodus 12:1-20, Exodus 23:14-19, Exodus 34:18-20, Leviticus 23:5-8, Numbers 9:1-14, Numbers 28:11-25

¹ “You shall observe the month of Abib and celebrate the Passover of the LORD, your God! For in the month of Abib the LORD, your God, brought you out of Egypt by night. ² You shall sacrifice, as the Passover to the LORD, your God, an animal from your flock or herd at the place where the LORD will choose to make His name dwell! ³ You shall not eat any bread with yeast together with it! For seven days you shall eat bread without yeast as the bread of affliction! For you left the land of Egypt in haste. Do this that you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life! ⁴ No yeast shall be seen among you throughout your territory for seven days! None of the meat that you sacrifice in the evening of the first day shall remain overnight until the morning! ⁵ You shall not dare to sacrifice the Passover in just any of the cities that the LORD, your God, is giving you! ⁶ Instead, you shall go to the place where the LORD, your God, will choose to make His name dwell! You shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening as the sun goes down, on the very day when you left Egypt! ⁷ You shall cook it and eat it at the place that the LORD, your God, will choose! Then in the morning you may go back to your tents. ⁸ For six days you shall eat bread without yeast, and on the seventh day there shall be a festive assembly to the LORD, your God! You shall not do any work!

2) The Festival of Weeks (or Harvest or First-fruits or Pentecost) — Exodus 34:22-23, Leviticus 23:15-21, Numbers 28:26-31, 1 Kings 9:25, 2 Chronicles 8:12-13

⁹ “Then you shall count off seven weeks! You shall begin to count the seven weeks from the time when the sickle is first used in the standing grain! ¹⁰ You shall celebrate the Festival of Weeks to the LORD, your God, with as large a freewill offering as you can give, as the LORD, your God, has blessed you! ¹¹ You shall rejoice before the LORD, your God, together with your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, the Levite in your city, the foreigner, the orphan and the widow who are among you, at the place where the LORD, your God, will choose to make His name dwell! ¹² You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt! Therefore, you shall carefully carry out these Prescriptions!

3) The Festival of Booths — Exodus 23:16, Exodus 34:22, Leviticus 23:33-43, Numbers 29:12-40, 1 Kings 9:25, 1 Kings 12:32-33, 2 Chronicles 8:12-13

¹³ “You shall celebrate the Festival of Booths for seven days after you have gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winepress! ¹⁴ You shall rejoice at your festival together with your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, the Levite, the foreigner, the orphan and the widow who are in your city! ¹⁵ For seven days you shall celebrate the

festival to the LORD, your God, in the place that the LORD will choose! For the LORD, your God, will bless you in all your produce and in everything that your hands do, so that you will be entirely joyful.

¹⁶ “Three times a year all your men shall appear before the LORD, your God, at the place that He will choose, for the Festival of Bread without Yeast, for the Festival of Weeks and for the Festival of Booths! However, no one shall appear before the LORD empty-handed! ¹⁷ Everyone shall present his gift in proportion to the blessing that the LORD, your God, has given to you!

The Commandment for judges to deliver just verdicts

¹⁸ “You shall appoint judges and officials in all your cities, which the LORD, your God, is giving you, for your tribes, that they may judge the people with just decisions! ¹⁹ You shall not pervert justice or show favouritism toward certain persons! You shall not accept a bribe! For a bribe blinds the eyes of wise men and distorts the causes of righteous men. ²⁰ You shall strive for justice and justice alone, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you!

A prohibition of idolatry

²¹ “You shall not set up any wooden post as a cultic pole, which you build for yourself, in opposition to the altar of the LORD, your God! ²² You shall not erect any sacred stone for yourself! These are things that the LORD, your God, hates.

17

¹ “You shall not sacrifice a bull or a sheep that has any blemish or other serious defect in it to the LORD, your God! For this is detestable to the LORD, your God.

The death penalty for idolatry

² “When in any of the cities that the LORD, your God, is giving you there is found among you any man or woman who is doing what the LORD, your God, regards as wicked, in transgressing His Covenant, ³ who has gone and served other gods and worshipped them or has worshipped the sun, the moon or the stars in their whole array in the sky, which I have forbidden ⁴ and you are told about it or you hear about it, you shall investigate it thoroughly! If you see that it is true and, if it has been proved that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, ⁵ you shall bring that man or woman, who has done this wicked thing, to your city-gates and stone that man or woman to death! ⁶ He who deserves to die **shall be put to death on the evidence of two or three witnesses!** He shall not be put to death on the evidence of only one witness! ⁷ The hands of the witnesses shall be the first to act against him to put him to death, and after that the hands of all the other people! **You shall completely remove the evil from among you!**

The requirement for priests and judges to make legal decisions

⁸ “When a case is too difficult for you to decide, whether it is one kind of homicide or another, one

kind of legal claim or another, one kind of assault or another or any legal matters in dispute in your city, you shall leave and go up to the place that the LORD, your God, will choose! ⁹ You shall go to the Levitical priests and the judge who is there at that time and ask them, and they will declare to you the decision in the case! ¹⁰ You shall act according to the verdict that those who are at that place, which the LORD will choose, declare to you! You shall carefully do exactly as they direct you! ¹¹ You shall act according to the Instruction that they teach you and according to the decision that they pronounce to you! You shall not turn aside from what they pronounce to you, to the right or to the left! ¹² The man who acts arrogantly, by not obeying the priest who stands to minister there to the LORD, your God, or the judge, shall be put to death! You shall completely **remove the evil** from Israel! ¹³ All the people will hear about it, so that they will be afraid and not act insolently again.

The limitations to royal authority in Israel

¹⁴ “When you enter the land that the LORD, your God, is giving to you and you take possession of it and settle in it and then say, ‘Let me appoint a king over myself like all the other nations around me!’ ¹⁵ you shall be sure to appoint over yourself a king whom the LORD, your God, chooses! You shall appoint over yourself one who is your fellow-Israelite! You shall not dare to appoint a foreigner over yourself, one who is not a fellow-Israelite! ¹⁶ However, he shall not acquire many horses for himself and shall not make the people return to Egypt to get more horses, since the LORD has told you, ‘You shall not go back that way again!’ ¹⁷ He shall also not acquire many wives for himself, that his heart may not turn away! He shall also not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold for himself! ¹⁸ When he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write a copy of this Law for himself on a scroll, taken from the one held by the Levitical priests! ¹⁹ He shall keep it with him and read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD, his God, and may be careful to put into practice all the Words of this Law and these Prescriptions! ²⁰ Then he will not think that he is better than the rest of his fellow-Israelites and will not turn away from the Commandments, to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign over his kingdom in Israel for a long time.

18

The division of peace-offerings between the people, the Levites and the priests — Leviticus 10:12-15, Numbers 18:8-20

¹ “The Levitical priests, as well as all the rest of the tribe of Levi, shall not have a share of property or inheritance with the rest of Israel! They shall live on the offerings made by fire to the LORD and on what is His inheritance! ² They shall have no inheritance among their fellow-Israelites! The LORD is their inheritance, as He has promised them. ³ This shall be

what is legally due to the priests from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, either a bull or a sheep: Each shall give to the priest the shoulder, the jaws and the stomach! ⁴ You shall give the priest the first-fruits of your grain, your wine and your olive-oil and the first fleece of your flock! ⁵ For the LORD, your God, has chosen him and his descendants for all time out of all your tribes to stand and minister in the name of the LORD.

⁶ “When a Levite moves from one of your cities anywhere in Israel where he has been living, he shall come with a wholehearted desire to the place that the LORD will choose! ⁷ He shall minister in the name of the LORD, his God, like all his fellow-Levites who stand there before the LORD! ⁸ He shall have an equal share to support him, besides what he receives from the sale of his family-inheritance!

The prohibition of occult practices, child-sacrifice, divination and magic

⁹ “When you enter the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable practices of those nations! ¹⁰ No one shall be found among you who sacrifices his son or his daughter in the fire, anyone who makes predictions by casting lots, who conjures up spirits, who observes omens, who practices sorcery, ¹¹ who casts spells, who is a medium, who possesses a familiar spirit or who consults the dead! ¹² For the LORD detests all who do these things and the LORD, your God, is driving those nations out before you because of these detestable practices. ¹³ You shall **be blameless** before the LORD, your God! ¹⁴ For these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to those who conjure up spirits and those who make predictions by casting lots. However, the LORD, your God, has not permitted you yourself to do such things.

Moses’ prophecy about the future Prophet who would be like himself

¹⁵ “**The LORD, your God, will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among you, from your fellow-Israelites. You shall listen to Him!** ¹⁶ This is exactly what you asked from the LORD, your God, at Horeb, on the day of the assembly, when you said, ‘Let me not hear the voice of the LORD, my God, any longer or see this great fire any longer, that I may not die!’

The promise of a Prophet like Moses

¹⁷ “The LORD told me, ‘What they have said is good. ¹⁸ **I shall raise up for them a Prophet like you, from among their fellow-Israelites.** I shall put My Words in His mouth, and **He will tell them everything that I command Him.** ¹⁹ I Myself shall call to account any person **who does not listen to My Words, which He speaks** in My name. ²⁰ However, that prophet who acts insolently by speaking anything in My name that I have not commanded him to speak or who speaks in the name of other gods, shall die!’

²¹ “When you ask yourselves, ‘How shall we detect the message that the LORD has not spoken?’ ²² if what a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD does

not happen or come true, that is a message that the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it arrogantly. You shall not be afraid of him!

19

Instructions about cities of refuge — Numbers 35:6-29, Deuteronomy 4:41-43, Joshua 20:1-9

¹ “When the LORD, your God, destroys the nations whose land the LORD, your God, is giving you, and you dispossess them and settle in their cities and their houses, ² you shall select three cities for yourself in the middle of your land, which the LORD, your God, is giving you to possess! ³ You shall provide roads for yourself and divide into three parts the territory of your land, which the LORD, your God, is giving you as an inheritance, that anyone who kills another person may flee there! ⁴ This is the rule concerning the man who kills another and flees there to save his life: Anyone who kills his neighbour unintentionally and when he has not hated him in the past (⁵ as when a man goes into the forest with his neighbour to gather firewood and, as he swings his axe to cut the timber, the head may slip off the handle and happen to hit his neighbour so that he dies), then he shall flee to one of these cities, that he may stay alive! ⁶ Otherwise the avenger of blood may, in hot anger, pursue the man who has killed another, overtake him, if the distance is too great, and kill him, although he does not deserve to die, because he has not hated his neighbour in the past. ⁷ Therefore, I command you: ‘You shall reserve three cities for yourself!’

⁸ “If the LORD, your God, enlarges your territory, as He has sworn to your forefathers, and gives you all the land that He has promised to give your forefathers (⁹ provided that you carefully carry out all these Commandments, which I command you today, to love the LORD, your God and always to walk in his Ways), then you shall add three more cities to these three! ¹⁰ Then no innocent blood will be shed in your land, which the LORD, your God, is giving you as your inheritance. Otherwise you would be guilty of bloodshed.

Laws for dealing with deliberate crime

¹¹ “However, if a man hates his neighbour, lies in wait for him, assaults him, beats him to death and then flees to one of these cities, ¹² then the elders of his city shall send men to fetch him from there and hand him over to the avenger of bloodshed, that he may die! ¹³ You shall not look on him with pity but rid Israel of innocent bloodshed, that it may go well with you!

A regulation about property-boundaries

¹⁴ “You shall not displace your neighbour’s boundary-stone, which your ancestors have set up on your property, which you will inherit in the land that the LORD, your God, is giving to you to possess!

Regulations about witnesses

¹⁵ “A single witness shall not be sufficient to accuse anyone about any wrong or any sin, regarding any

fault that he commits! **The evidence of two or three witnesses shall establish any charge!** ¹⁶ When a malicious witness rises to accuse any person of any offence, ¹⁷ the two men who are involved in the dispute shall stand in the presence of the LORD before those who are the priests and the judges at that time! ¹⁸ Then the judges shall investigate thoroughly! If they find that the witness is a liar, who has given false testimony against his fellow-Israelite, ¹⁹ then you shall do to him what he has planned to do to his neighbour! You shall **get rid of this wickedness from among you!** ²⁰ Then the rest will hear about it, be afraid and never again commit such a wicked thing among you. ²¹ You shall not look on him with pity! You shall take a life for a life, **an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth**, a hand for a hand and a foot for a foot!

20

Regulations for times of war

¹ “When you go out to war against your enemies and see horses and chariots and a larger army than your own, you shall not be afraid of them! For the LORD, your God, who has brought you up from the land of Egypt, will be with you. ² When you approach the time of the battle, the priest shall come forward and shall address the army! ³ He shall tell them, ‘Listen, O Israel, today you are soon to go into battle against your enemies! Do not be fainthearted! Do not be afraid! Do not flee in panic and do not be terrified because of them! ⁴ For the LORD, your God, is going with you to fight for you against your enemies and to give you victory.’

⁵ “The officers shall address the army: ‘Has anyone built a new house and not dedicated it? Let him leave and go back home, that he may not die in battle, with the result that another man will dedicate it! ⁶ Has anyone planted a vineyard and not made use of it? Let him leave and go back home, so that he does not die in the battle, with the result that someone else will make first use of it! ⁷ Has anyone become engaged to a woman and not married her? Let him leave and go back home, that he may not die in the battle, with the result that someone else will marry her!’

⁸ “The officers shall also ask the army: ‘Is anyone afraid and fainthearted? Let him leave and go back home, that the courage of his fellow-Israelites may not melt like his own!’

⁹ “When the officers have finished speaking to the army, they shall appoint commanders of the divisions to lead the army!

¹⁰ “When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall proclaim an offer of peace to it! ¹¹ If it accepts your offer of peace and opens its gates to you, then all the people found in it shall become subject to compulsory labour and be your slaves! ¹² If the city refuses to come to peaceful terms with you but engages in battle

against you, you shall besiege it! ¹³ When the LORD, your God, puts it in your hands, you shall kill every male in it with the sword! ¹⁴ However, you may take as plunder for yourselves the women and children, the livestock and everything else in the city, all its booty. Then you may live on your enemies' booty, which the LORD, your God, has given you. ¹⁵ You shall treat in this way all the cities that are very far away from you and that are not any of the cities that belong to the nations here! ¹⁶ However, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes in the cities of these peoples, which the LORD, your God, is giving you as an inheritance! ¹⁷ Rather, you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD, your God, has commanded you! ¹⁸ Do this so they may not teach you to imitate all the detestable things that they have been doing for their gods and that you may not sin against the LORD, your God!

¹⁹ "When you besiege a city for a long time while you are fighting against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them! Although you may get fruit from them, you shall not cut them down! For are the trees of the field human beings, that you should besiege them? ²⁰ You may destroy only the trees that you know are not fruit trees. You may cut them down and use them to build siege-works against the city that is fighting against you, until it falls.

21

Instructions about how to act when there is an unsolved murder

¹ "This is what you shall do when anyone is found killed, lying in the open country in the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you to possess and no one knows who has murdered him: ² Your elders and your judges shall come out and measure the distances from the dead body to the surrounding cities! ³ Then the elders of the city nearest to the dead man shall take a heifer that has never been put to work and has never pulled with a yoke! ⁴ The elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a stream that is always flowing where the ground is not cultivated or sown! There at the stream they shall break the heifer's neck! ⁵ Then the priests, who are descendants from Levi, shall come forward! For the LORD, your God, has chosen them to minister to Him, to pronounce blessings in the name of the LORD and to use their word to settle every dispute and every assault. ⁶ Then all the elders of that city, who live nearest to the place where the dead man has been found, shall wash their hands over the heifer, whose neck has been broken at the stream! ⁷ Then they shall declare, 'Our hands have not shed this blood and our eyes have not seen it done! ⁸ O LORD, accept atonement for Your people, Israel, whom You have redeemed, and do not charge Your people, Israel, with guilt for innocent bloodshed!' Then the bloodshed will be atoned for with respect to

them. ⁹ In this way you yourself will get rid of the guilt of innocent bloodshed from among you, when you do what the LORD considers right.

Regulations about female captives

¹⁰ "When you go out to fight with your enemies and the LORD, your God, delivers them into your hands, and you take captives ¹¹ and you see a beautiful woman among the captives and are attracted to her, you may marry her ¹² and bring her into your home. She shall shave her head, trim her nails, ¹³ and discard the clothes that she was wearing when she was captured! Then she shall live in your home and mourn over her father and her mother for a full month! After that you may begin sexual relations with her and be her husband, and she will be your wife. ¹⁴ However, if you do not find her agreeable, you shall let her go wherever she wishes! You shall certainly not sell her for money! You shall not treat her brutally! For you have humiliated her.

The rights of a first-born child in the inheritance of property

¹⁵ "When a man has two wives and the one is loved and the other is unloved and both the loved wife and the unloved one have borne him children and the first-born is the son of the wife who is unloved, ¹⁶ when he wills his property to his sons as their inheritance, he dare not treat the son of the wife whom he loves as the first-born, in preference to the son of the wife who is unloved, who is the first-born! ¹⁷ Rather, he shall treat the son of the unloved wife as the first-born and shall give him a double share of everything that he owns! For that son is the first child of his father's generative power. The right of the first-born shall belong to him!

The action to be taken with a rebellious son

¹⁸ "When a man has a stubborn and obstinate son who refuses to obey his father and his mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, ¹⁹ his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders at the gate of his city. ²⁰ They shall tell the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and obstinate! He refuses to obey us. He is frivolous and a drunkard.' ²¹ Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death! **You shall get rid of such wickedness from among you!** Then all Israel will hear about it and be afraid.

The curse on a hanged man

²² "When anyone is put to death for committing a crime that has a death-penalty and you **hang him on a tree**, ²³ his corpse shall not remain on the tree all night! Rather, you shall be sure to bury him on the same day! For **a hanged man is under God's curse**. You shall not defile your land, which the LORD, your God, is giving you as an inheritance!

22

Responsibility for what is lost

¹ "You shall not watch your fellow-Israelite's ox or his sheep going astray and refrain from helping! You shall be sure to take them back to your fellow-Israelite! ² If your fellow-Israelite does not live near

you and you do not know him, you shall take it home with you! It shall stay with you until your fellow-Israelite comes looking for it! Then you shall give it back to him! ³ You shall do the same with his donkey or with his garment! You shall do the same with any lost article of your fellow-Israelite, which he has lost and you have found! You shall not dare to withdraw your help!

⁴ “You shall not watch your fellow-Israelite’s donkey or ox falling down on the road and refrain from helping them! You shall be sure to help him get it to its feet!

Regulations about men’s and women’s clothes

⁵ “A woman shall not wear a man’s things, and a man shall not wear a woman’s clothing! For the LORD, your God, detests anyone who does these things.

Regulations about the care of birds

⁶ “When you come across a bird’s nest on the road, either in any tree or on the ground, with young birds or eggs and the mother is sitting on the young birds or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young! ⁷ You may take the young for yourself but be sure to let the mother go, that it may be well with you and that you may live a long life!

The requirement to add a railing to a flat roof

⁸ “When you build a new house, you shall put up a low wall on your flat roof, that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your home if anyone should fall from the roof.

The prohibition about mixing dissimilar seeds, vines and livestock – Leviticus 19:19

⁹ “You shall not sow two kinds of seed in your vineyard, that the whole yield of your seed, which you sow and what the vineyard yields may not become forfeit to the sanctuary!

¹⁰ “You shall not plough with an ox and a donkey hitched together!

¹¹ “You shall not wear material of different kinds, such as wool and linen, together!

¹² “You shall make tassels for yourself on the four corners of the outer garment that you wear!

Regulations for sexual purity

¹³ “If a man marries a woman, has intercourse with her and then hates her, ¹⁴ accuses her of shameful conduct and gives her a bad reputation by saying, ‘I have married this woman but, when I came near her, I did not find that she had evidence of virginity,’ ¹⁵ then the young woman’s father and mother shall take the evidence of the young woman’s virginity to the elders of the city at the city-gate! ¹⁶ The father of the young woman shall tell the elders, ‘I have given my daughter to this man to marry, but he hates her!’ ¹⁷ Look! He is accusing her of shameful conduct, saying, ‘I have not found that your daughter has proof of virginity.’ However, here is the proof that my daughter was a virgin.’ Then they shall spread out the garment before the elders of the city. ¹⁸ Then the elders of that city shall take the man and discipline him! ¹⁹ They shall fine him twelve hundred grams of silver and give it to

the young woman’s father! For the husband has given a virgin of Israel a bad reputation. She shall be his wife! He shall not dare to divorce her all his life!

²⁰ “However, if this accusation is true and no evidence that the young woman was a virgin could be found, ²¹ they shall take the young woman to the door of her father’s home, and the men of her city shall stone her to death! For she has committed an infamous thing in Israel by sinning sexually in her father’s home. **You shall completely remove such evil from among you!**

²² “If a man is caught having intercourse with another man’s wife, both of them, the man who had relations with the woman and the woman shall die! You shall purge such evil from Israel!

²³ “If a young woman who is a virgin is engaged to a man, and another man meets her in the city and has sexual relations with her, ²⁴ you shall take both of them out to the gate of that city and stone them to death, the girl because she has not screamed for help, although she was in the city, and the man because he has sexually violated his neighbour’s wife! **You shall completely remove such evil from among you!**

²⁵ “However, if the man meets the engaged young woman in the country and the man takes hold of her and rapes her, then only the man who had relations with her shall die! ²⁶ You shall not do anything to the young woman! The young woman has not committed any sin for which she deserves to die. For this case is like that of someone who attacks and murders his neighbour. ²⁷ For the man has met her in the open country. Although the young woman who was engaged has screamed, there has been no one to rescue her.

²⁸ “If a man meets a young woman who is a virgin who is not engaged, takes hold of her and has sexual relations with her, and they are caught, ²⁹ the man who has had relations with her shall pay the girl’s father six hundred grams of silver, and she shall be his wife! For he has sexually violated her. He shall not dare to divorce her all his life!

³⁰ “No man shall marry his father’s wife! He shall not have intercourse with the woman who belongs to his father!

23

The criteria for the exclusion of people from the assembly

¹ “No one whose testicles are crushed or whose penis is cut off shall enter the assembly of the LORD!

² “No one of illegitimate birth shall enter the assembly of the LORD! No descendant of his even to the tenth generation shall come into the assembly of the LORD!

³ “No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the LORD! No descendant of theirs even to the tenth generation shall enter the assembly of the LORD! ⁴ For they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way, when you came out of Egypt. They also hired Balaam, the son of Beor from Pethor

in Mesopotamia, against you, to curse you. ⁵ However, the LORD, your God, refused to listen to Balaam. Instead, the LORD, your God, changed the curse into a blessing for you. For the LORD, your God, loves you. ⁶ You shall never try to achieve what is advantageous to them or makes them prosperous all your life!

⁷ “You shall not detest an Edomite! For he is your relative. You shall not detest an Egyptian! For you were a foreigner in his land. ⁸ Children who are born to them in the third generation may enter the assembly of the LORD.

The need to be ceremonially clean in an army camp

⁹ “When you go out with an army against your enemies, you shall be on your guard against everything evil!

¹⁰ “When any man among you becomes unclean because of a nocturnal emission, he shall go outside the camp! He shall not come inside the camp!

¹¹ However, when evening comes, he shall wash himself with water! When the sun goes down, he may come inside the camp.

¹² “You shall have a place outside the camp and go out to it! ¹³ You shall have a tent peg with your equipment and, when you sit down outside, you shall dig a hole with it and turn back and cover your excrement! ¹⁴ For the LORD, your God, walks about in your camp, to deliver you and to deliver your enemies to you. Therefore, your camp shall be holy, that He may not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you!

Instructions about the protection of a slave

¹⁵ “You shall not hand a slave over to his master when he has escaped from his master to you! ¹⁶ He shall live with you, among your people, in the place that he chooses in one of your cities, wherever it suits him! You shall not oppress him!

A prohibition of prostitution

¹⁷ “None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, and none of the sons of Israel shall be a cult prostitute! ¹⁸ You shall not bring the money paid to a prostitute or the earnings of a male cult prostitute into the house of the LORD, your God, in payment for any vow! For the LORD, your God, detests both of these.

A prohibition of the charging of interest to a fellow-Israelite

¹⁹ “You shall not charge interest on loans to your fellow-Israelite, interest on money, interest on food or interest on anything else that could be loaned for interest! ²⁰ You may charge a foreigner interest. However, you shall not charge your fellow-Israelite interest, that the LORD, your God, may bless you in all that you undertake in the land that you are entering to possess!

Regulations about vows

²¹ “When you make a **vow to the LORD**, your God, you shall not delay in **fulfilling** it! For the LORD, your God, will certainly require it of you, and you would be guilty of sin. ²² However, if you refrain

from making vows, you will not be guilty of sin. ²³ You shall be careful to carry out what your lips have uttered, since you have vowed what you have promised with your mouth to the LORD, your God, by your own choice!

Regulations about using the grapes and the grain of a neighbour

²⁴ “When you go into your neighbour’s vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you like, until you have had enough. However, you shall not put any in your container! ²⁵ If you go into your neighbour’s standing grain, you may pluck the ears of grain with your hand. However, you shall not use a sickle to cut your neighbour’s standing grain!

24

Regulations about divorce — compare Matthew 19:3-9

¹ “If a man takes a wife and marries her, and then she becomes displeasing to him because he has found some indecency in her and **he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand** and sends her out of his house, ² and, if she leaves his home, goes away, and becomes another man’s wife ³ and the next husband hates her, **writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand** and sends her out of his house or if the next husband, who has married her, dies, ⁴ then her former husband, who had divorced her, shall not dare to marry her again, after she has been touched by uncleanness! For the LORD regards that as detestable. You shall not pollute with sin the land that the LORD, your God, is giving to you as an inheritance!

Exemptions for a newly married man

⁵ “When a man has recently married, he shall not go out with the army or become involved in any other public duty! He shall be free at home for one year to bring happiness to the wife whom he has married!

Limitations to what may be taken as security

⁶ “No one shall take a hand-mill or an upper millstone as security for a debt! For he would be taking a life as security for a debt.

A prohibition of kidnapping

⁷ “If a man is caught kidnapping any of his brothers, another Israelite and, if he treats him brutally or sells him, then that kidnapper shall die! **You shall purge what is evil from among you!**

Instructions about infectious skin-disease — Leviticus 13

⁸ “Be very careful, when there is an outbreak of skin-disease, to do exactly as the Levitical priests instruct you! You shall be careful to do as I have commanded them! ⁹ Remember what the LORD, your God, did to Miriam on the journey after you had come out of Egypt!

Regulations about security for a loan

¹⁰ “When you make your neighbour a loan of any sort, you shall not go into his house to collect his security!

¹¹ You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you make the loan shall bring the security outside to you!

¹² If the man is poor, you shall not sleep with his security in your possession! ¹³ You shall be sure to restore the security to him when the sun goes down, that

he may sleep in his cloak! Then he will bless you, and the LORD, your God, will regard it as a righteous deed by you.

A regulation about the wages of a hired man

14 “You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your fellow-Israelites or one of the foreigners who is inside your city in your land! 15 You shall pay him his wages on the same day, before the sun goes down! For he is poor and counts on it. Otherwise he may cry against you to the LORD, and you will be guilty of sin.

A regulation about individual responsibility

16 “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, and children shall not be put to death because of their fathers! Each one shall be put to death for his own sin!

A regulation about foreigners, widows and orphans

17 “You shall not pervert the justice due to a foreigner or a fatherless child! You shall not take a widow’s dress as security! 18 You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD, your God, redeemed you from there! That is why I command you to do this.

A prohibition of gleaning by harvesters

19 “When you are reaping your grain harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to fetch it! It shall belong to the stranger, the fatherless child and the widow, that the LORD, your God, may bless you in all the work that your hands do! 20 When you beat the olives from your trees, you shall not go over the branches again! The stranger, the orphan and the widow shall have what remains! 21 When you pick the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterwards! The stranger, the orphan and the widow shall have what remains! 22 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt! That is why I command you to do this.

25

Regulations to limit the severity of a flogging

1 “When men have a dispute and come into court to have judges decide between them, acquitting the innocent man and condemning the guilty man, 2 then, if the guilty man deserves to be flogged, the judge shall cause him to lie down and have him flogged in his presence with a number of lashes in proportion to his guilt! 3 He may have him flogged with forty lashes. He shall not exceed this! Otherwise, if he has him flogged with more lashes than these, you would have a low regard for your fellow-Israelite.

Permission for an ox to eat while it is working

4 **“You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out grain!**

A requirement for a kinsman-redeemer to marry the widow of a relative — compare Ruth 4:1-10

5 “When brothers are living together and **one of them dies and has no child**, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger! Her deceased **husband’s brother** shall take her and **marry her, that he may perform the duty of a hus-**

band’s brother to her! 6 Then **the first son whom she bears shall succeed** to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out from Israel! 7 However, if the man does not wish to marry his brother’s widow, then his brother’s widow shall go up to the elders at the city-gate and say, ‘My deceased husband’s brother has refused to perpetuate his brother’s name in Israel! He is not willing to fulfil his duty of my husband’s brother to me.’ 8 Then the elders of his city shall summon him and speak to him! If he persists, saying, ‘I do not want to marry her,’ 9 then his brother’s widow shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and shall pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face! Then she shall declare, ‘This is what is done to the man who will not build up his brother’s family!’ 10 His family in Israel shall be called, ‘The family of the man who had his sandal pulled off!’

Respect for male sexual organs

11 “When two men are fighting with one another and the wife of the one comes close to rescue her husband from the man who is attacking him and puts out her hand and seizes him by his genitals, 12 you shall cut off her hand! You shall not regard her with pity!

God’s requirements to be honest in business

13 “You shall not have unequal weights in your bag, a heavier one and a lighter one! 14 You shall not have unequal grain measures in your house, a larger one and a smaller one! 15 You shall have an accurate and honest weight! You shall have an accurate and honest measure, that you may live a long life in the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you! 16 For the LORD, your God, detests everyone who does these things, everyone who deals unjustly.

An instruction to wipe out the Amalekites

17 “Remember what the Amalekites did to you during the journey when you came out of Egypt! 18 They met you on the journey when you were weary and tired and cut off your rear-guard, all the stragglers behind you. They did not fear God. 19 Therefore, when the LORD, your God, has given you rest from all your enemies around you in the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you for an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under the sky! You shall not forget!

26

First-fruits from the land of Canaan

1 “When you enter the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you as an inheritance and you take possession of it and live in it, 2 you shall take some of the first from all the produce of the ground, which you will harvest from your land, which the LORD, your God, is giving you! You shall put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD, your God, will choose to make His name dwell! 3 You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and tell him, ‘I declare today to the LORD, your God, that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our forefathers to

give us!’⁴ Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD, your God!⁵ You shall make this response before the LORD, your God: ‘My forefather was a wandering Aramean. He went down to Egypt with few people and lived as a foreigner there. There he became a great, powerful and numerous nation.⁶ However, the Egyptians treated us harshly, oppressed us and imposed severe forced labour on us.⁷ Then we cried to the LORD, the God of our forefathers, and the LORD heard our cry. He saw our misery, distress and oppression.⁸ The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders.⁹ He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.¹⁰ So now, look! I have brought the first produce of the land, which You, O LORD, have given me.’ Then you shall set it down before the LORD, your God, and worship before the LORD, your God!¹¹ Then you shall be glad about all the good things that the LORD, your God, has given to you and your family, together with the Levite and the foreigner who is living among you!

Regulations about tithes

¹² “When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, which is the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, to the foreigner, to the fatherless child and to the widow, that they may eat inside your cities and have as much as they want!¹³ Then you shall say before the LORD, your God, ‘I have taken these holy offerings out of my home and have also given them to the Levite, to the foreigner, to the fatherless child and to the widow, exactly as You have commanded me. I have not transgressed any of Your Commandments and have not forgotten them.¹⁴ I have not eaten any of the holy offerings while I was mourning or taken any of it away while I have been unclean or offered any of it to the dead. I have listened to what the LORD, my God, has said. I have done exactly as You have commanded me.¹⁵ Look down from heaven, Your holy dwelling place, and bless Your people, Israel, and the ground that You have given to us, as You have sworn to our forefathers, “a land flowing with milk and honey!”’

An admonition to observe God’s Commandments

¹⁶ “Today the LORD, your God, commands you to observe these Prescriptions and Decisions. You shall therefore be careful to put them into practice with all your heart and with all your soul!¹⁷ You have declared today that the LORD is your God and that you will walk in His Ways and keep His Prescriptions, His Commandments and His Decisions and that you will listen to what He has said.¹⁸ The LORD has also declared today that **you are His own people**, His **treasured possession**, as He has promised you, and that you shall keep all His Commandments.¹⁹ He will then place you high above all the other nations that He has made, in praise, in fame and in honour, and you

will be a people that is holy to the LORD, your God, as He has promised.”

27

The Commandment to write the Law on stones at Mount Ebal — Joshua 8:32

¹ Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people: “Keep all the Commandments that I am ordering you today!² On the day when you cross over the Jordan into the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you, you shall set up large stones and whitewash them with lime!³ You shall write on them all the Words of this Law, when you cross over to enter the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you, ‘a land flowing with milk and honey,’ as the LORD, the God of your forefathers, has promised you!⁴ When you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I am commanding you today, on Mount Ebal and shall whitewash them with lime!⁵ You shall build an altar there to the LORD, your God, an altar of stones! You shall not use any iron tool on them!⁶ You shall build an altar to the LORD, your God, with uncut stones! You shall sacrifice burnt offerings on it to the LORD, your God!⁷ You shall also sacrifice peace-offerings and eat there and rejoice in the presence of the LORD, your God!⁸ Then you shall very plainly write on the stones all the Words of this Law!”⁹ Then Moses and the Levitical priests told all Israel: “Be silent and listen, O Israel! Today you have become the people of the LORD, your God.¹⁰ Therefore, you shall listen to what the LORD, your God, says! You shall put into practice His Commandments and His Prescriptions, which I am ordering you today!”

An instruction to proclaim curses on disobedience from Mount Ebal — Deuteronomy 11:26-32, Joshua 8:30-35

¹¹ On that day Moses commanded the people:
¹² “When you have crossed over the Jordan, these tribes shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin!¹³ These tribes shall stand on Mount Ebal to pronounce the curses: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali!¹⁴ Then the Levites shall declare to all the men of Israel in a loud voice:¹⁵ ‘Cursed is the man who makes a carved or cast-metal idol, a thing that the LORD detests, a thing made by the hands of a craftsman, and sets it up in a secret place!’ Then all the people shall answer: ‘Amen!’¹⁶ ‘Cursed is anyone who despises his father or his mother!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’¹⁷ ‘Cursed is anyone who displaces his neighbour’s boundary stone!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’¹⁸ ‘Cursed is anyone who leads a blind man astray on the road!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’¹⁹ ‘Cursed is anyone who perverts the justice due to a foreigner, a fatherless child or a widow!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’²⁰ ‘Cursed is anyone who sleeps with his father’s wife, because he has uncovered the nakedness

that belongs to his father!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’²¹ ‘Cursed is anyone who has sexual relations with any animal!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’²² ‘Cursed is anyone who has sexual relations with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’²³ ‘Cursed is anyone who has sexual relations with his mother-in-law!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’²⁴ ‘Cursed is anyone who strikes down his neighbour secretly!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’²⁵ ‘Cursed is anyone who accepts a bribe to murder an innocent person!’ Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’²⁶ **‘Cursed is anyone who does not carry out the Words of this Law by putting them into practice!’** Then all the people shall say: ‘Amen!’

28

Promises of blessings for obedience — Leviticus 26:1-13, Deuteronomy 7:12-24, Deuteronomy 11:26-32

¹ ‘If you faithfully listen to what the LORD, your God, says and carefully observe all His Commandments, which I am ordering you today, the LORD, your God, will set you high above all the other nations of the earth. ² All these blessings will come to you and accompany you if you listen to what the LORD, your God, says. ³ You will be blessed in the city and be blessed in the open country. ⁴ The children that your wife bears will be blessed, as well as what your ground produces, the young of your livestock, the offspring of your cattle and the increase of your flock. ⁵ Your basket and your kneading-trough will be blessed. ⁶ You will be blessed when you come in and be blessed when you go out. ⁷ The LORD will cause your enemies who attack you to be defeated before you. They will come out against you from one direction and run away from you in seven directions. ⁸ The LORD will command a blessing on you in your barns and in everything that you undertake. The LORD, your God, will bless you in the land that He is giving you. ⁹ The LORD will establish you as a people that is holy to Himself, as He has sworn to you, if you keep the Commandments of the LORD, your God, and walk in His Ways. ¹⁰ All the peoples of the earth will see that you have been called by the name of the LORD and will be afraid of you. ¹¹ The LORD will pour out abundant kindness on you, on the children that your wives have, on the young that your livestock have and on what your ground produces, in the land that the LORD has sworn to your forefathers to give you. ¹² The LORD will open to you His good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will not borrow. ¹³ The LORD will make you the head and not the tail. You will always be at the top and never at the bottom if you obey the Commandments of the LORD, your God, which I am ordering you today to put into prac-

tice carefully,¹⁴ and, if you do not turn aside to the right hand or to the left from any of the Words that I am commanding you today, so that you should follow other gods, to serve them.

Threats of curses if the Israelites are disobedient — Exodus 9:8-12, Leviticus 26:14-46

¹⁵ ‘However, if you do not listen to what the LORD, your God, says or are not careful to carry out all His Commandments and His Statutes, which I am ordering you today, then all these curses will come on you and overtake you. ¹⁶ You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the open country. ¹⁷ Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed. ¹⁸ The children that your wife bears will be cursed, as well as what your ground produces, the offspring of your cattle and the increase of your flock. ¹⁹ You will be cursed when you come in and be cursed when you go out.

²⁰ ‘The LORD will send on you curses, confusion and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and come to sudden ruin on account of the evil that you have done, because you have forsaken Me. ²¹ The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He destroys you from the land that you are entering to possess. ²² The LORD will strike you with wasting disease, fever, inflammation, burning fever, the sword, rust and mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish. ²³ The sky over your head will be bronze and the earth under you will be iron. ²⁴ The LORD will turn the rain of your land into powder and dust will come down on you from the sky until you are destroyed.

²⁵ ‘The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You will go out against them in one direction and run away from them in seven directions. You will cause all the kingdoms of the earth to be horrified. ²⁶ Your dead bodies will be food for all the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth and there will be no one to frighten them away. ²⁷ The LORD will afflict you with the boils that plagued the Egyptians, with haemorrhoids, with festering sores and with itch from which you cannot be healed. ²⁸ The LORD will afflict you with madness, with blindness and with confusion of mind. ²⁹ You will grope about at noonday, like a blind person groping in the dark. You will not prosper in your ways. You will experience nothing but oppression and robbery day after day, and there will be no one to save you. ³⁰ You will become engaged to a woman, but another man will rape her. You will build a house but not live in it. You will plant a vineyard but not make use of it. ³¹ Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat any of it. Your donkey will be taken away by force as you watch and will not be restored to you. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, and there will be no one to rescue you. ³² Your sons and your daughters will be given to another people and your eyes will grow weak as you keep looking for

Deuteronomy

them all day long, but there will be nothing that you can do.

³³ “A nation that you have not known will eat what your land and your labour produce, and you will have nothing but oppression and harsh treatment all your days. ³⁴ You will be driven crazy by the sights that your eyes see.

³⁵ “The LORD will afflict your knees and legs with **painful boils**. There will be no cure for them from the soles of your feet to the crown of your head.

³⁶ “The LORD will make you and your king, whom you will set over yourselves, walk to a nation that you and your forefathers have not known. There you will serve other gods, made of wood and stone. ³⁷ You will become a cause of horror, a standard warning to others and an object of scorn in all the nations where the LORD will lead you away.

³⁸ “You will carry much seed to the field but gather little in, because the locust will consume it. ³⁹ You will plant vineyards and cultivate them but drink no wine and gather no grapes, because the worms will eat them. ⁴⁰ You will have olive-trees throughout your territory but not anoint yourself with olive-oil, because your olives will drop off. ⁴¹ You will father sons and daughters but be without them, because they will go into captivity. ⁴² The mole crickets will take possession of all your trees and the produce of your land. ⁴³ The foreigner who is among you will rise higher and higher above you, but you will sink lower and lower. ⁴⁴ He will lend to you, and you will not lend to him. He will be the head and you will be the tail.

⁴⁵ “All these curses will come on you. They will pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you have not listened to what the LORD, your God, has said and have not kept His Commandments and His Statutes, which He has commanded you.

⁴⁶ They will be a sign and a wonder against you and your descendants for ever. ⁴⁷ Since you have not been serving the LORD, your God, with joy and a happy heart because you have had so much of everything, ⁴⁸ you will serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, and you will be hungry, thirsty and naked and lack everything. He will also put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you.

⁴⁹ “The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the end of the earth, swooping down like an eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, ⁵⁰ a nation with defiant faces, who have no respect for the elderly and show no mercy to the young. ⁵¹ They will eat the young of your cattle and what your ground produces, until you are destroyed. They will leave you no grain, wine or olive-oil, no calves of your cattle or lambs of your flock until they have destroyed you. ⁵² They will besiege you in all your cities until your high and fortified walls, in which you have been trusting, come down throughout

your land. They will besiege you in all your cities throughout your land, which the LORD, your God, has given to you. ⁵³ You will eat children whom your own wife has borne, the flesh of your own sons and daughters, whom the LORD, your God, has given you, during the siege and in the hardship with which your enemies will oppress you. ⁵⁴ The tenderest and the most pampered man among you will become mean to his brother, to the wife whom he embraces and to the last of the children whom he has left. ⁵⁵ As a result, he will not give any of the flesh of his children, whom he is eating, to any of them. For he has nothing else left in the siege and in the hardship with which your enemy will oppress you in all your cities. ⁵⁶ The most tender and fastidious woman among you, who has not been venturing to set the sole of her foot on the ground, because she is so fastidious and tender, will become mean to her husband, whom she embraces, and to her son and her daughter. ⁵⁷ She will not share with them the afterbirth that comes from her body or her children, whom she bears, but will eat them secretly because she lacks everything else in the siege and in the hardship with which your enemy will oppress you in your cities.

⁵⁸ “If you are not careful to observe all the Words of this Law, which have been written in this book, so that you fear this glorious and awesome name, “the LORD, your God,” ⁵⁹ the LORD will inflict extraordinary plagues on you and on your descendants, severe and tenacious plagues and serious and tenacious diseases. ⁶⁰ He will bring back on you every disease of the Egyptians, which you dreaded, and they will cling to you. ⁶¹ The LORD will also bring on you every kind of sickness and plague that has not been recorded in this book of the Law until you are destroyed. ⁶² You will be left few in number, although you had been as numerous as the stars in the sky, because you have not listened to what the LORD, your God, has said. ⁶³ As the LORD took delight in doing you good and making you numerous, so the LORD will take delight in bringing ruin on you and destroying you. You will be torn out of the land that you are entering to possess. ⁶⁴ The LORD will scatter you among all the peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you will serve other gods of wood and stone, which you and your forefathers have not known. ⁶⁵ Among those nations you will find no relief and no place for the sole of your foot to rest. There the LORD will make your heart tremble, your eyes fail and your soul despair. ⁶⁶ You will live in constant suspense, you will tremble in terror day and night and have no assurance of your life. ⁶⁷ In the morning you will say, ‘If only it were evening!’ and in the evening you will say, ‘If only it were morning!’ because of the trembling that fills your hearts and because of the sights that your eyes see.

⁶⁸ “The LORD will bring you back in ships to Egypt,

on the journey that I told you that you would not see again. There you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male slaves and female slaves, but no one will buy you.”

29

The renewal of the Covenant in Moab

¹ These are the Words of the Covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in the land of Moab, in addition to the Covenant that He had made with them at Horeb. ² Moses summoned all Israel and told them: “You have seen everything that the LORD has done before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his officials and to all his land, ³ the great trials, which your eyes have seen, the miraculous signs and those great wonders. ⁴ However, **until this day the LORD has not given you a mind to understand, eyes to see or ears to listen.**

⁵ “I have been leading you in the wilderness for forty years. Your clothes have not worn out on you and your sandals have not worn out on your feet. ⁶ You have not eaten bread or drunk any wine or other strong drink. I have done this, that you may know that I am the LORD, your God.’

⁷ “When you came to this place, Sihon, the king of Heshbon, and Og, the king of Bashan, came out to fight against us, but we defeated them. ⁸ We took their land and gave it to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, as an inheritance. ⁹ Therefore, you shall keep the Words of this Covenant and carry them out, that you may have success in everything that you will be doing!

¹⁰ “All of you are standing today in the presence of the LORD, your God, your leaders, your tribes, your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, ¹¹ your children, your wives and the foreigners who are in your camp, both the man who gathers your firewood and the man who draws your water. ¹² You are standing here that you may enter the Covenant of the LORD, your God, and His Stipulation, which the LORD, your God, is making with you today, ¹³ that He may confirm **you** today **as His people**, that **He may be your God**, as He has promised you, and as He has sworn to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. ¹⁴ It is not with you alone that I am making this Covenant and this Stipulation, ¹⁵ but with anyone else who is standing with us here today before the LORD, our God, and with anyone who is not here with us today. ¹⁶ For you yourselves know that we lived in the land of Egypt and that we passed through the middle of the nations through which you have come. ¹⁷ You have also seen their detestable images and their idols, which were among them, wood, stone, silver and gold. ¹⁸ Beware that there is no man, woman, clan or tribe among you whose heart is turning away today from the LORD, our God, to go and serve the gods of those nations! Take care that there is **no root that produces**

poisonous and bitter fruit among you! ¹⁹ When such a person hears the Words of this Stipulation, congratulates himself and thinks, ‘I shall be safe even if I go my own stubborn way,’ then the well-watered ground will be cleared away together with the dry. ²⁰ The LORD will not be willing to pardon him. For then the anger of the LORD and His jealousy will smoke against that man. Every curse that has been written in this book will settle on him, and the LORD will blot out His name from under the sky. ²¹ The LORD will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses of the Covenant, which have been written in this book of the Law. ²² The next generation, your children, who will rise up after you and the foreigner who will come from a distant land, will say, when they see the plagues of that land and its chronic diseases, with which the LORD has afflicted it, ²³ ‘The whole land is a burned-out place, with sulphur and salt. Nothing is being sown, and nothing is growing. No green plants are coming up in it. It is like the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.’

²⁴ “All the nations will ask, ‘Why has the LORD done this to this land? What has caused the heat of this great anger?’

²⁵ “Then they will answer, ‘It is because they have forsaken the Covenant of the LORD, the God of their forefathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt. ²⁶ They have been going and serving other gods and have been worshipping them, gods that they had not known and that He had not permitted them to have. ²⁷ That is why the anger of the LORD has blazed out against this land, so that He has brought on it all the curses that have been written in this book. ²⁸ The LORD has uprooted them from their land in anger, in fury and in great wrath and has cast them into another land, where they are today.’

²⁹ “The secret things belong to the LORD, our God, but the things that have been revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may put into practice everything that this Law says.”

30

A promise of restoration after repentance and forgiveness

¹ “When all these things happen to you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you again take them to heart wherever the LORD, your God, has driven you among all the nations, ² and when you and your children return to the LORD, your God, and listen to everything that He says, with all your heart and with all your soul, as I am commanding you today, ³ then the LORD, your God, will suspend your sentence of imprisonment. He will have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD, your God, has scattered you. ⁴ Even if any of you have been banished **in the**

most distant land under the sky, the LORD, your God, **will gather you** from there and bring you back **from there.** ⁵ The LORD, your God, will bring you to the land that your forefathers had possessed, that you may take possession of it, and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your forefathers. ⁶ The LORD, your God, will also circumcise your heart and the hearts of your descendants, so that you will love the LORD, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. ⁷ Then the LORD, your God, will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who have hated you and who have been persecuting you. ⁸ Then you will again listen to what the LORD says and put into practice all His Commandments, which I am ordering you today. ⁹ Then the LORD, your God, will make you very successful in whatever you do, in all the children that your wife bears, in the offspring from your livestock and in the produce of your land, so that they prosper. For the LORD will again delight in you, so that you prosper, as He delighted in your forefathers, ¹⁰ when you listen to what the LORD, your God, says, when you keep His Commandments and His Statutes, which have been written in this book of the Law, and when you turn to the LORD, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul.

The choice between life and death

¹¹ “For this commandment, which I am giving you today, is not too difficult for you and not far away. ¹² It is not in heaven, so that you should ask, ‘**Who will go up to heaven** for us, fetch it for us and proclaim it to us, that we may perform it?’ ¹³ Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you should ask, ‘Who will cross over to the other side of the sea for us, to fetch it for us, that he may proclaim it to us, that we may perform it?’ ¹⁴ Rather, **the Word is very near you.** It is **in your mouth and in your heart**, that you may perform it.

¹⁵ “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and calamity. ¹⁶ For I am commanding you today to love the LORD, your God, to walk in His Ways and to keep His Commandments, His Statutes and His Decisions, that you may live and become numerous and that the LORD, your God, may bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷ However, if your heart turns away and you do not listen but are led astray, worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I have been telling you today that you people will certainly be ruined. You will not live for long in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to enter and to possess. ¹⁹ I call on heaven and earth as witnesses against you today. I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Therefore, you shall choose life, that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰ that you may love the LORD, your God, that you may listen to what He says and cling to Him! For He is your life and your length of days, that you may

dwell in the land that the LORD has promised with an oath to give to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

31

The choice of Joshua to succeed Moses — Numbers 27:12-23

¹ Then Moses continued to speak these Words to all Israel. ² He told them: “I am one hundred and twenty years old today and can no longer associate with you. The LORD has also told me, ‘You will not cross over the Jordan here.’ ³ The LORD, your God, will Himself cross over ahead of you. He will destroy these nations before you, that you may dispossess them. Joshua himself will cross over as your leader, as the LORD has promised. ⁴ The LORD will do to them what He has done to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them. ⁵ When the LORD gives them over to you, you shall do to them everything that I have commanded you! ⁶ Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or be terrified because of them! For the LORD, your God, is the One who is going with you. **He will not abandon you or forsake you.**”

⁷ Then Moses summoned Joshua and told him, while all Israel was watching: “Be strong and courageous! For you will go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to give to their forefathers and you will give them hereditary possession of it. ⁸ The LORD Himself is going before you. He will be with you. He will **not abandon you or forsake you.** You shall not be afraid or terrified!”

The writing down of the Law and the requirement to hear it read every seventh year

⁹ Then Moses wrote down this Law and gave it to the priests, who were descended from Levi, and who used to carry the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰ Moses commanded them: “At the end of every seven years, at the set time in the year when debts are cancelled, at the Festival of Booths, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD, your God, at the place that He will choose, you shall read this Law before all Israel while they listen! ¹² Assemble the people, the men, the women and the children and your foreigners, who are in your cities, that they may hear, and that they may learn it, may fear the LORD, your God, and may be careful to put into practice everything that this Law says, ¹³ and that their children, who have not known it, may hear it and may learn to fear the LORD, your God, all your life in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to occupy!”

The appearance of the Lord to Moses and Joshua

¹⁴ The LORD told Moses: “Look! The time when you must die has come near. Call Joshua and present yourselves at the Tent of Meeting, that I may commission him!”

So, Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁵ Then the LORD appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud

stood over the entrance of the tent.

The instruction to Moses to write a song to warn the Israelites

16 “The LORD told Moses: “Look! You are about to lie down with your fathers. Then these people will get up, run wantonly after the gods of the foreigners among them in the land that they are entering and will forsake Me and break My Covenant, which I have made with them. 17 At that time My anger will break out against them. I shall forsake them and hide My face from them. They will be ready to be devoured. Many calamities and distresses will come on them and at that time they will ask, ‘Have not these calamities come on us because our God is not among us?’ 18 At that time I Myself shall certainly hide My face because of all the evil that they have been doing, in turning to other gods. 19 Now, therefore, write down this song for yourselves and teach it to the Israelites! Have them sing it, that this song may be a witness for Me against the Israelites! 20 For, when I bring them into the land that I have sworn to their forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey, and when they eat all they want and grow fat, they will turn to other gods, serve them, treat Me irreverently and break My Covenant. 21 When many calamities and distresses come on them, this song will testify against them as a witness. For their descendants will not forget it but sing it. For I know what they are inclined to do today, before I bring them into the land that I have promised them with an oath.”

22 Moses wrote this song on that day and taught it to the Israelites. 23 God commissioned Joshua, the son of Nun, and said: “Be strong and courageous! For you will bring the Israelites into the land that I have promised them with an oath and I Myself shall be with you.”

24 When Moses had completely finished writing the Words of this Law in a book, 25 Moses commanded the Levites, who used to carry the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, 26 “Take this book of the Law and put it beside the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, your God, that it may remain there as a witness against you! 27 For I myself know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Look! Even today, while I am still alive with you, you have been rebelling against the LORD. How much more after I die! 28 Gather all the elders of your tribes and your officers before me, that I may speak these Words while they listen and that I may call heaven and earth as witnesses against them! 29 For I know that after I die you will certainly act corruptly and turn aside from the Way that I have commanded you. In days to come evil will come on you, because you will do what the LORD regards as evil and provoke Him to anger through what you are doing.”

The song that Moses wrote for the Israelites

30 Then, while the whole congregation of Israel listened, Moses recited the Words of this song from beginning to end:

32

1 “Listen, heavens, and I shall speak! Let the earth hear the Words of my mouth!

2 “Let my teaching shower down like the rain! Let my speech drift down like the dew, like showers of rain on fresh grass and like gentle rain on green plants!

3 “For I shall proclaim the name of the LORD. Ascribe greatness to our God!

4 “He is the Rock. His **work is perfect**. For all His **Ways are just**. He is a faithful God without wrong. He is righteous and upright.

5 “They have acted corruptly toward Him. They are **no longer His children** because they are blemished. They are **a twisted and crooked kind of people**.

6 “Is this how you repay the LORD, foolish and imprudent people? Is not He your Father, who has gained possession of you, has made you and has established you?

7 “Remember the days of long ago! Consider the years of many generations! Ask your father, that He may inform you, your elders, that they may tell you!

8 “When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He divided the descendants of Adam, He fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel.

9 “However, the portion of the LORD is His people: Jacob is the plot of ground that He has inherited.

10 “He used to find him in a wilderness, in a wasteland, in a howling desert. He used to surround him, take care of him and protect him like the pupil of His eye.

11 “As an eagle stirs up its nest and hovers over its young birds, as it spreads out its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions, 12 so the LORD alone used to lead him, and no foreign god was with him.

13 “He used to make him ride on the high places of the earth, and he ate the produce of the field. He let him suck honey from the rock and olive-oil out of the flinty rock.

14 “He used to give him curdled milk from the herd and milk from the flock, together with fattened young rams, rams bred in Bashan and male goats, together with the very finest wheat. You used to drink foaming wine made from the blood of the grape.

15 “However, Jeshurun grew fat and kicked. You grew fat, you became plump and stubborn. Then he left God, who had made him, and treated haughtily the Rock who had saved him.

16 “They aroused Him to jealousy with foreign gods. They provoked Him to anger with detestable deities.

17 “**They used to sacrifice to the demons, which are not gods**, to gods that they had not known, new gods, which had come in recently, about which your fathers had not bristled in terror.

18 “You used to neglect the Rock who fathered you, and forgot the God who gave you birth.

19 “When the LORD saw this, He rejected them, because His sons and His daughters had provoked Him.

20 “He said, ‘I shall hide My face from them. I shall see what their end will be. For they are a perverse generation, children who are unreliable.

21 “They **have been making Me jealous** with what is not God. They have been provoking Me to anger with their worthless idols. **I Myself shall make them jealous with those who are not a people. I shall use a foolish nation to provoke them to anger.**

22 “For a fire has been lit by My anger, and it has burnt down to the lowest part of Sheol. It has been devouring the earth and what it produces and has been setting the foundations of the mountains on fire.

23 “I shall heap up calamities on them. I shall use up My arrows on them.

24 “They will be exhausted by hunger and consumed by pestilence, plague and bitter disease. I shall send the fangs of wild animals against them, as well as the poison of creatures that crawl in the dust.

25 “Outdoors the sword will make them childless, and there will be terror in the inner rooms, for young men and virgins alike, for both nursing babies and men with grey hair.

26 “I had said: “I shall dash them to pieces. I shall make them disappear from human memory.” 27 I would have done so, if I had not feared provocation by the enemy, if I had not wished to prevent those who were oppressing them from misrepresenting it and to prevent them from saying, “Our hand has been triumphant, and it has not been the LORD who has done all this.”

28 “For they are a nation that has lost good sense and they have no discernment.

29 “If only they were wise! If only they would understand this! They would consider what their end would be!

30 “How could one have chased a thousand and two have made ten thousand flee, unless their Rock had sold them and unless the LORD had given them up?

31 “For their rock is not like our Rock. Our enemies make this conclusion.

32 “For their vines come from the vines of Sodom and from the terraces of Gomorrah. Their grapes are poisonous grapes. Their clusters are bitter.

33 “Their wine is the poison of serpents and the cruel venom of cobras.

34 “Is not this stored up with Me, sealed up in My storehouses?

35 “**Vengeance and recompense belong to Me.** In due time their foot will slip. For the day of their final calamity is close and the events to come will happen to them swiftly.’

36 “**For the LORD will vindicate His people** and have compassion on His servants, when He sees that their strength has gone away and that no one is left, either anyone imprisoned or anyone free.

37 “Then He will ask: ‘Where are their gods, the rock in which they have taken refuge, 38 who used to eat the fat of their sacrifices and used to drink the wine of their drink offerings?’ Let them rise and help you! Let them be your refuge!

39 “See now, that I, even I, am He and that there is no god besides Me. I shall kill, and I shall make alive. I have wounded and I Myself shall heal, and there is no one who can deliver from My hand.

40 “**For I shall raise My hand to heaven** and declare, ‘As surely as I **live for ever**, 41 if I sharpen My flashing sword and My hand takes hold of judgment, I shall take vengeance on My adversaries and repay those who hate Me.

42 “I shall make My arrows drunk with blood, and My sword will devour flesh, together with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the loose-haired heads of the enemy.

43 “**You nations, make His people shout for joy! For He will avenge the blood of His servants.** He will take revenge on His adversaries. He will make atonement for His land and His people.”

The recitation of Moses' song to the Israelites

44 Moses came, together with Hoshea, the son of Nun, and recited all the Words of this song while the people were listening. 45 When Moses had finished speaking all these Words to all Israel, 46 he told them: “Take to heart all the Words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to put into practice all the Words of this Law! 47 For it is not speech that is too empty for you but is your life, and by this Word you will live long on the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to occupy.”

The permission given to Moses to look at the land of Canaan from Mount Nebo before his death

48 On that day the LORD also told Moses, 49 “Go up onto the Abarim Range here, on Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho, and view the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites as their property! 50 Then die on the mountain that you climb! Be gathered to your people, as Aaron, your brother, died on Mount Hor and as he was gathered to his people! 51 This is because you failed to fulfil your duty to Me among the Israelites at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin and because you did not treat Me as holy among the Israelites. 52 For, although you will see the land on the other side, you will not go in there, into the land that I am giving to the Israelites.”

33

Moses' blessing on the twelve tribes of Israel — compare Genesis 49:1-28

1 This is the blessing that Moses, the man of God, pronounced on the Israelites before he died. 2 He said: “The LORD has come from Sinai and has shone from Seir on them. He has appeared in radiance from Mount Paran. He has come from the ten thousands of

holy ones. From His right hand a fiery Law came forth for them.

³ “Surely, He loves the people. **All His holy ones** are in His hand. They have been crowding together at Your feet and will receive guidance from Your pronouncements.

⁴ “**Moses has commanded a Law for us, as a possession** for the assembly of Jacob.

⁵ “He became King over Jeshurun, when the leaders of the people assembled, when all the tribes of Israel were together.

⁶ “Let Reuben live and let him not die out, but let his persons be few!”

⁷ He said this about Judah:

“Hear, O LORD, the voice of Judah and bring him in to his people! His hands have been conducting his case for him, and You will help him against his enemies.”

⁸ About Levi he said:

“Your Thummim and your Urim belong to Levi, to your devout one, whom You tested at Massah, and before whom You laid a lawsuit at the waters of Meribah.

⁹ He says, about His father and his mother, ‘I have not known them.’ He has not been acquainted with his brothers and has not acknowledged his children. For they have been observing your Word and have been keeping your Covenant. ¹⁰ They will teach Your Decisions to Jacob and Your Law to Israel. They will put incense before You and whole burnt offerings on Your altar.

¹¹ Bless, O LORD, his strength and be favourable to the work of his hands! Beat to pieces the loins of those who attack him and of those who hate him, that they may not rise again!”

¹² About Benjamin he said:

“**The beloved of the LORD** will dwell in safety beside Him. He shelters him all day long and he dwells between His shoulders.”

¹³ About Joseph he said:

“May the LORD bless his land with the choicest gifts of heaven, with the dew and with the deep waters that lie stretched out beneath, ¹⁴ with the choicest things that the sun produces, with the best produce of each month, ¹⁵ with the finest produce of the ancient mountains, with the fruitful yield of the everlasting hills, ¹⁶ with the fruitful yield of the earth and its fullness and the favour of Him who dwelt in the thorny bush! May these come on the head of Joseph, on the crown of the head of the prince among his brothers!

¹⁷ He will be splendid, like his first-born bull and have horns like the horns of an Arabian antelope. With them he will butt the peoples, all together, to the ends of the earth. Such will be the ten thousands of Ephraim and such will be the thousands of Manasseh.”

¹⁸ About Zebulun he said:

“Rejoice, Zebulun, when you go out, and Issachar, when you stay in your tents!

¹⁹ They will summon peoples to their mountain. There they will offer righteous sacrifices. For they will suck in the great abundance of the seas and the hidden secrets of the sand.”

²⁰ About Gad he said:

“Blessed is he who gives Gad a large territory! Gad has crouched down like a lion. He will tear in pieces an arm and even a scalp.

²¹ He provided the best of the land for himself. For there a ruler’s portion had been reserved. He came with the leaders of the people and with Israel he carried out what the LORD considers righteous and what He decides.”

²² About Dan he said,

“Dan is a lion’s cub, which jumps out from Bashan.”

²³ About Naphtali he said:

“O Naphtali, satisfied with favour and full of the blessing of the LORD, take possession of the sea and the land south of it!”

²⁴ About Asher he said:

“May Asher be most blessed of the sons! Let him be the favourite of his brothers and let him bathe his foot in olive-oil!

²⁵ The bolts of your gates will be iron and bronze and your strength will last as long as your days.”

²⁶ “O Jeshurun, there is no one like God, who rides through the heavens to help you. In His majesty He rides the clouds.

²⁷ The eternal God is your dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms. He has driven out the enemy before you and has said, ‘Destroy!’

²⁸ Therefore, Israel has been living in safety. The fountain of Jacob is living alone, in a land of grain and wine. Indeed, his skies will drop down dew.

²⁹ Blessed are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people whom the LORD has saved? He is the Shield who helps you. He is the Sword who has made you majestic. Your enemies will pretend to be submissive to you and you will tread on their backs.”

34

The death of Moses and God’s burial of him in the land of Moab

¹ Then Moses went up from the waterless plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him all the land, from Gilead to Dan, ² all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, ³ the Negev and the broad area, which is the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palm-trees, as far as Zoar. ⁴ Then the LORD told him: “This is the land that I have solemnly promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with an oath, saying: ‘I shall give it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you will not cross over there.”

⁵ Then Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab as the LORD had said. ⁶ He buried

Deuteronomy

him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-Peor, and to this day no one knows where his grave is. ⁷ Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died. His eyesight had not become dim and his vigour had not diminished. ⁸ The Israelites mourned for Moses on the waterless plains of Moab for thirty days. Then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses ended.

⁹ Joshua, the son of Nun, was filled with a spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him.

The people of Israel listened to him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses. ¹⁰ A prophet like Moses has not arisen since then in Israel. The LORD knew him face to face. ¹¹ He was unequalled for all the miraculous signs and wonders that the LORD had sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, to all his officials and to his whole land. ¹² Moses was also unequalled for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that he performed while all Israel witnessed them.

JOSHUA

1

The encouragement given by God to Joshua

¹ After Moses, the servant of the LORD, died, the LORD told Moses' assistant Joshua, the son of Nun,
² "Moses, My servant, is dead. Now therefore, you and all these people, proceed and cross over this Jordan, into the land that I am giving to these Israelites!
³ I have given you every place on which you will set the soles of your feet, as I have promised Moses.
⁴ Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon there, **as far as the great river**, the River **Euphrates**, all the country of the Hittites and as far as the Great Sea on the west. ⁵ **No one will** be able to stand up against you all your life. **I shall be with you** as I was with Moses. **I shall not leave you or forsake you.** ⁶ Be strong and courageous! For you will cause these people to take possession of the land that I have sworn to give their forefathers. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous! Be careful to keep all the Law, which My servant Moses has commanded you! Do not turn away from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go! ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do exactly as has been written in it! For then you will make your way prosperous and be successful! ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be terrified and do not be discouraged! For the LORD, your God, will be with you wherever you go."

The preparation to cross the Jordan

¹⁰ Joshua commanded the officers of the people,
¹¹ "Go through the camp and command the people, 'Prepare supplies for yourselves! For within three days you will be crossing over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD, your God, is giving you to possess."
¹² However, Joshua told the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh: ¹³ "Remember the Instructions that Moses, the servant of the LORD gave you, when he said, 'The LORD, your God, is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land!'
¹⁴ Your wives, your children and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses has given you on this side of the Jordan, but all the brave men among you shall cross over armed ahead of your fellow-Israelites and shall help them, ¹⁵ until the LORD gives rest to your fellow-Israelites, as He has to you and they also take possession of the land that the LORD, your God, is giving to them! Then you may return to the land that is your own possession, that you may occupy the land that Moses, the servant of the LORD, has given you on the eastern side of the Jordan."

¹⁶ They answered Joshua: "We shall do everything that you have commanded us and we shall go wherev-

er you send us. ¹⁷ We shall listen to you exactly as we have been listening to Moses. Only may the LORD, your God, be with you, as He has been with Moses!
¹⁸ Whoever stubbornly disregards what you command and refuses to listen to what you say, no matter what you command him to do, shall be put to death! Only be strong and courageous!"

2

The visit of two Israelite spies to Jericho and their concealment by Rahab — Hebrews 11:31

¹ Joshua, the son of Nun, secretly sent two men from Shittim as spies. He said, "Go and look over the land, especially Jericho!"

They went and entered the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lay down to sleep there. ² The king of Jericho was told, "Look! Some of the Israelite men have come here tonight to spy out the land."

³ Then the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: "Bring out the men who have come to you and have entered your house! For they have come to spy out the whole land."

⁴ However, the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said: "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from. ⁵ When the gate was about to be closed at dark, the men went out. I do not know where they have gone. Chase after them quickly! For you may catch up with them."

⁶ However, she had taken them up to the roof and had hidden them with the stalks of flax that had been stacked on the roof. ⁷ So, the men pursued them on the road towards the Jordan as far as the fords. People shut the gate as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out. ⁸ Before the spies went to sleep, she went up to them on the roof. ⁹ She told them: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, that a great fear of you has fallen on us and that all the inhabitants of the land are demoralised because of you. ¹⁰ For we have heard that the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you completely destroyed. ¹¹ When we heard it, our courage melted, and no one had any energy any longer because of you. For the LORD, your God, is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath. ¹² Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD that, because I have been kind to you, you also will be kind to my father's family! You must give me a sure sign ¹³ that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters and everything that they have and that you will deliver our lives from death!"

¹⁴ The men promised her: "Our lives in death for yours, if you conceal what we are doing here! When the LORD gives us the land we shall treat you kindly

and honestly.”

¹⁵ Then she let them down by a rope through the window. For her house had been built on the city wall, so that she was living on the wall. ¹⁶ She told them: “Go into the hill-country, that the pursuers may not meet you! Hide there for three days until the pursuers have returned! After that you may go your way.”

¹⁷ The men told her: “We shall be free from this oath of yours, which you have made us swear. ¹⁸ Look! When we come into the land, you must tie this line of crimson cord in the window through which you have let us down! You must gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers and all your father’s family! ¹⁹ Then, if anyone goes out of the doors of your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head, and we shall not be responsible. However, if a hand is laid on anyone who is with you in the house, we shall be responsible for his death. ²⁰ Moreover, if you tell what we are doing here, then we shall be exempt from your oath, which you have made us swear.”

²¹ She replied, “Yes, let it be as you say!” She sent them away, and they left. Then she tied the scarlet cord in the window. ²² When they left, they went into the hill-country and stayed there for three days, until the pursuers returned. The pursuers had been searching all along the road without finding them. ²³ Then the two men returned. They came down from the hill-country, crossed over, came to Joshua, the son of Nun, and told him all that had happened to them. ²⁴ They told Joshua: “The LORD has surely put the whole land in our hands. All the inhabitants of the land have also become disheartened because of us.”

3

The crossing of the Jordan River

¹ Joshua rose early in the morning and he and all the Israelites set out from Shittim, arrived at the Jordan and camped there before they crossed over. ² After three days the officers went through the camp, ³ and commanded the people: “When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, your God, and the priests, who are Levites, carrying it, you also shall move out from your positions and follow it! ⁴ However, there shall be a distance of about one kilometre between you and the Ark! Do not come closer to it, that you may know the way you should go! For you have not passed this way before.”

⁵ Joshua also told the people: “Put yourselves into a state of dedication! For tomorrow the LORD will perform marvellous deeds among you.”

⁶ Joshua told the priests, “Take up the Ark of the Covenant and pass on ahead of the people!” So, they took up the Ark of the Covenant and went ahead of the people. ⁷ Then the LORD told Joshua: “Today I shall begin to make all the Israelites honour you highly, that they may know that I shall be with

you as I have been with Moses. ⁸ You yourself shall command the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant: ‘When you come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan!’”

⁹ Joshua told the Israelites, “Come here and listen to what the LORD, your God, says!”

¹⁰ Joshua continued: “This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that He will certainly drive out ahead of you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Gergashites, the Amorites and the Jebusites. ¹¹ Look! The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over ahead of you into the Jordan. ¹² Now therefore, choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from each tribe! ¹³ When the soles of the feet of the priests who are carrying the Ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, are standing still in the water of the Jordan, the water of the Jordan that is flowing down from upstream will be cut off and the water will stand up in one dam.”

¹⁴ The people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, while the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant were going ahead of them. ¹⁵ When those who were carrying the Ark came to the Jordan and the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark dipped into the edge of the water, although the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest, ¹⁶ the water flowing down from upstream stood still. It rose up in one dam very far away, at Adam, the city that is near Zarethan. Meanwhile, the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed completely. It had been cut off. Then the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷ The priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel kept crossing over on dry ground, until the entire nation had finished crossing over the Jordan.

4

The Command to make a memorial of the crossing of the Jordan

¹ When the whole nation had finished crossing over the Jordan, the LORD told Joshua, ² “Choose twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, ³ and command them, ‘Pick up twelve stones from here, from the middle of the Jordan, from right where the priests’ feet stood still! Bring the stones across with you and put them down at the place where you camp tonight!’”

⁴ Then Joshua summoned the twelve men of the Israelites whom he had appointed, one man from each tribe. ⁵ Joshua told them: “Go across as far as the Ark of the LORD, your God, in the middle of the Jordan! Each of you shall lift up a stone on his shoulder, as many stones as the Israelites have tribes, ⁶ that this may be a sign among you! When your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’

⁷ then you shall tell them that the water of the Jordan

was cut off in front of the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD! When it crossed over the Jordan, the water of the Jordan was cut off. These stones will always remind the Israelites of it.”

⁸ So, the Israelites did as Joshua had commanded. They picked up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, as many stones as the Israelites had tribes, as the LORD had told Joshua. They carried them over with them to the place where they camped and put them down there. ⁹ Joshua also set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, at the place where the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant had been standing, and they have been there until today. ¹⁰ The priests who were carrying the Ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to tell the people, exactly as Moses had commanded Joshua. The people crossed over quickly.

¹¹ When all the people had finished crossing over, the Ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people.

¹² The men who were descended from Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over, armed, in front of the Israelites, as Moses had told them.

¹³ About forty thousand men ready for battle crossed over before the LORD to the waterless plains of Jericho for war. ¹⁴ On that day the LORD honoured Joshua in the estimation of all Israel, and all his life they respected him just as they had respected Moses.

¹⁵ Then the LORD told Joshua, ¹⁶ “Command the priests who are carrying the Ark of the Testimony to come up out of the Jordan!”

¹⁷ So, Joshua commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan!”

¹⁸ When the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD came up from the middle of the Jordan and the priests lifted the soles of their feet up onto the dry ground, the water of the Jordan returned to its place. It overflowed all its banks, as it had been doing before.

¹⁹ The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. ²⁰ Joshua set up at Gilgal those twelve stones, which they had taken out of the Jordan. ²¹ He told the Israelites: “In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, ‘What do these stones mean?’ ²² you shall inform your children, ‘Israel crossed over the Jordan here on dry ground!’ ²³ For the LORD, your God, dried up the water of the Jordan in front of you until you had crossed over, as the LORD, your God, had done to the Red Sea, which He had dried up in front of us until we had crossed over. ²⁴ He did this that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is mighty and that you might always fear the LORD, your God.”

5

The circumcision of the Israelites at Gilgal after entering Canaan

¹ All the kings of the Amorites who were on the western side of the Jordan and all the kings of the Canaanites who were near the sea heard that the LORD had dried up the water of the Jordan in front of the Israelites until they had crossed over. Then their courage melted and they no longer had any determination to resist the people of Israel. ² At that time the LORD told Joshua, “Make flint knives for yourself and once again circumcise the Israelites!”

³ So, Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites at Gibeath-Ha-Araloth. ⁴ This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who had come out of Egypt, all the males of military age, had died in the wilderness during the journey after they had left Egypt. ⁵ For, although all the people who had come out had been circumcised, none of the people who were born in the wilderness during the journey from Egypt had been circumcised. ⁶ For the Israelites had been walking in the wilderness for forty years, until the entire nation, the men of military age who had come out of Egypt, had gone, because they had not listened to what the LORD said. For the LORD had sworn to them that He would not let them see the land that the LORD had promised with an oath to their forefathers to give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁷ He had raised up their sons in their place. Joshua circumcised them. For they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised during the journey. ⁸ After the circumcision of the whole nation was finished, they remained where they were in the camp until they were healed.

⁹ The LORD told Joshua, “Today I have rolled the disgrace of Egypt away from you.” So, Joshua named that place “Gilgal,”⁷³ and it still has that name today.

The first Passover observed at Gilgal in Canaan

¹⁰ While the Israelites were camping at Gilgal, they celebrated the Passover on the waterless plains near Jericho in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month. ¹¹ On the day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened bread and roasted grain. ¹² On the day after they had eaten some of the produce of the land, the manna stopped. The Israelites had no more manna but that year they ate what the land of Canaan yielded.

The appearance of the Captain of God's army to Joshua

¹³ When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a Man standing before him with His drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went to him and asked Him, “Do You belong to us or to our enemies?”

¹⁴ He said, “Neither; but I have come now as the Commander of the army of the LORD.”

Joshua fell on his face to the ground, worshipped and asked Him, “What does my Lord have to tell His servant?”

¹⁵ The Commander of the army of the LORD told Joshua: “Take your sandals off your feet! For the

⁷³ Gilgal means, “Rolling away.”

place where you are standing is holy.”
Joshua did so.

6

The destruction of Jericho

¹ Jericho closed its gates, and they stayed closed because of the Israelites. No one went out or came in.

² The LORD told Joshua: “Look! I have delivered Jericho with its king and its fighting men into your hands. ³ All you men of war shall march around the city! You shall go around the city once and do this for six days! ⁴ Seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams’ horns in front of the Ark! However, on the seventh day you shall go around the city seven times while the priests blow the trumpets! ⁵ When they make a long blast with the ram’s horn and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall give a loud shout! The wall of the city will fall in its place. Then the people shall go up, each one straight ahead!”

⁶ So, Joshua, the son of Nun, called the priests and told them: “Take up the Ark of the Covenant! Seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams’ horns in front of the Ark of the LORD!”

⁷ He told the people: “Proceed and go around the city! The armed men shall go ahead of the Ark of the LORD!”

⁸ As Joshua had told the people, the seven priests who were carrying the seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the LORD went forward. They kept blowing the trumpets, and the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD continued to follow them. ⁹ The armed men continued to walk in front of the priests who were blowing the trumpets. The rear-guard kept following the Ark, while the trumpets were blown continuously.

¹⁰ However, Joshua had commanded the people: “You shall not shout or raise your voices! Not a word shall come out of your mouths until the day when I tell you, ‘Shout!’ Then you shall shout!”

¹¹ So, he caused the Ark of the LORD to go around the city. When it had circled it once, they came into the camp and spent the night in the camp. ¹² Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests took up the Ark of the LORD. ¹³ The seven priests carrying the seven rams’ horns in front of the Ark of the LORD kept walking along and blowing the horns, and the armed men kept going ahead of them. The rear guard continued to follow the Ark of the LORD while the priests continued to blow the trumpets. ¹⁴ They went around the city once on the second day and then returned to the camp. They did this for six days. ¹⁵ However, on the seventh day they got up early at dawn and went around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they went around the city seven times. ¹⁶ At the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua told the people: “Shout! For the LORD has given you the city. ¹⁷ The city and all that is in it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction! Only Rahab the prostitute

and all who are with her in her house shall live! For she hid the spies whom we sent. ¹⁸ However, you yourselves must avoid taking what is devoted to destruction, so that, when you have devoted any of the banned goods to destruction, you do not take them and so make the camp of Israel liable to destruction by making it taboo! ¹⁹ However, all the silver and gold and all vessels of bronze and iron are holy to the LORD. They shall go into the treasury of the LORD!” ²⁰ So, the people shouted and the priests blew the trumpets. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted very loudly, and the **wall fell** in its place. Then the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead of him and they captured the city. ²¹ Then with their swords they devoted everything in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys.

The rescue of Rahab and her family from Jericho

²² However, Joshua had told the two men who had spied out the land: “Go into the prostitute’s house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you promised her with an oath!”

²³ The young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers and all who belonged to her. They brought out all her relatives and left them outside the camp of Israel.

²⁴ They burned the city and everything in it. However, they put the silver, the gold and the vessels of bronze and of iron into the treasury of the house of the LORD. ²⁵ Joshua spared the lives of Rahab the prostitute, her father’s family and all who belonged to her. She has been living among the Israelites to this day, because she hid the spies whom Joshua had sent to investigate Jericho.

A curse on any attempt to rebuild Jericho — 1 Kings 16:34

²⁶ Joshua pronounced a curse at that time. He said: “May the man be cursed before the LORD who undertakes to rebuild this city, Jericho! He will lay its foundation at the cost of his first-born son. He will set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son.”

²⁷ So, the LORD was with Joshua, and the rumour about him spread throughout the land.

7

The sin of Achan, who took banned goods, the defeat of the Israelites at Ai and the death of Achan

¹ However, the Israelites unfaithfully seized condemned goods. Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the condemned things. So, the anger of the LORD burned against the Israelites. ² Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-Aven, to the east of Bethel. He told them, “Go up and spy out the land!”

So, the men went up and spied out Ai. ³ When they returned to Joshua they told him: “The people should not all go up! Only about two or three thousand men should go up and attack Ai! Do not tire out the whole people there! For there are only a few there.”

⁴ So, about three thousand men of the people went up there but ran away from the men of Ai. ⁵ The men of Ai struck down about thirty-six of their men. They chased the Israelites from the gate as far as Shebarim and killed some of them on the slopes. The hearts of the people melted away and became like water. ⁶ Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell with his face on the ground in front of the Ark of the LORD until the evening. The elders of Israel did the same and covered their heads with dust. ⁷ Joshua said: “Ah, O Lord GOD, why have You brought this people over the Jordan at all, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? If only we had agreed to live on the other side of the Jordan! ⁸ With Your permission, O Lord, what shall I say, now that Israel has turned his back before his enemies? ⁹ When the Canaanites and all the other people who live in the land hear about it, they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will You do for Your great name?”

¹⁰ The LORD told Joshua: “Get up! Why then are you bowing with your face to the ground? ¹¹ Israel has sinned. They have transgressed My Covenant, which I have commanded them, taken some of the condemned things, stolen, lied and put them among their own belongings. ¹² That is why the Israelites cannot stand before their enemies. They will turn their backs before their enemies, because they have become condemned to destruction. I shall not be with you any longer unless you destroy the condemned things among you. ¹³ Get up! Consecrate the people! Tell them, ‘Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow! For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: “There are condemned things among you, O Israel. You will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove the condemned things from among you.” ¹⁴ In the morning you shall approach by your tribes! The tribe that the LORD designates shall approach by clans! The clan that the LORD designates shall approach by families! The family that the LORD designates shall approach man by man! ¹⁵ The man who is designated as the holder of the condemned things shall be burned up together with everything that he has! For he has transgressed the Covenant of the LORD. He has committed a serious sin in Israel.”

¹⁶ Joshua rose early the next morning and made Israel approach by its tribes, and the tribe of Judah was chosen. ¹⁷ Then he made the clans of Judah come forward and designated the clan of the Zerahites. He made the clan of the Zerahites come forward man by man, and Zabdi was chosen. ¹⁸ He made his family come forward man by man, and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was chosen.

¹⁹ Then Joshua told Achan: “My son, please give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, and give praise to Him! Please tell me what you have done! Do not hide

it from me!”

²⁰ Achan answered Joshua: “It is true. I myself have sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel. This is what I have done: ²¹ When I saw in the plunder a beautiful cloak from Babylonia, two kilograms and four hundred grams of silver and a bar of gold weighing six hundred grams, I wanted to have them and took them. Look! They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver at the bottom.”

²² Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent. They found it buried in his tent, with the silver at the bottom. ²³ They took them out of the tent, brought them to Joshua and to all the Israelites and emptied them out before the LORD. ²⁴ Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan, the son of Zerah, the silver, the cloak, the bar of gold, his sons and daughters, his cattle, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent and everything else that he had. They brought them up to the Valley of Achor. ²⁵ Joshua said: “Why have you made us taboo? The LORD will make you taboo today.” All Israel stoned him. Then, after they had stoned the rest, they burned them. ²⁶ Then they piled over him a large heap of stones, which remains to this day. Then the LORD relinquished His burning anger. That is why that place has been called “The Valley of Achor” ever since.

8

The use of an ambush to capture and destroy Ai

¹ The LORD told Joshua: “Do not be afraid or terrified! Take the whole army with you! Start out and go up to Ai! Look! I have delivered the king of Ai, his people, his city and his land into your hands. ² You shall do to Ai and its king as you have done to Jericho and its king, except that you may take what you plunder from it and its livestock for yourselves! Set an ambush behind the city!”

³ So, Joshua and the whole army set out to go up to Ai. Joshua chose thirty thousand bold fighting men and sent them out at night. ⁴ He commanded them: “Look! You will be lying in ambush behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, and all of you should be ready! ⁵ I and all the people who are with me shall approach the city. When they come out against us just as they did the first time, we shall run away from them. ⁶ They will come out after us, until we have lured them away from the city. For they will say, ‘They are fleeing from us, as they did the first time.’ So, we shall flee from them. ⁷ Then you shall rise up from the ambush and take the city! The LORD, your God, will deliver it into your hands. ⁸ When you have captured the city, you shall set it on fire! You shall do as the LORD has told you! See, I have commanded you.”

⁹ When Joshua had sent them out, they went to the place of ambush and took their positions between Bethel and Ai, on the western side of Ai. However, Joshua spent that night with the people. ¹⁰ Joshua

arose early the next morning and mustered the people. Then he and the elders of Israel led the people up to Ai. ¹¹ The whole army that was with him went up and approached the city. When they came opposite the city, they camped north of Ai with the valley between them and Ai. ¹² Joshua had taken about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city. ¹³ The soldiers had set up the entire camp that was on the northern side of the city, while its rear-guard was on the western side of the city. However, that night Joshua went into the middle of the valley. ¹⁴ When the king of Ai saw this, he and all his people, the men of the city, hurried out early in the morning to meet Israel in battle, to the place that had been chosen, overlooking the Arabah. However, he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city. ¹⁵ Joshua and all Israel let themselves be driven back before them and ran away in the direction of the wilderness. ¹⁶ All the people who were in Ai were called out to pursue them and, as they pursued Joshua, they let themselves be drawn away from the city. ¹⁷ Not a man was left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel. They left the city open and pursued Israel.

¹⁸ Then the LORD told Joshua: “Stretch out the sword that is in your hand toward Ai! For I shall deliver it into your hand.”

Joshua stretched out the sword that was in his hand toward the city. ¹⁹ The men in the ambush rose quickly out of their position and, as soon as he had stretched out his hand, they ran, entered the city and captured it. They quickly set the city on fire. ²⁰ When the men of Ai looked back, they suddenly saw that the smoke of the city had gone up to the sky. They had no opportunity to flee this way or that. For the Israelites who had been fleeing towards the wilderness turned back against their pursuers. ²¹ When Joshua and all Israel saw that the men who had been in hiding had captured the city and that the smoke of the city had gone up, they turned around and struck down the men of Ai. ²² When the men of the ambush came out of the city against them, they were in the middle of Israel, with Israelites on both sides. Israel struck them down, until they left none of them who survived or escaped. ²³ However, they took the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

²⁴ When Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the open country in the wilderness, where they had pursued them, and all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai and struck it down with the edge of the sword.

²⁵ All who fell that day, both men and women, numbered twelve thousand, the whole population of Ai. ²⁶ However, Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he had stretched out his sword, until he had devoted all the inhabitants of Ai to destruction.

²⁷ Israel took as plunder for themselves only the live-

stock and the spoil of that city, according to the Command that the LORD had given to Joshua. ²⁸ So, Joshua burned Ai and made it a permanent mound of ruins and a desolate place, as it is to this day. ²⁹ He hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. At sunset Joshua commanded them to take his body down from the tree and throw it at the entrance of the gate of the city. They raised over it a large heap of stones, which remains to this day.

The pronouncement of blessings at Mount Gerizim and curses at Mount Ebal — Deuteronomy 11:26-32, 26:4-6, 27:4-28:68

³⁰ Then Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, ³¹ as Moses, the servant of the LORD, had commanded the Israelites. It followed the written Instructions in the Book of the Law of Moses, “an altar of uncut stones, on which no iron tool had been used.” They offered burnt offerings to the LORD on it and sacrificed peace-offerings. ³² There on the stones Joshua wrote a copy of the Law of Moses, which Moses had written down in the presence of the Israelites. ³³ All Israel, foreigners as well as native Israelites, with their elders, officers and judges, were standing on opposite sides of the Ark, facing the Levitical priests, who used to carry the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD. Half of them were in front of Mount Gerizim, and the other half in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses, the servant of the LORD, had previously commanded them, to bless the people of Israel. ³⁴ Afterwards Joshua read all the Words of the Law, the blessings and the curses, exactly as they had been written in the Book of the Law. ³⁵ There was not a Word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read before the whole assembly of Israel, including the women, the little ones and the foreigners who were living among them.

9

The treaty that the Israelites were tricked into making with the Gibeonites

¹ Then all the kings who were west of the Jordan in the hill-country and in the lowlands, all along the coast of the Great Sea as far as Lebanon, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, heard about this. ² They gathered together with the common purpose of fighting against Joshua and Israel. ³ However, when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, ⁴ they on their part acted cunningly. They went as a delegation, took worn-out sacks for their donkeys and worn-out wineskins that had burst and been mended. ⁵ They were wearing worn-out and patched sandals on their feet and worn-out clothes. All the bread for their food supply was dry and crumbly. ⁶ They came to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal and told him and the men of Israel: “We have come from a distant country. Now make a treaty with us.”

⁷ However, the men of Israel replied to the Hivites: “Perhaps you are living near us. How then could we

make a treaty with you?"

⁸ They answered Joshua: "We are your servants."

Joshua asked them, "Who are you, and where do you come from?"

⁹ They told him: "We, your servants have come from a very distant country, because of the name of the LORD, your God. For we have heard a report about Him, all that He has done in Egypt, ¹⁰ and all that He has done to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, to Sihon, the king of Heshbon and to Og, the king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. ¹¹ So, our elders and all the inhabitants of our country told us, 'Take provisions with you for the journey and go to meet them! Tell them: "We are your servants! Now therefore, make a treaty with us!"'

¹² Here is our bread. It was still warm when we took it from our houses as our provisions for the journey on the day when we set out to come to you. Now, however, you see, it has become dry and crumbly.

¹³ Look! These wineskins, which were new when we filled them, have burst. These clothes and sandals of ours have worn out from the very long journey."

¹⁴ The men of Israel took some of their provisions but did not ask the LORD for advice. ¹⁵ Joshua made peace with them and made a treaty with them, to let them live, and the leaders of the congregation ratified it by an oath. ¹⁶ At the end of three days, after they had made a treaty with them, they heard that they were their neighbours and that they were living among them. ¹⁷ The Israelites set out and reached their cities on the third day. Their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath-Jearim. ¹⁸ However, the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn an oath to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. Then the entire congregation complained against the leaders. ¹⁹ However, all the leaders told the entire congregation: "We ourselves have sworn an oath to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. Now, therefore, we dare not touch them. ²⁰ This is what we shall do to them. Let them live, that wrath may not come on us because of the oath that we have sworn to them!"

²¹ The leaders told them, "Let them live!"

So, they became woodcutters and water carriers for the entire community, as the leaders had advised about them. ²² Joshua summoned them and asked them: "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' although you are living near us?" ²³ Now therefore, you are under a curse and will never cease to serve as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God."

²⁴ They answered Joshua: "Your servants have definitely been told that the LORD, your God, had commanded His servant Moses to give you the whole land and destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you. We have done this because we were terrified for our lives because of you. ²⁵ Now therefore, here we

are in your hands. Do whatever you consider is good and right to do to us!"

²⁶ So, that was what Joshua did to them. He rescued them from the hands of the Israelites, so that they did not kill them. ²⁷ However, that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD in the place that He would choose. That is what they are to this day.

10

Joshua's command to the sun to stand still during the battle against a coalition of Canaanites

¹ Adoni-Zedek, the king of Jerusalem, heard that Joshua had captured Ai and devoted it to destruction, doing to Ai and its king what he had done to Jericho and its king and that the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with the Israelites and were among them.

² Then they were very afraid, because Gibeon was a large city, like one of the royal cities. It was larger than Ai, and all its men were warriors. ³ Therefore, Adoni-Zedek, the king of Jerusalem, sent men to Hoham, the king of Hebron, to Piram, the king of Jarmuth, to Japhia, the king of Lachish, and to Debir, the king of Eglon, to request: ⁴ "Come up to me and help me, and let us attack Gibeon! For it has made peace with Joshua and the Israelites."

⁵ Then the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish and the king of Eglon and all their forces gathered together. They went up and pitched camp against Gibeon and fought against it. ⁶ The men of Gibeon sent messengers to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal to tell him: "Do not abandon us, your servants! Come up to us quickly and save us! Help us! For all the kings of the Amorites who live in the hill-country have gathered together against us."

⁷ Joshua went up from Gilgal together with his entire army, including all the brave soldiers. ⁸ The LORD told Joshua: "Do not be afraid of them! For I have delivered them into your hands. Not one of them will resist you."

⁹ So, Joshua marched all night up from Gilgal and attacked them by surprise. ¹⁰ The LORD threw them into a panic before the Israelites and struck them down in a great defeat at Gibeon. They pursued them along the road going up to Beth-Horon. Then they struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah.

¹¹ While they were fleeing from the Israelites down the slope of Beth-Horon, the LORD threw large hailstones from the sky down on them, all the way to Azekah, and they died. More of them died because of the hailstones than the Israelites killed with their swords. ¹² At that time Joshua was speaking to the LORD, on the day when the LORD delivered the Amorites to the Israelites. He said, in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still at Gibeon and, moon, at the Valley of Aijalon!"

¹³ The sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the

nation took vengeance on its enemies. Has this not been written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed setting for about a whole day. ¹⁴ There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD listened to what a man said. For the LORD was fighting for Israel. ¹⁵ Then Joshua returned with all Israel to the camp at Gilgal.

The execution of five Amorite kings

¹⁶ These five kings had fled and hidden in the cave at Makkedah. ¹⁷ When Joshua was told, "The five kings have been found hiding in the cave at Makkedah,"

¹⁸ Joshua said: "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave and assign some men beside it to guard them!"

¹⁹ However, do not stay there yourselves! Pursue your enemies! Attack their rear guard! Do not allow them to enter their cities! For the LORD, your God, has delivered them into your hands."

²⁰ When Joshua and the Israelites had finished inflicting on them a very great defeat until they were wiped out and when those of them who had survived had escaped into the fortified cities, ²¹ all the people returned safely to Joshua at the camp at Makkedah. No one had been a threat to any of the Israelites. ²² Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out of the cave to me!"

²³ They did so! They brought those five kings out of the cave to him: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish and the king of Eglon. ²⁴ When they had brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel. He told the captains of the soldiers who had come with him: "Come forward! Put your feet on the necks of these kings!"

Then they came forward and put their feet on their necks. ²⁵ Joshua told them: "Do not be afraid or terrified! Be strong and courageous! For this is what the LORD will do to all your enemies against whom you are going to fight."

²⁶ After this, Joshua struck the kings, put them to death and hanged them on five trees. They remained hanging on the trees until the evening. ²⁷ However, at sunset, Joshua gave a command, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden. They placed large stones against the mouth of the cave, and they are there to this very day.

The campaign against the Canaanites in the south of Canaan

²⁸ That day Joshua also captured Makkedah and struck down with the sword both it and its king. He devoted every person who was in it to destruction. He left no survivors. He did to the king of Makkedah what he had done to the king of Jericho. ²⁹ Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against Libnah. ³⁰ The LORD also delivered it and its king into the hands of Israel. Joshua struck down with the edge of the sword both it and every person who was in it. He left no survivors there. He did to its king what he had

done to the king of Jericho.

³¹ Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish, pitched camp against it and fought against it. ³² The LORD delivered Lachish into the hands of Israel. Joshua captured it on the second day and struck down with the edge of the sword both it and every person in it, exactly as he had done to Libnah. ³³ When Horam, the king of Gezer, had come up to help Lachish, Joshua struck down him and his people, until he had left no survivors. ³⁴ Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Lachish to Eglon. They pitched camp against it and fought against it. ³⁵ They captured it that same day and struck it down with the edge of the sword. He devoted every person in it to destruction that day, exactly as he had done to Lachish.

³⁶ Then Joshua and all Israel with him went up from Eglon to Hebron and fought against it. ³⁷ They captured it and struck it down with the edge of the sword, its king, its villages and every person in it. He left no survivors, as he had done to Eglon. He devoted it to destruction together with every person in it. ³⁸ Then Joshua and all Israel with him turned back to Debir and fought against it. ³⁹ He captured the city, its king and all its villages. They struck them down with the edge of the sword and devoted to destruction every person in it. He left no survivors. He did to Debir and to its king what he had done to Hebron and what he had done to Libnah and its king. ⁴⁰ So, Joshua struck down the whole land, the hill-country, the Negev, the lowlands, the slopes and all their kings. He left no survivors. He devoted to destruction everything that breathed, as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded. ⁴¹ Joshua struck them down from Kadesh-Barnea as far as Gaza and from the whole region of Goshen to Gibeon. ⁴² Joshua captured all these kings and their land in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, was fighting for Israel. ⁴³ Then Joshua returned to the camp at Gilgal with all the Israelites.

11

The campaign against the Canaanites in the north of Canaan

¹ When Jabin, the king of Hazor, heard about this, he sent messengers to Jobab, the king of Madon, to the king of Shimron and to the king of Achshaph. ² He also sent messengers to the kings who were in the northern hill-country, in the waterless region south of Chinnereth, in the lowlands and in the hilly region around Dor on the west, ³ to the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites in the hill-country and the Hivites below Hermon in the region of Mizpah. ⁴ They came out with all their armies, a huge number of people, as numerous as the sand that is on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots. ⁵ All these kings joined their forces. They came and camped together at the

waters of Merom to fight against Israel. ⁶ The LORD told Joshua: “Do not be afraid of them! For about this time tomorrow I shall deliver all of them, slain, to Israel. You shall cut the hamstrings of their horses and burn up their chariots!”

⁷ Joshua and the whole army came against them suddenly beside the waters of Merom and attacked them.

⁸ The LORD delivered them into the hands of Israel. They struck them down and pursued them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth-Mayim and as far as the valley of Mizpah in the east. They struck them down until they left none of them as survivors. ⁹ Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him. He cut the hamstrings of their horses and burned up their chariots.

¹⁰ Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor. He struck down its king with the sword. For Hazor had formerly been the head of all these kingdoms.

¹¹ They struck down every person who was in it with the edge of the sword, devoting them to destruction. Nothing was left that breathed, and he burned up Hazor. ¹² So, Joshua had captured all the cities of those kings and all their kings and had struck them down with the edge of the sword, devoting them to destruction, as Moses, the servant of the LORD, had commanded. ¹³ However, Israel did not burn any of the cities that were standing on their mounds of ruins, with the exception of Hazor alone, which Joshua burned. ¹⁴ The Israelites took all the plunder of these cities and their livestock as booty for themselves. However, they struck down every human being with the edge of the sword until they had destroyed them. They did not leave anything that breathed. ¹⁵ Joshua did as the LORD had commanded Moses, His servant, and as Moses had commanded Joshua. He did not fail to do anything of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

A summary of the conquest under Joshua

¹⁶ So, Joshua had taken all this land, the hill-country, all the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the lowlands and the Arabah, both the hill-country and the lowlands of Israel, ¹⁷ from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far as Baal-Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He had captured all their kings, struck them down and put them to death. ¹⁸ Joshua had waged war against all these kings for a long time. ¹⁹ There was not a city that had made peace with the Israelites except the Hivites who lived at Gibeon. They had taken them all in battle. ²⁰ For it was the LORD Himself who had made them stubborn, so that they attacked Israel in battle, that He might devote them to destruction and that they might receive no mercy, but that the LORD might destroy them, as He had commanded Moses.

²¹ At that time Joshua also went and eliminated the Anakites from the hill-country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, from all the hill-country of Judah and from all the hill-country of Israel. Joshua devoted

them to destruction with their cities. ²² No Anakites were left in the land of the Israelites. Only in Gaza, in Gath and in Ashdod did any survive. ²³ So, Joshua had taken the whole land, exactly as the LORD had told Moses. Joshua gave it to Israel for an inheritance according to the share of their tribes. Then the land had rest from war.

12

A reminder of the victories of the Israelites under Moses east of the Jordan — Numbers 21:21-35, Deuteronomy 2:24-3:14

¹ These are the kings of the land east of the Jordan whom the Israelites had defeated and whose land they had taken, from the Arnon Valley to Mount Hermon, with all the eastern part of the Arabah: ² Sihon had been the king of the Amorites, who had lived in Heshbon and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon Valley, the middle of the valley and half of Gilead as far as the Jabbok River, the border of the Ammonites, ³ and the eastern part of the Arabah to the Sea of Chinnereth and to the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Lake, in the direction of Beth-Jeshimoth and then southward below the slopes of Pisgah. ⁴ The territory of Og, the king of Bashan, had also been there. He was one of the survivors of the Rephaites, who used to live at Ashtaroth and at Edrei. ⁵ He used to rule over Mount Hermon, Salecah, all Bashan, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites and over half of Gilead to the border of Sihon, the king of Heshbon. ⁶ Moses, the servant of the LORD, and the Israelites had defeated them. Moses, the servant of the LORD, had assigned their land to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh to be their possession.

The list of the kings whom the Israelites under Joshua defeated west of the Jordan

⁷ These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the western side of the Jordan, from Baal-Gad in the Valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir. Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their shares. ⁸ It was in the hill-country, in the lowlands, in the Arabah, in the slopes, in the wilderness and in the Negev. It had been the land of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. ⁹ There were also the king of Jericho, one king; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one king; ¹⁰ the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; ¹¹ the king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; ¹² the king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; ¹³ the king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; ¹⁴ the king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; ¹⁵ the king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; ¹⁶ the king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; ¹⁷ the king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one; ¹⁸ the king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; ¹⁹ the king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; ²⁰ the king of Shimron-Meron, one; the

king of Achshaph, one; ²¹ the king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; ²² the king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; ²³ the king of Dor in the hilly region near Dor, one; the king of the Goyim in Gilgal, one; ²⁴ and the king of Tirzah, one king. There were thirty-one kings in all.

13

The parts of the land of Canaan that still had to be taken

¹ When Joshua was old and well advanced in years, the LORD told him: "Although you have become very old and have advanced in years, very much land remains to be taken over. ² This is the land that remains: all the districts of the Philistines and all those of the Geshurites, ³ from the Shihor River on the east of Egypt to the territory of Ekron on the north, which used to be regarded as belonging to the Canaanites, the territory of the five Philistine princes, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron, as well as the princes of the Avvites, ⁴ in the south, all the land of the Canaanites and Mearah, which belongs to the Sidonians, as far as Aphek, to the border of the Amorites, ⁵ the land of the Gebalites and all Lebanon, toward the east, from Baal-Gad below Mount Hermon as far as the entrance to Hamath, ⁶ all the inhabitants of the hill-country from Lebanon to Misrephoth-Mayim, that is, all the Sidonians. I Myself shall drive them out before the Israelites. However, allocate the land to Israel as an inheritance, as I have commanded you! ⁷ Now, therefore, allocate this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and half of the tribe of Manasseh!"

The allocation of land to the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan — Numbers 32; Deuteronomy 3:12-17

⁸ With the other half of Manasseh, the Reubenites and the Gadites had received their inheritance, which Moses had given them, on the eastern side of the Jordan, as Moses, the servant of the LORD, had assigned it to them, ⁹ from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon and the city that is in the middle of the valley and all the plateau of Medeba as far as Dibon, ¹⁰ and all the cities of Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who had been reigning in Heshbon, as far as the border of the Ammonites. ¹¹ It also included Gilead, the territory of the Geshurites and Maacathites, all Mount Hermon, all Bashan as far as Salecah, ¹² and all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who had reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, and who had survived out of the remnant of the Rephaites, whom Moses had defeated and driven out. ¹³ Nevertheless, the Israelites have not driven out the Geshurites or the Maacathites, but Geshur and Maacath continue to live among the Israelites to this day. ¹⁴ The tribe of Levi was the only tribe to which Moses did not give any inheritance. The offerings made by fire to the LORD, the God of Israel, constitute their inheritance, as He had promised them.

The territory of Reuben

¹⁵ Moses had allocated an inheritance to the tribe of

the descendants of Reuben according to their clans. ¹⁶ Their territory was from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon and the city that is in the middle of the valley and the entire plateau near Medeba, ¹⁷ Heshbon and all its cities, which are on the plateau, Dibon, Bamoth-Baal, Beth-Baal-Meon, ¹⁸ Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, ¹⁹ Kiriathaim, Sibmah and Zereth-Shahar on the hill in the valley, ²⁰ Beth-Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, Beth-Jeshimoth, ²¹ all the cities of the plateau, the whole kingdom of Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who had ruled in Heshbon, and whom Moses had defeated with the chiefs of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba, the tribal princes of Sihon, who were living in that country. ²² The children of Israel had also killed with the sword Balaam, the son of Beor, who used to practise divination, in addition to those whom they had slain. ²³ The territory of the descendants of Reuben had the Jordan as their boundary. This was the inheritance of the descendants of Reuben, according to their clans, with their cities and villages.

The territory of Gad

²⁴ Moses had also given an inheritance to the tribe of Gad, to the descendants of Gad, according to their clans. ²⁵ Their territory was Jazer, all the cities of Gilead and half the land of the Ammonites, as far as Aroer, which is near Rabbah, ²⁶ and from Heshbon to Ramath-Mizpeh and Betonim and from Mahanaim as far as the territory of Debir, ²⁷ and, in the valley, Beth-Haram, Beth-Nimrah, Succoth and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon, the king of Heshbon. They have the Jordan as a boundary, the territory on the eastern side of the Jordan as far as the end of the Sea of Chinnereth. ²⁸ This is the inheritance of the descendants of Gad according to their clans, with their cities and their villages.

The territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh east of the Jordan

²⁹ Moses had also allotted an inheritance to the half-tribe of Manasseh. It belonged to the half-tribe of the descendants of Manasseh according to their clans. ³⁰ Their territory extended from Mahanaim through all of Bashan, the whole kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, all the tent settlements of Jair, which were in Bashan, sixty cities, ³¹ half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. These belonged to the descendants of Machir, the son of Manasseh, to half of the descendants of Machir, according to their clans.

³² These are the inherited territories that Moses allotted when he was on the waterless plains of Moab, on the eastern side of the Jordan, near Jericho. ³³ However, Moses had allotted no inheritance to the tribe of Levi. The LORD, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as He had promised them.

14

The first stage in the allocation of land west of the Jordan

¹ These are the areas that the Israelites received as an

inheritance in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar, the priest, Joshua, the son of Nun, and the heads of the families of the tribes of the Israelites allotted to them.

² The nine and a half tribes received their inheritance by lot, as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

³ For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and a half tribes on the other side of the Jordan. However, he had given no inheritance to the Levites among the rest. ⁴ Because the descendants of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, consisted of two tribes, they did not give a share of the land to the Levites, except cities to live in and their pasturelands for their livestock and for their other property. ⁵ The Israelites did as the LORD had commanded Moses and allotted the land.

The capture of Hebron by Caleb and the special allocation of land to him — Judges 1:12-15

⁶ Then the descendants of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, told him: “You know what the LORD told Moses, the man of God, about you and me at Kadesh-Barnea. ⁷ I was forty years old when **Moses, the servant of the LORD**, sent me from Kadesh-Barnea to spy out the land, and I reported to him exactly what I thought.

⁸ Although my kinsmen, who went up with me, discouraged the people, I followed the LORD, my God, completely. ⁹ That day Moses said an oath: ‘The land on which your feet have walked will certainly be an inheritance for you and for your descendants for ever, because you have been following the LORD, my God, completely.’ ¹⁰ Now, therefore, you see, as He has promised, the LORD has kept me alive these forty-five years since the LORD said this to Moses, while Israel wandered through the wilderness. So now, you see, today I am eighty-five years old. ¹¹ I am still as strong today as I was when Moses sent me. I am now as vigorous as I was then, to fight and to move about.

¹² Now therefore, give me this hill-country about which the LORD spoke on that day! For you yourself heard on that day that the Anakites were there, with large fortified cities. Perhaps the LORD will help me, so that I shall drive them out, as the LORD has promised.”

¹³ Then Joshua blessed Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and gave Hebron to him as his inheritance.

¹⁴ Therefore, Hebron has become the inheritance of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, to this day, because he had followed the LORD, the God of Israel, completely. ¹⁵ Hebron had formerly been named “Kiriath-Arba.”⁷⁴ Arba had been the greatest man among the Anakites. Then the land had rest from war.

15

The allocation of land to Judah

¹ The allotment for the tribe of the descendants of Judah according to their clans reached to the boundary of Edom and the wilderness of Zin, at its southern

end. ² They had their boundary at the end of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces towards the south. ³ It extended from the southern side of the Slope of Akrabbim, passed along to Zin and went up south of Kadesh-Barnea. Then it passed along to Hezron, went up to Addar and curved around to Karka. ⁴ Then it passed on to Azmon and went out at the Brook of Egypt, so that the border ended at the sea. This will be your southern border. ⁵ The eastern border was the Salt Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan. On the northern side the border began from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. ⁶ The border went up to Beth-Hoglah and passed northwards to Beth-Arabah. The border then went up to the Stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben. ⁷ Then the border went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor and turned northward towards Gilgal, which is opposite the Slope of Adummim, which is on the southern side of the valley. Then the border continued to the waters of En-Shemesh and ended at En-Rogel. ⁸ Then the boundary went up the Valley of the Son of Hinnom at the southern shoulder of the Jebusite City (that is, Jerusalem). Then the boundary went up to the top of the mountain that overlooks the Valley of Hinnom in the west and that is at the northern end of the valley of the Rephaites.

⁹ From the top of the mountain the border turned toward the spring of the waters of Nephtoah and came out at the cities of Mount Ephron. Then the border turned toward Baalah (that is, Kiriath-Jearim). ¹⁰ Then the border curved west of Baalah to Mount Seir and passed along to the northern shoulder of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon). Then it went down to Beth-Shemesh and crossed to Timnah. ¹¹ The border went along to the shoulder on the northern side of Ekron. Then the border curved around to Shikkeron, passed along to Mount Baalah and reached Jabneel. Then the border ended at the sea. ¹² The western border was the Great Sea and the coastline. This is the border all around the descendants of Judah for their clans.

The allocation of Hebron to Caleb inside the territory of Judah — Judges 1:11-15

¹³ However, Joshua gave to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, a portion in the middle of the descendants of Judah, as the LORD had told Joshua. It was Kiriath-Arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of the Anakites). ¹⁴ Caleb drove three Anakites out from there: Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, who were descendants of Anak. ¹⁵ He went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir. The name of Debir had formerly been “Kiriath-Sepher.” ¹⁶ Caleb had said: “I shall give my daughter Achsah as a wife to anyone who strikes down Kiriath-Sepher and captures it.”

¹⁷ Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s brother, captured it, so Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah in marriage. ¹⁸ When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. When she was on her donkey, she clapped her hands to get his attention, so Caleb asked her, “What do you want?”

⁷⁴ Kiriath-Arba means, “City of Arba.”

¹⁹ She answered: "Give me a blessing! Since you have put me in the land of the Negev, give me water-basins in addition!"

So, he gave her the upper and lower water-basins.

The cities inside the territory of Judah in the south

²⁰ This was the inheritance of the tribe of the descendants of Judah according to their clans. ²¹ The cities belonging to the tribe of the descendants of Judah in the Negev, toward the boundary of Edom, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²² Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³ Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴ Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, ²⁵ Hazor-Hadattah, Kerioth-Hezron (that is, Hazor), ²⁶ Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷ Hazar-Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-Pelet, ²⁸ Hazar-Shual, Beer-Sheba, Biziothiah, ²⁹ Baalah, Iyim, Ezem, ³⁰ Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah, ³¹ Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, ³² Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain and Rimmon. There were twenty-nine cities in all, with their villages.

The cities inside the territory of Judah in the western foothills

³³ In the lowlands there were Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴ Zanoah, En-Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵ Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, ³⁶ Shaaraim, Adithaim and Gederah, (or Gederothaim), fourteen cities with their villages.

³⁷ There were Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-Gad, ³⁸ Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, ³⁹ Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, ⁴⁰ Cabbon, Lamas, Kithlish, ⁴¹ Gederoth, Beth-Dagon, Naamah and Makkedah, sixteen cities with their villages.

⁴² There were Libnah, Ether, Ashan, ⁴³ Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, ⁴⁴ Keilah, Achzib and Mareshah, nine cities with their villages.

⁴⁵ There was Ekron with its towns and its villages.

⁴⁶ Between Ekron and the sea there were all the cities near Ashdod with their villages.

⁴⁷ There was Ashdod, with its towns and its villages, Gaza, with its towns and its villages, as far as the Brook of Egypt and the Great Sea with its coastline.

The cities in the territory of Judah in the hill-country

⁴⁸ In the hill-country there were Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, ⁴⁹ Dannah, Kiriath-Sannah (that is, Debir), ⁵⁰ Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, ⁵¹ Goshen, Holon and Giloh, eleven cities with their villages.

⁵² There were Arab, Dumah, Eshan, ⁵³ Janim, Beth-Tappuah, Aphekah, ⁵⁴ Humtah, Kiriath-Arba (that is, Hebron) and Zior, nine cities with their villages.

⁵⁵ There were Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶ Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷ Kain, Gibeah and Timnah, ten cities with their villages.

⁵⁸ There were Halhul, Beth-Zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹ Maarath, Beth-Anoth and Eltekon, six cities with their villages.

⁶⁰ There were Kiriath-Baal (that is, Kiriath-Jearim) and Rabbah, two cities with their villages.

The cities in the territory of Judah in the wilderness

⁶¹ In the wilderness there were Beth-Arabah, Middin, Secacah, ⁶² Nibshan, the City of Salt and En-Gedi, six cities with their villages.

⁶³ However, the descendants of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites, who were living in Jerusalem. So, the Jebusites have been living with the descendants of Judah at Jerusalem to this day.

16

The allocation of land to Ephraim

¹ The allocation by lot for the descendants of Joseph went from the Jordan at Jericho, from the water of Jericho on the east, into the wilderness that goes up from Jericho through the hill-country to Bethel.

² From Bethel the border extended to Luz and continued along to the border of the Archites at Ataroth.

³ Then it went down westward to the border of the Japhletites, as far as the border of Lower Beth-Horon, then as far as Gezer and ended at the sea. ⁴ So, the descendants of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, received their inheritance.

⁵ The territory of the descendants of Ephraim by their clans was as follows: the border of their inheritance on the east was Ataroth-Addar as far as Upper Beth-Horon. ⁶ Then the border went on from there to the sea. On the north was Michmethath. Then on the east the border curved around toward Taanath-Shiloh and went along beyond it to the east to Janoah. ⁷ Then it went down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, touched Jericho and came out at the Jordan. ⁸ From Tappuah the border kept going westward to the Kanah Brook and ended at the sea. This was the inheritance of the tribe of the descendants of Ephraim, for their clans. ⁹ It also included the cities that had been set aside for the descendants of Ephraim inside the inheritance of the descendants of Manasseh, all those cities with their villages. ¹⁰ However, they did not drive out the Canaanites who were living in Gezer. So, the Canaanites have been living in the middle of Ephraim to this day. Nevertheless, they have been reduced to complete enslavement.

17

The allocation of land to the half-tribe of Manasseh west of the Jordan

¹ The lot was drawn for the tribe of Manasseh. For he had been the first-born of Joseph. Gilead and Bashan had been allotted to Machir, the first-born of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, because he was a warrior.

² Allotments were made to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh by their clans, Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hephher and Shemida. These were the other male descendants of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, by their clans. ³ However, Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had had no sons but only daughters. These are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. ⁴ They approached Eleazar, the priest, and Joshua, the son of Nun, and the leaders. They said, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our relatives."

Therefore, Joshua gave them an inheritance among

their father's brothers, as the LORD had commanded.

⁵ Accordingly, ten shares were allotted to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which is on the other side of the Jordan, ⁶ because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead had been allotted to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh.

⁷ The border of Manasseh went from Asher to Michmethath, which is opposite Shechem. Then the border kept going along southward to include the people living at En-Tappuah. ⁸ The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but Tappuah itself, on the border of Manasseh, belonged to the descendants of Ephraim. ⁹ Then the boundary went down to the Kanah Brook. These cities, to the south of the brook, belonged to Ephraim, although they were among the cities of Manasseh. Then the border of Manasseh went on the northern side of the brook and ended at the sea. ¹⁰ On the southern side the land belonged to Ephraim and on the northern side to Manasseh. The border of Manasseh reached the sea. Manasseh's land adjoins Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. ¹¹ Inside Issachar and Asher, Manasseh also had Beth-Shean and its villages, Ibleam and its villages, the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of En-Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages. There are three hilly regions. ¹² Nevertheless, the descendants of Manasseh could not take possession of these cities, and the Canaanites were determined to live in this region. ¹³ When the Israelites grew stronger, they subjected the Canaanites to forced labour. However, they did not drive them out completely.

A protest made by the tribe of Joseph

¹⁴ The descendants of Joseph asked Joshua: "Why have you given us only one allotment and one portion for an inheritance? We, however, are a numerous people, and until now the LORD has been blessing us."

¹⁵ Joshua answered them: "If you are a numerous people, go up by yourselves to the forest and clear ground there for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaites, since the hill-country of Ephraim is too narrow for you!"

¹⁶ The descendants of Joseph replied: "The hill-country is not enough for us! Moreover, all the Canaanites who are living in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-Shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel!"

¹⁷ Then Joshua told Ephraim and Manasseh, the family of Joseph: "You are a numerous people and you are very strong. You will not have only one allotment, ¹⁸ but the hill-country will be yours. For, although it is a forest, you shall clear it! Then its farthest limits will belong to you. For you shall drive out the Canaanites, even though they have chariots of iron and even though they are strong!"

The survey of the rest of Canaan before the second stage in the allocation of land to the tribes

¹ Then the whole congregation of the Israelites assembled at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there. The land had been subjugated before them.

² However, seven tribes remained among the Israelites that had not yet obtained their inheritance. ³ So, Joshua asked the Israelites: "How long will you show yourselves lazy about going in to take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given to you? ⁴ Provide three men from each tribe, that I may send them out, that they may undertake a survey of the land! They shall write a description of it to be used in determining their inheritance! Then they shall come back to me! ⁵ They shall divide it into seven portions! Judah shall continue in his territory in the south, and the family of Joseph shall continue in their territory in the north. ⁶ You shall write a description of the land in seven parts and bring the description here to me! Then I shall cast lots for you here before the LORD, our God. ⁷ Nevertheless, the Levites have no allocation among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance. Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh have also received their inheritance on the eastern side of the Jordan. Moses, the servant of the LORD has given it to them."

⁸ The men got ready to go. Joshua had commanded those who went to write a description of the land. He had told them: "Go, walk through the land, write a description of it and come back to me! Then I shall cast lots for you here before the LORD at Shiloh."

⁹ The men went and passed through the land. They wrote in a book a description of it, city by city, in seven parts. Then they returned to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh. ¹⁰ Joshua cast lots for them at Shiloh before the LORD and there Joshua assigned the land to the Israelites according to their tribal divisions.

The allocation of land to Benjamin

¹¹ The allocation by lot fell to the tribe of the descendants of Benjamin according to their clans. The territory allotted to them fell between the descendants of Judah and the descendants of Joseph. ¹² On the northern side their boundary began at the Jordan. Then the border went up to the shoulder north of Jericho. Next it went up to the west through the hill-country and ended at the Wilderness of Beth-Aven.

¹³ From there the border passed along towards Luz, southwards, to the shoulder of Luz (that is, Bethel). Then the border went down to Ataroth-Addar, on the mountain that is on the southern side of Lower Beth-Horon. ¹⁴ Then the border turned and went around on the western side, southwards from the mountain that faces Beth-Horon and came out at Kiriath-Baal (which is Kiriath-Jearim), a city belonging to the descendants of Judah. This was the western side. ¹⁵ The southern side began at the outskirts of Kiriath-Jearim. Then the border extended to the west and continued to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. ¹⁶ Then the bor-

der went down to the end of the hill that faces the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which is at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. It then went down the Valley of Hinnom, to the southern slope of the Jebusite City and then down to En-Rogel. ¹⁷ Then it curved northwards and continued to En-Shemesh. Then it went on to Geliloth, which is opposite the Pass to Adummim. Next it descended to the stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben. ¹⁸ Then it continued to the northern side of the slope facing the Arabah and went down to the Arabah. ¹⁹ Then the border continued to the northern slope of Beth-Hoglah. The border ended at the northern bay of the Salt Sea, at the southern end of the Jordan. This was the southern border. ²⁰ The Jordan formed its border on the eastern side. This was the inheritance of the descendants of Benjamin, according to their clans, with its borders all around.

²¹ The cities that belonged to the tribe of the descendants of Benjamin according to their clans were Jericho, Beth-Hoglah, Emek-Keziz, ²² Beth-Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, ²³ Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴ Chephar-Ha-Ammona, Ophni and Geba, twelve cities with their villages: ²⁵ Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, ²⁶ Mizpeh, Chephirah, Mozah, ²⁷ Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸ Zela, Ha-Eleph, the Jebusite city, which is Jerusalem, Gibeah and Kiriath-Jearim, fourteen cities with their villages. This was the inheritance of the descendants of Benjamin according to their clans.

19

The allocation of land to Simeon inside the borders of Judah — 1 Chronicles 4:28-33

¹ The second lot was drawn for the families of the tribe of Simeon. Their inheritance was inside the inheritance of the descendants of Judah. ² They had in their inheritance Beer-Sheba, Sheba, Moladah, ³ Hazar-Shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴ Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, ⁵ Ziklag, Beth-Marcaboth, Hazar-Susah, ⁶ Beth-Lebaoth and Sharuhem, thirteen cities with their villages; ⁷ Ain, Rimmon, Ether and Ashan, four cities with their villages; ⁸ together with all the villages that were around these cities as far as Baalath-Ber and Ramah of the Negev. This was the inheritance of the tribe of the descendants of Simeon according to their clans. ⁹ The inheritance of the descendants of Simeon was included inside the share of the descendants of Judah because the share of the descendants of Judah was too large for them. The descendants of Simeon obtained an inheritance inside of the inheritance of the people of Judah.

The allocation of land to Zebulun

¹⁰ The third lot was drawn for the descendants of Zebulun, according to their clans. The border of their inheritance reached as far as Sarid. ¹¹ Then their border went up toward the west, on to Maralah, touched Dabbesheth and then the brook that is near Jokneam. ¹² From Sarid it went back towards the east to the border of Chisloth-Tabor. Then it extended to

Daberath and went up to Japhia. ¹³ From there it passed along towards the east to Gath-Hepher, to Eth-Kazin. Then it went on to Rimmon and turned towards Neah. ¹⁴ Then the border went around it on the north to Hannathon and ended at the Valley of Yiphtahel. ¹⁵ Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Yidalah and Bethlehem were included. There were twelve towns and their villages. ¹⁶ These towns and their villages were the inheritance of the descendants of Zebulun, clan by clan.

The allocation of land to Issachar

¹⁷ The fourth lot was drawn for Issachar, for the descendants of Issachar, according to their clans. ¹⁸ Their territory went to Jezreel and included Chesloth, Shunem, ¹⁹ Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, ²⁰ Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²¹ Remeth, En-Gannim, En-Haddah and Beth-Pazzez. ²² The border also touched Tabor, Shahazimah and Beth-Shemesh. Their border ends at the Jordan. There were sixteen cities with their villages. ²³ These cities with their villages are the inheritance of the tribe of the descendants of Issachar, according to their clans.

The allocation of land to Asher

²⁴ The fifth lot was drawn for the tribe of the descendants of Asher according to their clans. ²⁵ Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, ²⁶ Allammelech, Amad and Mishal. On the west it touches Carmel and Shihor-Libnah. ²⁷ Then it turns east to Beth-Dagon and touches Zebulun and the Valley of Yiphtahel northward to Beth-Emek and Neiel. Then it continues on the left to Cabul, ²⁸ and Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah and as far as Great Sidon. ²⁹ Then the border turns back to Ramah and to the fortified city of Tyre. Then the border turns back to Hosah and ends at the sea, in the region of Achzib, ³⁰ Ummah, Aphek and Rehob. There were twenty-two cities with their villages. ³¹ These cities with their villages were the inheritance of the tribe of the descendants of Asher according to their clans.

The allocation of land to Naphtali

³² The sixth lot was drawn for the descendants of Naphtali, for the descendants of Naphtali according to their clans. ³³ Their border ran from Heleph, from the oak at Zaananim and Adami-Nekeb and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum and ended at the Jordan. ³⁴ Then the border turned back towards the west to Aznoth-Tabor and continued from there to Hukok. It touched Zebulun in the south, touched Asher in the west and Judah in the east at the Jordan. ³⁵ The fortified cities were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, ³⁶ Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷ Kedesh, Edrei, En-Hazor, ³⁸ Yiron, Migdal-El, Horem, Beth-Anath and Beth-Shemesh. There were nineteen cities with their villages. ³⁹ These cities with their villages were the inheritance of the tribe of the descendants of Naphtali according to their clans.

The allocation of land to Dan

⁴⁰ The seventh lot was drawn for the tribe of the de-

scendants of Dan, according to their clans. ⁴¹ The territory of their inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-Shemesh, ⁴² Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Yithlah, ⁴³ Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴ Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵ Jehud, Bene-Berak, Gath-Rimmon, ⁴⁶ Me-Jarkon and Rakkon, with the region in front of Joppa.

The migration of the tribe of Dan to the far north — Judges 18

⁴⁷ When the territory of the descendants of Dan was lost to them, the descendants of Dan went up and fought against Leshem. They captured it, struck it down with the sword, took possession of it and settled in it. They called Leshem “Dan,” after the name of Dan, their forefather. ⁴⁸ The tribe of the descendants of Dan inherited these cities with their villages, according to their clans.

The special inheritance of Joshua

⁴⁹ When they had finished assigning the borders of the land as inherited territories, the Israelites gave an inheritance among them to Joshua, the son of Nun.

⁵⁰ As the LORD directed them, they gave him the city that he asked for, Timnath-Serah in the hill-country of Ephraim. He rebuilt the city and settled in it.

⁵¹ These were the inheritances that the priest Eleazar, Joshua, the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers’ houses of the tribes of the Israelites distributed by lot. They did this before the LORD at Shiloh at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. So, they finished dividing the land.

20

The allocation of six cities of refuge — Numbers 35:6-34, Deuteronomy 4:41-43, 19:1-14

¹ Then the LORD instructed Joshua, ² “Tell the Israelites, ‘Appoint the cities of refuge, about which I have instructed you through Moses, ³ that anyone who strikes and kills another person accidentally and unintentionally may flee there, that they may become places of refuge from a person who takes revenge for bloodshed! ⁴ When he flees to one of these cities, he shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city and explain his case to the elders of that city! Then they shall admit him into their city and allocate him a place, that he may live with them! ⁵ When the person who is taking revenge for bloodshed pursues him, they shall not yield the person who has killed another into his hand! For he has struck his neighbour unintentionally, without having hated him in the past. ⁶ He shall remain in that city until he has appeared before the congregation for a trial and until the death of the man who is the High Priest at that time! Then the person who has killed another may return to his own city and to his own home in the city from which he had fled.’”

⁷ Therefore, they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill-country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim and Kiriath-Arba, which is Hebron, in the hill-country of Judah. ⁸ On the other side of the Jordan, east of Jericho, they allocated Bezer in the wil-

derness on the plateau, from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead, from the tribe of Gad and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. ⁹ These were the cities designated for all the Israelites and for the foreigners residing among them, that anyone who killed another person accidentally might flee there, that he might not die by the hand of a person who was taking revenge for bloodshed, before he had appeared before the congregation.

21

The Allocation of cities for the Levites — 1 Chronicles 6:54-81

¹ Then the leaders of the families of the Levites approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua, the son of Nun, and the leaders of the families of the other tribes of the Israelites. ² They told them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan: “The LORD has commanded through Moses that you should give us cities to dwell in, along with their pasturelands for our livestock.”

³ So, as the LORD had commanded, the Israelites gave the Levites the following towns and pasturelands out of their inheritance: ⁴ The allocation fell by lot for the clans of the Kohathites. So, those Levites who were descendants of Aaron the priest received thirteen cities by lot from the tribes of Judah, Simeon and Benjamin. ⁵ The rest of the Kohathites received ten cities by lot from the clans of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

⁶ The descendants of Gershon received by lot thirteen cities from the clans of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

⁷ The descendants of Merari according to their clans received twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Zebulun. ⁸ The Israelites gave these cities and their pasturelands by lot to the Levites, as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

The allocation of cities for the descendants of Kohath

⁹ They gave the following cities mentioned by name out of the tribes of the descendants of Judah and of Simeon. ¹⁰ The descendants of Aaron who were from the Kohathite clans of the Levites received these, because the allocation by lot fell to them first. ¹¹ They gave them Kiriath-Arba, which is Hebron, with its surrounding pastureland, in the hill-country of Judah. (Arba was the forefather of Anak). ¹² However, they had given the fields of the city and its villages to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, as his property.

¹³ So, they allocated Hebron, the city of refuge for the person who had killed another, to the descendants of Aaron the priest, with its pasturelands, Libnah with its pasturelands, ¹⁴ Jattir with its pasturelands, Eshtemoa with its pasturelands, ¹⁵ Holon with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands, ¹⁶ Ain with its pasturelands, Juttah with its pasturelands and Beth-Shemesh with its pasturelands. There were nine cities out of these two tribes. ¹⁷ They gave them, out of the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon with its pasturelands, Geba with its pasturelands, ¹⁸ Anathoth with its pas-

turelands and Almon with its pasturelands. There were four cities. ¹⁹ The cities of the priests, the descendants of Aaron, numbered thirteen in all, together with their pasturelands.

²⁰ The rest of the Kohathite clans of the Levites received cities by lot from the tribe of Ephraim. ²¹ They gave them Shechem, a city of refuge for the person who had killed another, with its pasturelands in the hill-country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasturelands, ²² Kibzaim with its pasturelands and Beth-Horon with its pasturelands. There were four cities. ²³ Out of the tribe of Dan they gave them Eltekeh with its pasturelands, Gibbethon with its pasturelands, ²⁴ Aijalon with its pasturelands and Gath-Rimmon with its pasturelands. There were four cities. ²⁵ Out of the half-tribe of Manasseh they gave them Taanach with its pasturelands and Gath-Rimmon with its pasturelands. There were two cities. ²⁶ The cities of the clans of the rest of the Kohathites numbered ten in all, together with their pasturelands.

The allocation of cities for the descendants of Gershon

²⁷ They gave two cities with their pasturelands out of the half-tribe of Manasseh to the clans of the Levites who were descended from Gershon. They were Golan in Bashan, a city of refuge for the person who had killed another and Be-Eshterah. There were two cities. ²⁸ Out of the tribe of Issachar they gave them Kishion with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands, ²⁹ Jarmuth with its pasturelands and En-Gannim with its pasturelands. There were four cities. ³⁰ Out of the tribe of Asher they gave them Mishal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands, ³¹ Helkath with its pasturelands and Rehob with its pasturelands. There were four cities. ³² Out of the tribe of Naphtali they gave them Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands, a city of refuge for the person who had killed another, Hammoth-Dor with its pasturelands and Kartan with its pasturelands. There were three cities. ³³ The cities of the Gershonites according to their clans numbered thirteen in all, together with their pasturelands.

The allocation of cities for the descendants of Merari

³⁴ They gave to the rest of the Levites, to the clans that were descended from Merari, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with its pasturelands, Kartah with its pasturelands, ³⁵ Dimnah with its pasturelands and Nahalal with its pasturelands. There were four cities. ³⁶ Out of the tribe of Reuben they gave them Bezer with its pasturelands, Jahaz with its pasturelands, ³⁷ Kedemoth with its pasturelands and Mephaath with its pasturelands. There were four cities. ³⁸ Out of the tribe of Gad they gave them Ramoth in Gilead, a city of refuge for the person who had killed another, with its pasturelands, Mahanaim with its pasturelands, ³⁹ Heshbon with its pasturelands and Jazer with its pasturelands. There were four cities in all. ⁴⁰ The cities that the descendants of Merari, that is, the rest of

the clans of the Levites, received by lot, according to their clans, numbered twelve in all.

⁴¹ The cities of the Levites inside the territory of the Israelites numbered forty-eight in all, together with their pasturelands. ⁴² Each of these cities had its pasturelands around it. This was the same for all these cities. ⁴³ So, the LORD gave to Israel all the land that He had sworn to give to their forefathers. They took possession of it and lived in it. ⁴⁴ The LORD gave them rest on every side exactly as He had sworn to their forefathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them. The LORD had handed all their enemies over to them. ⁴⁵ Not one Word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the family of Israel had failed. All had come true.

22

Joshua's blessing to the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan and their return to their territory

¹ Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh. ² He told them: "You have kept everything that Moses, the servant of the LORD, commanded you and have obeyed me in everything that I have commanded you. ³ You have not forsaken your fellow-Israelites during this long time, down to this day but done what the LORD, your God, has commanded you to do. ⁴ Now the LORD, your God, has given rest to your fellow-Israelites, as He has promised them. Return, therefore and go to your tents in the land that belongs to you, which Moses, the servant of the LORD, gave you on the other side of the Jordan! ⁵ Only be very careful to carry out the Commandment and the Law, which Moses, the servant of the LORD, commanded you, to love the LORD, your God, to walk in all His Ways, to keep His Commandments, to hold fast to Him and to serve Him with all your hearts and with all your souls!"

⁶ When Joshua had blessed them and sent them away, they went to their tents.

⁷ Moses had given a possession in Bashan to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh, and Joshua had given to the other half a possession beside their fellow-Israelites in the land west of the Jordan. When Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them. ⁸ He told them: "Go back to your tents with much wealth, with very much livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, iron and much clothing! Divide the plunder from your enemies with your fellow-Israelites!"

The dispute about the building of an altar near the Jordan by the eastern tribes

⁹ So, the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh left the other descendants of Israel at Shiloh in the land of Canaan to return to Gilead, to go to the land of Gilead, their own property, which they had obtained, as the LORD had commanded them through Moses. ¹⁰ When they came to the district near the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan, the descendants of Reuben and the descendants of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh built an altar

there beside the Jordan, a large altar visible from far away. ¹¹ When the rest of the Israelites heard about it they said: “Look! The descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh have built this altar on the border of the land of Canaan, in the district near the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the Israelites.”

¹² When the Israelites heard about it, the whole congregation of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh to go up and fight against them. ¹³ Then the Israelites sent Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, to the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead. ¹⁴ They sent with him ten leaders, one from each of the tribal families of Israel. Each one was the head of an ancestral family among the clans of Israel. ¹⁵ When they came to the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, they told them: ¹⁶ “This is what the whole congregation of the LORD has asked, ‘What is this breach of faith that you have committed against the God of Israel? You have today turned away from the LORD by building an altar for yourselves. You have today rebelled against the LORD! ¹⁷ Has the sin of Peor meant so little to us? To this day we have not cleansed ourselves from it, although a plague fell on the congregation of the LORD. ¹⁸ Are you too turning away from LORD today? If you rebel against the LORD today, tomorrow He will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel. ¹⁹ However, if the land that you possess is unclean, come across into land that is the property of the LORD, where the Tabernacle of the LORD has settled down! Take land among us to settle on but do not rebel against the LORD or rebel against us by building an altar for yourselves in addition to the altar of the LORD, our God! ²⁰ When Achan, the son of Zerah, broke faith concerning the condemned goods, did not wrath come on the whole congregation of Israel? He was not the only one who perished for his offence.”

²¹ Then the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh replied to the heads of the clans of Israel: ²² “The LORD is the God of gods! The LORD is the God of gods! He knows, and Israel itself should know! If it has been in rebellion or in breach of faith against the LORD, do not spare us today! ²³ If we have built our own altar to turn away from the LORD or to offer burnt offerings and grain-offerings on it or to sacrifice peace-offerings on it, may the LORD Himself demand an account! ²⁴ We have certainly done this only because we are anxious, for a reason. We said, ‘In time to come your descendants may tell our descendants: “What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel? ²⁵ The LORD has made the Jordan a border between you descendants of Reuben and you descendants of Gad and us. You have no connection with the

LORD!’” Your descendants would cause our descendants to cease fearing the LORD. ²⁶ Therefore, we said, ‘Let us do something for ourselves by building the altar, not for burnt offering or for sacrifice ²⁷ but to be a witness between us and you and between our generations after us, that we shall perform the service of the LORD in His presence with our burnt offerings, sacrifices and peace-offerings! Then your descendants will not tell our children in time to come, ‘You have no portion in the LORD.’ ²⁸ Therefore, we thought, ‘If they should ever say this to us or to our coming generations in future, we should say, “Look at the replica of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings or for sacrifices but to be a witness between us and you!’” ²⁹ It would be unthinkable for us to rebel against the LORD and turn away from the LORD today by building an altar for burnt offering, grain-offering or sacrifice, other than the altar of the LORD, our God, which is in front of His Tabernacle!”

³⁰ When Phinehas the priest, the leaders of the congregation, the heads of the clans of Israel who were with him, had heard what the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad and the people of Manasseh said, they approved of it. ³¹ Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, told the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad and the descendants of Manasseh: “Today we know that the LORD is among us, because you have not committed a breach of faith here against the LORD. Now you have delivered the Israelites from the hand of the LORD.”

³² Then Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, and the leaders returned from the descendants of Reuben and the descendants of Gad in the land of Gilead to the Israelites in the land of Canaan and brought them a report. ³³ Israel approved of the report. Then the Israelites blessed God and did not talk any longer about going up to fight against them to destroy the land where the descendants of Reuben and the descendants of Gad were living. ³⁴ The descendants of Reuben and the descendants of Gad gave the altar a name, saying: “It is a witness between us that the LORD is God.”

23

Joshua's reminder to the leaders of the Israelites to follow the teachings of Moses

¹ A long time had passed after the LORD had given Israel rest from all their enemies around them, and Joshua had grown old and was well advanced in years.

² Joshua summoned all Israel, its elders, its leaders, its judges and its officers. He told them: “I have become old and am well advanced in years. ³ You yourselves have seen all that the LORD, your God, has done to all these nations on your behalf. For the LORD, your God, is the One who has been fighting for you.

⁴ Look! I have allotted to you as an inheritance for your tribes those nations that remain, as well as all the nations that I have cut off, from the Jordan to the

Great Sea in the west. ⁵ The LORD, your God, will Himself push them back ahead of you and drive them out ahead of you. You will take possession of their land, as the LORD, your God, has promised you. ⁶ Therefore, you must be very strong, so that you are careful to put into practice all that has been written in the Book of the Law of Moses, so that you do not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left! ⁷ Do not associate with these nations that remain among you! You shall not mention the names of their gods, you shall not swear by them! You shall not serve them or bow down to them! ⁸ Rather, you shall hold fast to the LORD, your God, as you have been doing to this day! ⁹ The LORD has driven out great and strong nations before you. As for you, no one has been able to resist you to this day. ¹⁰ One of you used to chase a thousand, because the LORD, your God, was the One who was fighting for you, as He had promised you. ¹¹ Therefore, you shall be very careful to love the LORD, your God! ¹² For, if you really do turn away, join the rest of these nations that are remaining among you and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, ¹³ you must know for certain that the LORD, your God, will no longer drive out these nations before you! Then they will be a snare and a trap for you, a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land, which the LORD, your God, has given you. ¹⁴ Look! Today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not a single Word of all the good things that the LORD, your God, has promised concerning you has failed. All have come true for you. Not one of them has failed. ¹⁵ However, as every good promise that the LORD, your God, has made concerning you has been fulfilled for you, so the LORD will bring on you every evil threat, until He has destroyed you from this good land, which the LORD, your God, has given you. ¹⁶ If you transgress the Covenant of the LORD, your God, which He has commanded you, and you go and serve other gods and bow down to them, the anger of the LORD will burn against you and you will quickly perish from the good land that He has given to you.”

24

The renewal of the Covenant at Shechem and the agreement of the Israelites to continue to worship God — compare Exodus 24:9-18

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders, leaders, judges and officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. ² Joshua told all the people: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Long ago your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived on the other side of the Euphrates and served other gods. ³ However, I took your father Abraham from the other side of the Euphrates and made him go through the whole land of Canaan. I multiplied his descendants. I gave him Isaac. ⁴ I gave

Isaac Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill-country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. ⁵ I sent Moses and Aaron and plagued Egypt by what I did in the middle of it and afterwards I brought you out. ⁶ When I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, you came to the sea, and the Egyptians pursued your ancestors with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. ⁷ When your ancestors cried out to the LORD, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, brought the sea over them and covered them. So, your own eyes saw what I did in Egypt. Then you lived in the wilderness for a long time. ⁸ Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who used to live on the other side of the Jordan. When they fought against you, I gave them into your hands. You took possession of their land when I destroyed them before you. ⁹ Then Balak, the son of Zippor, the king of Moab, prepared to fight against Israel. He sent men to ask Balaam, the son of Beor, to come to curse you. ¹⁰ However, I would not listen to Balaam. He continued to bless you, and I delivered you from him. ¹¹ Then you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The citizens of Jericho fought against you, as well as the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, but I gave them into your hands. ¹² I put dejection ahead of you, which drove them out before you, as well as the two kings of the Amorites. You did not do it with your own sword and bow. ¹³ I gave you a land for which you had not taken pains and cities that you had not built, and you lived in them. You are eating from vineyards and olive trees that you have not planted.’

¹⁴ “Now therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him sincerely and faithfully! Put away the gods that your ancestors served on the other side of the Euphrates River and in Egypt and serve the LORD! ¹⁵ However, if serving the LORD seems wrong to you, choose today whom you will serve: either the gods that your ancestors served on the other side of the Euphrates River or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living! However, as for me and my family, we shall serve the LORD.”

¹⁶ Then the people answered: “Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods!

¹⁷ For the LORD, our God, is the One who has brought our ancestors and us up out of slave-quarters in the land of Egypt. He is the One who has performed these great miraculous signs before our eyes. He is the One who has protected us on all the journeying that we have been doing and among all the nations through which we have passed. ¹⁸ The LORD has also driven out before us all the nations, even the Amorites, who used to live in the land. We also shall serve the LORD. For He is our God.”

¹⁹ Nevertheless, Joshua told the people: “You cannot serve the LORD, because He is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and

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your sins. ²⁰ When you forsake the LORD and serve the gods of a foreign land, He will turn, do you harm and destroy you after He has been good to you.”

²¹ However, the people told Joshua, “No! Rather, we shall serve the LORD!”

²² Then Joshua told the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves, that you have chosen the LORD, to serve Him.”

They answered, “We are witnesses.”

²³ He said, “Now therefore, get rid of the foreign gods that are among you and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel!”

²⁴ The people replied to Joshua, “We shall serve the LORD, our God, and listen to what He says.”

²⁵ So, that day Joshua made a covenant for the people and drew up Prescriptions and Decisions for them at Shechem. ²⁶ Joshua wrote these Words in the Book of the Law of God. He took a large stone and set it up there under the large tree that is at the sanctuary of the LORD.

²⁷ Joshua told all the people: “Look! This stone will be a witness against us. For it has heard all the Words that the LORD has spoken to us. It will be a witness against you, that you may not disown your God.”

²⁸ Then Joshua dismissed all the people to his own inheritance.

The death and burial of Joshua — Judges 2:6-10

²⁹ After this, Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, at the age of one hundred and ten years. ³⁰ They buried him on his own inherited property at Timnath-Serah, which is in the hill-country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ³¹ Israel served the LORD all Joshua’s life and all the lives of the elders who lived longer than Joshua and who had known all the work that the LORD had done for Israel.

The burial of Joseph’s bones — Genesis 50:25

³² They **buried** the bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, **at Shechem**, in the plot of ground that Jacob **had bought from the sons of Hamor**, the father of Shechem, for a hundred measures of money. It became inherited property of the descendants of Joseph.

The death and burial of the High Priest Eleazar

³³ Eleazar, the son of Aaron, also died, and they buried him at Gibeah, which had been allotted to his son Phinehas, in the hill-country of Ephraim.

JUDGES

1

The attempts by Judah to expel the remaining Canaanites — Joshua 15:13-19

¹ After Joshua died, the Israelites asked the LORD, “Who shall go up first for us to fight against the Canaanites?”

² The LORD said, “Judah shall go up! See, I have given the land into their hands.”

³ The people of Judah told Simeon, their fellow-Israelites: “Come up with us into the territory allotted to us, that we may fight against the Canaanites! Then we shall also go with you into the territory allotted to you.”

So, Simeon went with them. ⁴ Then Judah went up, and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hands, and they struck down ten thousand men at Bezek. ⁵ They caught up with Adoni-Bezek at Bezek, fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. ⁶ Adoni-Bezek fled, but they pursued him, caught him and cut off his thumbs and his big toes. ⁷ Adoni-Bezek said: “Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table. God has paid me back for what I have done to them.”

They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

⁸ The men of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it. They struck the city down with the edge of the sword and set it on fire. ⁹ After that, the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who were living in the hill-country, in the Negev and in the foothills.

The capture of Hebron by Caleb and the special allocation of land to him — Joshua 14:6-15

¹⁰ Then Judah advanced against the Canaanites who were living at Hebron. Hebron had formerly been called “Kiriath-Arba.” They defeated Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai. ¹¹ From there they attacked the people who were living at Debir. Debir had formerly been called “Kiriath-Sepher.” ¹² Caleb had said, “I shall give my daughter Achsah as a wife to anyone who attacks Kiriath-Sepher and captures it.”

¹³ Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, captured it, and Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah as wife. ¹⁴ When she came to Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for a field. When she was on her donkey, she clapped her hands to get his attention; so Caleb asked her, “What do you want?”

¹⁵ She told him: “Give me a blessing! Since you have set me in the land of the Negev, you must also give me water-basins!”

So, Caleb gave her the upper and the lower water-basins.

The settlement of Kenites in the Negev

¹⁶ The descendants of Moses’ father-in-law, the Kenite, had gone up with the people of Judah from the City of Palms into the Wilderness of Judah, which is

in the Negev near Arad and had gone and settled with the people.

Victories of Judah and Simeon in the south

¹⁷ Then Judah went with Simeon, their fellow-Israelites, and they defeated the Canaanites who were living at Zephath and devoted Zephath to destruction. So, the city was named “Hormah.”⁷⁵ ¹⁸ Judah also captured Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory and Ekron with its territory. ¹⁹ The LORD was with Judah, and they took possession of the hill-country. However, they could not drive out the people living on the flat country, because they had chariots of iron. ²⁰ They gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had promised. Caleb dispossessed the three sons of Anak from there. ²¹ However, the descendants of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who were living in Jerusalem. So, the Jebusites have been living in Jerusalem with the descendants of Benjamin to this day.

²² The descendants of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the LORD was with them. ²³ The descendants of Joseph had sent men to spy out Bethel. Bethel had previously been named “Luz.” ²⁴ When the spies who were watching saw a man coming out of the city, they asked him, “Please show us the way into the city and we shall treat you kindly!”

²⁵ After he had shown them the way into the city, they struck the city down with the edge of the sword. However, they spared the man and his whole family.

²⁶ The man then went to the land of the Hittites, built a city and named it “Luz.” That is still its name today.

²⁷ Moreover, Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-Shean and its villages, Taanach and its villages, the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages. The Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. ²⁸ However, when Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites under compulsory labour without driving them out completely.

²⁹ Ephraim also did not drive out the Canaanites who were living in Gezer, but the Canaanites have been living among them in Gezer.

³⁰ Zebulun also did not drive out the people who were living at Kitron or the people who were living at Nahalol. So, the Canaanites have been living among them, although they have become subject to compulsory labour.

³¹ Asher did not drive out the people who were living in Acco or the people who were living in Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik and Rehob. ³² So, the Asherites have been living among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land. For they have not driven them out.

³³ Naphtali did not drive out the people who were living in Beth-Shemesh or the people who were living in

⁷⁵ Hormah means, “Banned to destruction.”

Beth-Anath. So, they have been living among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless, they have put the inhabitants of Beth-Shemesh and of Beth-Anath under compulsory labour.

³⁴ The Amorites confined the descendants of Dan to the hill-country. For they did not allow them to come down to the flat country. ³⁵ The Amorites persisted in living on Mount Heres, in Aijalon and in Shaalbim, but, when the family of Joseph grew stronger, the Amorites became subject to compulsory labour. ³⁶ The border of the Amorites ran from the Pass of Akkrabbim, from Sela and up from there.

2

The announcement by the Angel of the Lord at Bochim about Israel's failure to drive out all the Canaanites

¹ The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. He said: "I was bringing you up from Egypt and have brought you into the land that I have sworn to give to your fathers. I have promised, 'I shall never break My Covenant with you. ² You yourselves shall not make any covenant with the inhabitants of this land! You shall break down their altars!' However, you have not listened to what I have said. What is this that you have done? ³ Therefore, I have also said, 'I shall not drive them out before you. They will become snares, and their gods will become a trap for you.'"

⁴ When the Angel of the LORD had told all the Israelites this, the people wept aloud. ⁵ So, they named that place "Bochim."⁷⁶ Then they offered sacrifices there to the LORD. ⁶ When Joshua had dismissed the people, each of the Israelites went to take possession of his own inheritance in the land. ⁷ The people served the LORD while Joshua was alive and while the elders were alive who continued to live after Joshua and who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel.

The death of Joshua — Joshua 24:29-31

⁸ Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of one hundred and ten years. ⁹ They buried him on his own inherited property at Timnath-Heres, in the hill-country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰ After all that generation had also been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up after them who knew neither the LORD nor the work that He had done for Israel.

The idolatry of the next generation of the Israelites

¹¹ Then the Israelites did what displeased the LORD and served the Baals. ¹² They abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, some of the gods of the peoples who were around them and worshipped them. They provoked the LORD to anger. ¹³ They abandoned the LORD and served Baal and Ashtoreth. ¹⁴ So, the LORD became angry with Israel and put them into the hands of raiders, who robbed them and He sold them to their enemies all around, so

they could not resist their enemies any longer. ¹⁵ Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them to harm them, as the LORD had warned and as the LORD had sworn to them. They were in great distress. ¹⁶ Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of those who were raiding them. ¹⁷ However, they did not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshipped them. They quickly turned aside from the Way in which their fathers had been walking. Their fathers had obeyed the Commandments of the LORD, but they did not do so. ¹⁸ However, whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and saved them from the hands of their enemies all the judge's life. For the LORD was moved to compassion on them by their groaning because of those who were tormenting and afflicting them. ¹⁹ However, when the judge died, they turned back and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, serving them and worshipping them. They did not give up any of their evil practices or their stubborn ways.

God's permission for the rest of the nations to remain to test His people

²⁰ Therefore, the LORD was very angry with Israel and said: "Because this nation has transgressed My Covenant, which I had commanded their forefathers and because it has not listened to what I said, ²¹ I on My part shall no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died. ²² I shall use them to test whether the Israelites will keep the Ways of the LORD and walk in them as their forefathers did or not."

²³ So, the LORD allowed those nations to remain. He did not drive them out quickly or deliver them into the hand of Joshua.

3

The nations that remained in Canaan

¹ These are the nations that the LORD left to test all those in Israel who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan. ² His sole purpose was that the generations of the Israelites might experience war, to teach war only to those who had not experienced it before. ³ These are the nations: the five princes of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians and the Hivites who have been living on the hill-country of Lebanon, from Mount Baal-Hermon as far as Lebo-Hamath. ⁴ They were there to test the Israelites, to find out whether they would obey the Commandments of the LORD, which He, through Moses, had ordered their forefathers to keep.

The falling away of the Israelites

⁵ So, the Israelites lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. ⁶ They took their daughters to be their wives and let their own daughters marry their sons and served their gods.

The leadership of Othniel as the judge of Israel and his defeat of Cushan-Rishathaim

⁷⁶ Bochim means, "Weeping."

⁷ The Israelites did what the LORD regarded as evil. They forgot the LORD, their God, and served the Baals and the Asherahs. ⁸ Therefore, the LORD became very angry with Israel and sold them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim, the king of Mesopotamia. The Israelites were subject to Cushan-Rishathaim for eight years. ⁹ Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up a deliverer for the Israelites, and he saved them. He was Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰ The Spirit of the LORD came on him, and he became the judge of Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD gave Cushan-Rishathaim, the king of Mesopotamia, into his hand, and he conquered Cushan-Rishathaim. ¹¹ So, the land had peace for forty years. Then Othniel, the son of Kenaz, died.

The leadership of Ehud as the judge of Israel and his defeat of the Moabites

¹² The Israelites again did what the LORD regarded as evil, and the LORD made Eglon, the king of Moab, stronger than Israel, because they had been doing what the LORD regarded as evil. ¹³ He arranged for the Ammonites and the Amalekites to join him, and they proceeded to defeat Israel. Then they took possession of the City of Palms. ¹⁴ The Israelites were subject to Eglon, the king of Moab, for eighteen years. ¹⁵ When the Israelites cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them. He was Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite and a left-handed man. The Israelites had used him to deliver tribute to Eglon, the king of Moab. ¹⁶ Ehud had made a short, double-edged sword for himself and strapped it to his right thigh under his clothes. ¹⁷ He delivered the tribute to Eglon, the king of Moab. Eglon was a very fat man. ¹⁸ When Ehud had finished delivering the tribute, he dismissed the people who had been carrying it. ¹⁹ However, he himself turned back at the idols that were near Gilgal and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king."

When the king commanded, "Silence!" all his attendants left his presence. ²⁰ Ehud came to him while he was sitting alone in his cool upper room. When Ehud said, "I have a Message from God for you," he arose from his chair. ²¹ Ehud reached with his left hand for the sword on his right thigh and thrust it into Eglon's belly. ²² Even the hilt went in after the blade and the fat closed over the blade. For Ehud did not pull the sword out of Eglon's belly and the blade came out at his rump. ²³ Then Ehud went out into the porch, closed the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them. ²⁴ When he had gone out, Eglon's servants came in. When they saw that the doors of the upper room had been locked, they thought, "He must be relieving himself in the toilet of the cool room."

²⁵ They waited until they were embarrassed. However, when he still did not open the doors of the upper room, they took the key and opened them. Then they

saw that their master had fallen dead on the floor.

²⁶ Ehud escaped while they were delaying. He went past the idols and escaped to Seirah. ²⁷ When he arrived there, he sounded the trumpet in the hill-country of Ephraim. Then the Israelites went down with Ehud from the hill-country, with him at their head. ²⁸ He told them: "Follow me quickly! For the LORD has given your enemies, the Moabites, into your hands." So, they followed him down, took possession of the fords of the Jordan that led to Moab and did not allow anyone to cross over. ²⁹ At that time they killed about ten thousand Moabites, all well-fed, valiant men. Not one escaped. ³⁰ That day Moab was made subject to Israel. Then the land had peace for eighty years.

The leadership of Shamgar as the judge of Israel and his defeat of the Philistines

³¹ Shamgar, the son of Anath, came after Ehud and struck down six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad. He also saved Israel.

4

The leadership of Deborah as the judge of Israel and her call to Barak to fight Sisera

¹ After Ehud died, the Israelites again did what the LORD considered evil. ² Therefore, the LORD handed them over to Jabin, the king of Canaan, who reigned at Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived at Harosheth-Haggoyim. ³ Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD, because Sisera had nine hundred iron chariots and had been violently oppressing the Israelites for twenty years. ⁴ Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was the judge in Israel at that time. ⁵ She used to sit under the Palm-tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill-country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came up to her for legal decisions. ⁶ She sent a Message and summoned Barak, the son of Abinoam, from Kedesh in Naphtali. She asked him: "Has not the LORD, the God of Israel, given this Command: 'Go and gather soldiers on Mount Tabor! Take ten thousand men with you from the people of Naphtali and the people of Zebulun'? ⁷ I shall lure Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, his chariots and his military forces, to you beside the stream-bed of the Kishon and hand him over to you."

⁸ Barak told her, "If you go with me, I shall go but if you do not go with me, I shall not go."

⁹ She said: "I shall certainly go with you. Nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not bring you honour. For the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman."

The defeat of Jabin by Barak

Then Deborah set out and went with Barak to Kedesh.

¹⁰ Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh. Ten thousand men followed him up, and Deborah went up with him. ¹¹ Heber, the Kenite, had separated from the other Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the large tree at Zaanaim, which is near

Kedesh.

¹² People reported to Sisera that Barak, the son of Abinoam, had gone up to Mount Tabor. ¹³ Sisera called out all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots and all the men who were with him, from Harosheth-Haggoyim to the Kishon River. ¹⁴ Deborah told Barak: “Go ahead! For this is the day on which the LORD has given Sisera into your hand. Has the LORD not gone out ahead of you?”

Barak went down from Mount Tabor at the head of ten thousand men. ¹⁵ The LORD threw Sisera, all his chariots and all his army into confusion as Barak fought them with the sword. Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot. ¹⁶ Barak pursued the chariots and the rest of the army to Harosheth-Haggoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword. Not a man was left.

The death of Sisera by the hand of Jael

¹⁷ However, Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite. For there were friendly relations between Jabin, the king of Hazor and the family of Heber, the Kenite. ¹⁸ Jael came out to meet Sisera and told him: “Turn aside, my master! Turn aside to me! Do not be afraid!”

So, he came to her into the tent, and she covered him with a tent-curtain. ¹⁹ He asked her, “Please give me a little water to drink! For I am thirsty.”

So, she opened a leather bottle of milk, gave him a drink and covered him up. ²⁰ He told her: “Stand at the opening of the tent! If anyone comes and asks you, ‘Is anyone here?’ say, ‘No!’”

²¹ However, Jael, the wife of Heber, picked up a tent peg and took a small hammer in her hand. Then she went quietly to him while he was sound asleep from exhaustion, hammered the peg into his temple and drove it through into the ground, and he died.

²² While Barak was still pursuing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and told him: “Come! I shall show you the man for whom you are looking.”

So, he went into her tent, and there was Sisera lying dead, with the tent peg through his temple. ²³ So, on that day God subdued Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the Israelites. ²⁴ The Israelites kept growing stronger against Jabin, the king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin, the king of Canaan.

5

The victory-song of Deborah and Barak

¹ That day Deborah and Barak, the son of Abinoam, sang this song:

² “When people let their hair hang loose in Israel, when the people offered themselves willingly — bless the LORD!

³ “Hear this, kings! Listen, notable people! I myself shall sing to the LORD. I shall sing praise to the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁴ “O LORD, when You went out from Seir, when You marched from the open country of Edom, the earth

trembled. The heavens also poured, yes, the clouds poured down water.

⁵ “The mountains quaked before the LORD, the One of Sinai, before the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁶ “In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, people stopped using roads and people who walked on paths used to go on roundabout tracks.

⁷ “People stopped living in open country in Israel, they stopped, until I, Deborah, arose, until I arose as a mother in Israel.

⁸ “When new gods were chosen, then war was at the city-gates. There was not a shield or a spear to be seen among forty thousand in Israel.

⁹ “My heart is with the men of Israel who make decrees, with those among the people who have offered themselves willingly. Bless the LORD!

¹⁰ “Think about it, you who ride on tawny donkeys sit on rugs and walk along the road!

¹¹ “From the sound of people sharing water at the watering channels, there they were repeating the righteous acts of the LORD, the righteous acts for His people in Israel who live in open country. Then the people of the LORD went down to the city-gates.

¹² “Stir yourself! Stir yourself, Deborah! Stir yourself! Stir yourself! Sing a song! Arise, Barak! Take your prisoners, son of Abinoam!

¹³ “Then those who were left of the noble people came down. The people of the LORD came down to me among the warriors.

¹⁴ “Men whose roots were in the country of Amalek came from Ephraim. Benjamin was among the people who followed you. Commanding officers came down from Machir, and men who hold up the staff of a recorder came down from Zebulun.

¹⁵ “The leaders in Issachar were with Deborah. Yes, Issachar was sent off into the valley with Barak, under his command. In the divisions of Reuben there were heavy obligations to be courageous.

¹⁶ “Why did you sit still between the two saddlebags, to listen to the flutes playing to the flocks? Among the divisions of Reuben there were extensive prudent deliberations!

¹⁷ “Gilead stayed on the other side of the Jordan! Dan, why did Dan also remain with the ships? Asher sat down on the shore of the sea. He stayed at his landing places!

¹⁸ “The people of Zebulun risked their very lives. Naphtali did also, on the heights of the open country.

¹⁹ “Kings came and fought. Then the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach, beside the water of Megiddo. They took no silver as plunder.

²⁰ “The stars fought from heaven. From their orbits they fought against Sisera.

²¹ “The Kishon River washed them away, the river from ancient times, the Kishon River. March on strongly, my soul!

²² “Then the horses’ hoofs pounded with the gallop-

ing, the galloping of his stallions.

²³ “The Angel of the LORD said, ‘Curse Meroz! Curse its inhabitants thoroughly! For they have not come to help the LORD, to help the LORD against the warriors.’”

²⁴ “May Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, be the most blessed of women! May she be the most blessed of women living in tents!”

²⁵ “Sisera asked for water, and she gave him milk. She brought him curdled milk, in a bowl fit for nobles.

²⁶ “Her hand reached for the tent peg, and her right hand for the hammer of labourers. She struck Sisera. She crushed his head. She shattered and pierced his temple.

²⁷ “Between her feet he sank, he fell! He lay still between her feet! He sank, he fell! Where he sank, there he fell, laid waste!”

²⁸ “The mother of Sisera looked down through the window, lamented through the latticed window and asked, ‘Why is his chariot taking so long to come? Why have the hoof-beats of his chariots delayed?’”

²⁹ “Her wisest princesses answer her. Indeed, she keeps answering herself: ³⁰ ‘Are they not finding and dividing the spoil? A womb or two for every man; dyed garments as spoil for Sisera, spoils of dyed, embroidered materials, dyed fabric embroidered on both sides that belonged to the necks of plundered men?’”

³¹ “May all Your enemies perish like this, O LORD! However, may those who love Him be like the sun when it rises in its strength!”

Then the land had peace for forty years.

6

The repeated sin of Israel and its oppression by the Midianites

¹ Then the Israelites did what the LORD regarded as evil, and the LORD put them under the control of Midian for seven years. ² The power of Midian against Israel was oppressive. To protect itself against Midian, the Israelites prepared underground holes for themselves in mountains, caves and strongholds.

³ Whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites used to come up. The Amalekites and other people of the East also used to come up against them.

⁴ They used to pitch camp against them and ruined what the land produced as far as Gaza. They did not leave any food for the Israelites to live on or any sheep, cattle or donkeys. ⁵ For they used to come up with their livestock and their tents. Whenever they came they were as numerous as locusts. They and their camels could not be counted. They came into the land to ruin it. ⁶ Israel was brought very low because of Midian. Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help. ⁷ When the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help because of Midian, ⁸ the LORD sent a prophet to the Israelites. He told them: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: ‘I Myself brought you up from Egypt and I brought you out of slave-

quarters. ⁹ I delivered you from the power of the Egyptians and from the power of all who were oppressing you. I drove them out before you and gave you their land. ¹⁰ I told you: “I am the LORD, your God. You shall not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living!” However, you have not listened to what I said.”

The appearance of the Angel of the LORD to Gideon

¹¹ The Angel of the LORD came and sat under the high tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash, of the clan of Abiezer, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress, to keep it safe from the Midianites. ¹² When the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, He told him, “The LORD is with you, you brave man!”

¹³ Gideon replied to Him: “With Your permission, if the LORD is with us, why, then, has all this happened to us? Where are all His wonderful deeds, about which our fathers have been telling us, saying, ‘Did the LORD not bring us up from Egypt?’ Now, however, the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the control of Midian.”

¹⁴ The LORD turned to him and said: “Use this strength that you have and save Israel from the control of Midian! Have I not sent you?”

¹⁵ Gideon replied to Him: “With Your permission, how shall I save Israel? Look! My clan is the weakest in Manasseh and I am the least in my father’s family.”

¹⁶ The LORD answered him, “Nevertheless, I shall be with you, and you will strike down the Midianites as if they were one man.”

¹⁷ Gideon replied to Him: “Please, if You regard me kindly, perform a miraculous sign for me, to prove that it is really You speaking to me! ¹⁸ Please do not leave this place until I come to You, bring out my offering and set it before You!”

He replied, “I shall stay until you come back.”

¹⁹ Then Gideon went inside and prepared a young goat and unleavened loaves from forty litres of flour. He put the meat in a basket, put the broth in a cooking pot, brought them out to Him under the high tree and presented them to Him. ²⁰ The Angel of God told him, “Take the meat and the unleavened loaves, place them on this rock and pour out the broth!”

Gideon did so. ²¹ Then the Angel of the LORD reached out the end of the staff that was in His hand and touched the meat and the unleavened loaves. Fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the flesh and the unleavened loaves. Then the Angel of the LORD vanished from his sight. ²² Then Gideon perceived that He was the Angel of the LORD. Gideon said: “Ah, O Lord GOD! Indeed, I have now seen the Angel of the LORD face to face.”

²³ However, the LORD told him: “Peace be with you! Do not be afraid! You will not die.”

²⁴ Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and

called it, "Yahweh-Shalom."⁷⁷ To this day it is still at Ophrah, which belongs to the clan of Abiezer.

Gideon's tearing down of the altar dedicated to Baal

²⁵ That night the LORD told him: "Take your father's young bull and the second bull, which is seven years old! Pull down the altar to Baal that your father has and cut down the Asherah-pole that is beside it!

²⁶ Then build an altar to the LORD, your God, on the top of this fortified place, with the usual order of stones! Then take the second bull and offer it as a burnt offering, using the wood of the Asherah-pole that you have cut down!"

²⁷ Gideon took ten of his men-servants and did as the LORD had told him. However, because he was too afraid of his father's family and the men of the city to do it by day, he did it by night. ²⁸ When the men of the city rose early in the morning, they saw that the altar of Baal had been broken down, that the Asherah-pole beside it had been cut down and that the second bull had been sacrificed on the altar that had been built. ²⁹ They asked each other, "Who has done this?" After they had searched and inquired, they said, "Gideon, the son of Joash, has done this."

³⁰ Then the men of the city told Joash: "Bring your son out, that he may die! For he has broken down the altar of Baal and has cut down the Asherah-pole, which was beside it."

³¹ However, Joash asked all who were standing against him: "Are you going to plead Baal's cause? Or are you going to save him? Whoever pleads his cause will be put to death by morning! If he is a god, let him plead his own cause when someone has broken down his altar!"

³² Therefore, on that day Gideon was called "Jerub-Baal," ⁷⁸ because Joash had been saying, "Let Baal contend against Gideon!" For he had broken down Baal's altar.

Gideon's requests about a fleece as signs from God

³³ All the Midianites and the Amalekites and the other people of the East had joined forces, crossed over and set up camp in the Valley of Jezreel. ³⁴ However, the Spirit of the LORD took possession of Gideon. He sounded the trumpet, and the clan of Abiezer was called up to follow him. ³⁵ He also sent messengers throughout Manasseh, and they were also called up to follow him. He also sent messengers through Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali, and they came up to meet them.

³⁶ Then Gideon said to God: "If it is true that You will save Israel through me as You have promised, ³⁷ then, look! I am placing a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece while all the ground is dry, then I shall know that You will save Israel through me, as You have promised."

³⁸ That is what happened. The next morning Gideon

got up early, wrung out the fleece, squeezed the dew out of the fleece and filled a bowl with water. ³⁹ Then Gideon asked God: "Let Your anger not break out against me, but let me speak just once more! Please let me make just one more test with the fleece! Please let the fleece alone be dry and let there be dew all over the ground!"

⁴⁰ That night God did so. The fleece alone was dry, but there was dew all over the ground.

7

The leadership of Gideon as the judge of Israel and his summoning of an army against the Midianites

¹ Then Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and set up camp beside the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them, beside the hill of Moreh, in the valley. ² The LORD told Gideon: "You have too many men with you for Me to give the Midianites into their hands. Israel must be prevented from boasting against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.' ³ Now, therefore, proclaim in the hearing of the people, 'Anyone who is afraid and trembling should quickly rush away from Mount Gilead!'"

Twenty-two thousand of the people left, but ten thousand remained. ⁴ Then the LORD told Gideon: "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, that I may test them for you there! If I tell you about anyone, 'This one shall go with you!' he shall go with you and, if I tell you about anyone, 'This one shall not go with you!' he must not go."

⁵ So, Gideon brought the men down to the water. The LORD told Gideon: "You shall separate everyone who laps water with his tongue like a dog from everyone who gets down on his knees to drink!"

⁶ The number of the men who lapped by putting their hands to their mouths was three hundred. However, all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water. ⁷ The LORD told Gideon: "With the three hundred men who have been lapping I shall save you and give the Midianites into your hands. All the rest of the men should go to their own places!"

⁸ The three hundred soldiers took their provisions with them, as well as their trumpets. When Gideon dismissed all the remaining men of Israel to their tents, he retained the three hundred men.

The dream of a Midianite

The camp of Midian was below Gideon in the valley.

⁹ That night the LORD told him: "Get up, go down against the camp! For I have delivered it into your hands. ¹⁰ However, if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp yourself with your servant Purah! ¹¹ You will hear what they are saying and after that you will find the courage to go down against the camp."

Then Gideon went down with his servant Purah to the edge of the men who were organised for war in the camp. ¹² The great number of the Midianites and the

⁷⁷ Yahweh-Shalom means, "The LORD is peace."

⁷⁸ Jerub-Baal means, "Baal should fight."

Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples were lying along the valley like locusts. Their camels could not be counted. They were as numerous as the sand on the seashore. ¹³ Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a dream to his companion. He said: "Look! When I had dream, I saw a round loaf of barley bread come rolling around in the camp of Midian. It came to the tent, struck it, fell and turned upside down, so that the tent was lying flat."

¹⁴ His companion answered: "This is nothing but the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel! God has delivered Midian and the whole camp into his hands."

The defeat of the Midianites by Gideon

¹⁵ As soon as Gideon heard the report of the dream and its interpretation, he worshipped. He returned to the camp of Israel and said: "Get up! For the LORD has delivered the camp of Midian into your hands."

¹⁶ He divided the three hundred men into three companies. He put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars with torches inside them. ¹⁷ He told them: "Watch me and do what I do! When I reach the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do! ¹⁸ When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then you too, blow your trumpets all around the camp and say, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!'"

¹⁹ Gideon and the hundred men who were with him arrived at the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just when they had posted the guards. They blew the trumpets and smashed the jars in their hands. ²⁰ The three companies blew their trumpets and broke their jars. They held the torches in their left hands, held the trumpets they were to blow in their right hands and shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"

²¹ Every man stood at his place around the camp, and the whole army began to run, cried out and fled.

²² When the three hundred blew the trumpets, the LORD caused the men to turn on each other and on all the rest of the camp. The army fled as far as Beth-Shittah in the direction of Zererah and as far as the bank of the stream at Abel-Meholah, near Tabbath.

²³ The men of Israel were called out from Naphtali, Asher and all Manasseh and pursued the Midianites.

²⁴ Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill-country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites and occupy the streams against them, as far as Beth-Barah and occupy the Jordan as well!"

All the men of Ephraim were called out and occupied the streams as far as Beth-Barah, as well as the Jordan. ²⁵ They captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the Rock of Oreb and Zeeb at the Winepress of Zeeb. Then they pursued them into Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.

8

The triumph of Gideon and his revenge on Israelites who had refused to

assist him

¹ Then the men of Ephraim asked Gideon, "What is this that you have done to us, by omitting to call us when you went to fight with the Midianites?"

They criticised him sharply. ² He asked them: "What have I done now in comparison with what you have done? Are not the grapes picked up after the harvest in Ephraim better than the whole vintage at Abiezer?"

³ God has delivered the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb, into your hands. What, then, have I been able to do in comparison with you?"

When he told them this, their resentment against him subsided. ⁴ Although Gideon and his three hundred men were exhausted when they came to the Jordan and crossed over it, they continued the pursuit. ⁵ So, he asked the men of Succoth: "Please give loaves of bread to the soldiers who are following me! For they are exhausted, I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian."

⁶ However, the officials of Succoth replied, "Do you already hold Zebah and Zalmunna in your custody, that we should give bread to your army?"

⁷ Gideon said: "Because of this, when the LORD has delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hands, I shall thresh your bodies with the thorn bushes of the wilderness and with spiky branches!"

⁸ He went up from there to Penuel and made the same request of them, but the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had done. ⁹ So, he also told the men of Penuel, "When I return safely, I shall break down this tower!"

¹⁰ Zebah and Zalmunna were at Karkor with their army of about fifteen thousand men. They were all who were left of the whole army of the eastern peoples. For one hundred and twenty thousand swordsmen had fallen. ¹¹ Gideon went up by the route of the nomads east of Nobah and Jogbehah and attacked the army when the army thought it was secure. ¹² When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, Gideon pursued them. He captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and threw all the army into a panic. ¹³ Then Gideon, the son of Joash, returned from the battle at the Pass of Heres. ¹⁴ Gideon captured a young man from the people of Succoth and questioned him. He wrote down for him the seventy-seven officials and elders of Succoth. ¹⁵ When he came to the men of Succoth, he said: "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna. You taunted me about them when you said, 'Do you already hold Zebah and Zalmunna in your custody, that we should give bread to your exhausted men?'"

¹⁶ Gideon seized the elders of the city. Then he took thorn bushes of the wilderness and spiky branches and used them to teach the men of Succoth a lesson. ¹⁷ He also broke down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city. ¹⁸ Then he asked Zebah and Zalmunna, "Where are the men whom you killed at Tabor?" They answered: "They were like you. Each of them

had the impressive appearance of the son of a king.”

¹⁹ He said: “They were my brothers, the sons of my own mother. As surely as the LORD lives, if you had spared their lives, I would not kill you.”

²⁰ Then he told Jether, his first-born son, “Go ahead and kill them!”

However, the young man would not draw his sword, because he was afraid. For he was still only a young man. ²¹ Then Zebah and Zalmunna said: “Come and strike us yourself! For a man has a man’s strength.”

So, Gideon went and killed Zebah and Zalmunna. Then he took the crescent ornaments that were on the necks of their camels.

The worship of Gideon’s ephod by the Israelites

²² Then the men of Israel asked Gideon: “Rule over us, you, your son and your grandson! For you have saved us from the power of Midian.”

²³ Gideon told them: “I myself shall not rule over you and my son will not rule over you. The LORD will rule over you.”

²⁴ However, Gideon told them: “Let me make a request of you! Each of you, give me an earring out of what he has plundered!”

The enemies had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites. ²⁵ They answered, “We shall gladly give them.”

They spread out a garment and every man threw an earring from his plunder onto it. ²⁶ The weight of the golden earrings that he had requested was twenty kilograms and four hundred grams of gold, besides the crescent ornaments, the pendants and the maroon garments that the kings of Midian had been wearing and besides the chains that had been around the necks of their camels. ²⁷ Gideon made the gold into a priestly breastplate and placed it in his city of Ophrah. All the Israelites prostituted themselves by worshipping it there, and it became a trap for Gideon and for his family.

Gideon’s death and another relapse into idolatry

²⁸ So, Midian was subdued before the Israelites and did not raise its head again. The land had peace for forty years during Gideon’s lifetime. ²⁹ Jerub-Baal, the son of Joash, went and lived in his own house.

³⁰ Gideon had seventy sons, his own offspring, because he had many wives. ³¹ When his concubine, who was in Shechem, also bore him a son, he named him “Abimelech.”⁷⁹ ³² Gideon, the son of Joash, died in a good old age and was buried in the tomb of Joash, his father, at Ophrah, the city of the Abiezrites. ³³ As soon as Gideon died, the Israelites relapsed again and prostituted themselves to the Baals. They set up Baal-Berith as their god. ³⁴ The Israelites did not remember the LORD, their God, who had delivered them from the power of all their enemies around them. ³⁵ They also failed to be kind to the family of Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) for all the good that he had done for Israel.

9

The leadership of Abimelech as the judge of Israel and his murder of his brothers

¹ Abimelech, the son of Jerub-Baal, went to his mother’s relatives at Shechem and spoke to them and to the whole clan of his mother’s family. He said, ² “Please ask all the citizens of Shechem, ‘Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerub-Baal should rule over you or that one man should rule over you?’ Remember also that I am your own flesh and bone!”

³ When his mother’s relatives repeated all this on his behalf to all the citizens of Shechem, they were inclined to follow Abimelech. For they said, “He is our relative.”

⁴ They gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-Berith, and Abimelech used them to hire worthless and reckless men as his followers. ⁵ He went to his father’s house at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the seventy sons of Jerub-Baal, on one stone. However, Jotham, the youngest son of Jerub-Baal survived, for he had hidden himself.

The crowning of Abimelech as king at Shechem

⁶ All the citizens of Shechem and Beth-Millo gathered and proceeded to make Abimelech king beside the high tree at the monument in Shechem.

The parable of Jotham about some trees

⁷ When people told Jotham about this, he went and stood on top of Mount Gerizim and shouted out to them: “Listen to me, citizens of Shechem, that God may listen to you! ⁸ The trees once went to anoint a king over themselves and told the olive tree, ‘Be our king!’ ⁹ However, the olive tree replied to them, ‘Shall I leave my fat oil, which people use to honour God and men, that I should go to wave my branches over the other trees?’ ¹⁰ Then the trees told the fig tree, ‘You come and be our king!’ ¹¹ However, the fig tree replied to them, ‘Shall I give up my sweet, good fruit and go to wave my branches over the other trees?’ ¹² Then the trees told the grapevine, ‘You come and be our king!’ ¹³ However, the grapevine asked them, ‘Shall I leave my wine, which cheers God and men, and go to wave my branches over the trees?’

¹⁴ Then all the trees told the box-thorn, ‘You come and be our king!’ ¹⁵ The box-thorn replied to the trees, ‘If you are truly anointing me as your king, come and take refuge in my shade! However, if you do not, let fire come out of the box-thorn and let it consume the cedars of Lebanon!’ ¹⁶ Now therefore, you have certainly not acted honestly and sincerely when you made Abimelech king. You have certainly not treated Jerub-Baal and his family well and certainly not treated him as his deeds have deserved! ¹⁷ My father fought for you, risked his life and delivered you from the power of Midian. ¹⁸ Nevertheless, you on your part have revolted against my father’s family this day, have killed his sons, seventy men, on a single stone and have made Abimelech, the son of his female serv-

⁷⁹ Abimelech means, “My father is king.”

ant, king over the citizens of Shechem, because he is your relative. ¹⁹ If you therefore have treated Jerub-Baal and his family honestly and sincerely today, then be glad about Abimelech and let him also be glad about you! ²⁰ However, if you have not, let fire come out from Abimelech and let it consume the citizens of Shechem and Beth-Millo! Let fire also come out from the citizens of Shechem and from Beth-Millo and let it consume Abimelech!”

²¹ Jotham began to run away and fled. He went to Beer and lived there because of his brother Abimelech.

The destruction of Shechem by Abimelech

²² Abimelech ruled over Israel for three years. ²³ God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, and the citizens of Shechem acted disloyally towards Abimelech. ²⁴ He did this that revenge might be taken on Abimelech for the violent murder of his brothers, the seventy sons of Jerub-Baal, which Abimelech had committed, and that revenge might be taken on the citizens of Shechem, who had encouraged him to kill his brothers. ²⁵ When the citizens of Shechem stationed men to wait in ambush on the mountaintops against him and robbed all who used to go past them on the road, this was reported to Abimelech. ²⁶ Gaal, the son of Ebed, moved into Shechem with his brothers, and the citizens of Shechem trusted him. ²⁷ After they had gone out into the fields, gathered the grapes from their vineyards and trodden them out, they held a joyful celebration. When they had gone into the temple of their god and had eaten and drunk, they cursed Abimelech. ²⁸ Gaal, the son of Ebed, asked: “Who is Abimelech, and who are we of Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerub-Baal, and is not Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem! However, why should we ourselves serve Abimelech? ²⁹ I wish that these people were under my control, that I might get rid of Abimelech! Such a man would send word to Abimelech, ‘Increase your army and come out!’”

³⁰ When Zebul, the governor of the city, heard what Gaal, the son of Ebed, had said, he was very angry.

³¹ Under cover, he sent messengers to Abimelech, saying: “Look! Gaal, the son of Ebed, and his brothers are coming to Shechem and look! They are making the city hostile towards you. ³² Now therefore, you and the people who are with you, act by night and set an ambush in the open country! ³³ Then in the morning, when the sun comes up, rise early and make a raid on the city! When he and the people who are with him come out against you, do to them whatever you find the opportunity to do!”

³⁴ Abimelech and all the men who were with him started out by night, and four companies took up concealed positions against Shechem. ³⁵ When Gaal, the son of Ebed, had gone out and stood in the entrance of the city-gate, Abimelech and the people who were

with him rose up from the ambush. ³⁶ When Gaal saw the people, he told Zebul, “Look! People are coming down from the mountain-tops.”

Zebul replied to him, “The shadows of the mountains look like men to you.”

³⁷ However, Gaal spoke up again: “Look! People are coming down from the middle of the area, and one company is coming from the direction of the magicians’ high tree.”

³⁸ Then Zebul answered him: “Where then is your loud mouth, you who were saying, ‘Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?’ Are not these the people whom you rejected? Go out now and fight them!”

³⁹ Then Gaal led the citizens of Shechem out and fought against Abimelech. ⁴⁰ Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him. Many fell wounded, as far as the entrance of the city-gate. ⁴¹ Abimelech continued to live at Arumah, and Zebul drove out Gaal and his brothers, so that they could not live at Shechem. ⁴² On the following day, the people went out into the fields, and some people told Abimelech. ⁴³ He took his people, divided them into three companies and set an ambush in the fields. He watched and when he saw the people coming out of the city, he attacked them and struck them down. ⁴⁴ Abimelech and the companies that were with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the city-gate. Then the two companies rushed on all who were in the fields and struck them down. ⁴⁵ Abimelech fought against the city all that day. He captured the city, killed the people who were in it, broke down the city and scattered salt over it.

⁴⁶ When all the citizens in the Tower of Shechem heard about it, they entered the vault of the temple of El-Berith. ⁴⁷ Abimelech was told that all the citizens of the Tower of Shechem had assembled. ⁴⁸ Then Abimelech and all the people who were with him went up to Mount Zalmon. Abimelech took an axe in his hand, cut off some firewood, picked it up and put it on his shoulder. He told the men who were with him, “Quickly, do what you have seen me do!”

⁴⁹ So, all the men cut their own firewood, followed Abimelech and piled it against the vault. They set the vault on fire over the people, so that all the people of the Tower of Shechem, about a thousand men and women, also died.

The death of Abimelech at Thebez

⁵⁰ Then Abimelech went to Thebez, camped against Thebez and captured it. ⁵¹ However, there was a strong tower inside the city. All the men and women, all the citizens of the town, fled to it and shut themselves in away from them. They climbed up onto the roof of the tower. ⁵² Abimelech went to the tower and fought against it. He approached the entrance of the tower to set it on fire. ⁵³ Then a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech’s head and crushed his skull to pieces. ⁵⁴ He quickly called to the young

man who was his armour-bearer and told him: "Draw your sword and kill me, that people may not say about me, 'A woman killed him!'"

So, his servant thrust him through, and he died. ⁵⁵ When the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, everyone went home. ⁵⁶ So, God repaid the wickedness that Abimelech had done to his father by killing his seventy brothers. ⁵⁷ God also made all the evil of the men of Shechem come back on their own heads. The curse of Jotham, the son of Jerub-Baal, came true on them.

10

The leadership of Tola as the judge of Israel

¹ After Abimelech a man of Issachar, Tola, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, rose to save Israel. He used to live at Shamir, in the hill-country of Ephraim. ² He ruled Israel as a judge for twenty-three years. Then he died and was buried at Shamir.

The leadership of Jair as the judge of Israel

³ Jair, the Gileadite, followed him and ruled Israel as a judge for twenty-two years. ⁴ He had thirty sons, who used to ride on thirty donkeys, and his sons had thirty cities. People call them "Havvoth-Jair" to this day. They are in the land of Gilead. ⁵ When Jair died, he was buried at Kamon.

Another lapse into sin by Israel and oppression by the Ammonites

⁶ The Israelites again did what the LORD regarded as evil and served the Baals, the Ashtaroth, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites and the gods of the Philistines. They forsook the LORD instead of serving Him. ⁷ He became angry with Israel and sold them into the control of the Philistines and the Ammonites. ⁸ They beat down and oppressed the Israelites in that year and for eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites who were east of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites in Gilead. ⁹ The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin and the tribe of Ephraim, so that Israel was in great distress. ¹⁰ The Israelites cried out to the LORD: "We have sinned against You. Indeed, we have forsaken our God and serving the Baals!"

¹¹ The LORD asked the Israelites: "Did I not save you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites and the Philistines? ¹² When the Sidonians, the Amalekites and Maon oppressed you, and you cried out to Me, did I not save you from their hands? ¹³ Nevertheless, you on your part have forsaken Me and have been serving other gods. Therefore, I shall not save you again. ¹⁴ Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen! Let them save you when you are in distress!"

¹⁵ However, the Israelites replied to the LORD: "We have sinned. You Yourself, do to us whatever you think is right! Please, just rescue us today!"

¹⁶ So, they got rid of the foreign gods among them. When they served the LORD, He could not endure

Israel's misery.

The leadership of Jephthah as the judge of Israel and his victory over the Ammonites

¹⁷ When the Ammonites were called up, they set up camp in Gilead. The Israelites also assembled and set up camp at Mizpah. ¹⁸ Then the people who were the leaders of Gilead made a common declaration: "Whoever begins the battle against the Ammonites will be the leader of all who live in Gilead."

11

¹ Jephthah, the Gileadite, was a mighty warrior but was the son of a prostitute. Jephthah's father was named "Gilead." ² Gilead's wife had also borne him sons. When his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah away and told him, "You will not receive any inheritance in our father's family, because you are the son of another woman."

³ Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Worthless men gathered around Jephthah and went out on raids with him. ⁴ After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel. ⁵ When the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah from the land of Tob. ⁶ They told Jephthah, "Come and be our leader, that we may fight against the Ammonites!"

⁷ However, Jephthah told the elders of Gilead: "Did you not hate me and drive me away from my father's family? Why, therefore, have you come to me now when you are in distress?"

⁸ The elders of Gilead told Jephthah: "That is why we have come back to you now. You must come with us, fight against the Ammonites and be our leader, over all who live in Gilead!"

⁹ Jephthah told the elders of Gilead: "If you take me back to fight against the Ammonites and the LORD delivers them to me, I shall be your leader."

¹⁰ The elders of Gilead told Jephthah, "The LORD will be a witness between us if we do not do as you say."

¹¹ So, Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead and the people made him the commander and the leader over them. Jephthah repeated all that he had said before the LORD at Mizpah. ¹² Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites with the question: "What do you have against me, that you have come to me to fight against my land?"

¹³ The king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of Jephthah: "Because, when the Israelites came up from Egypt, they took away my land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan. Now therefore, give those lands back in peace!"

¹⁴ Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites, ¹⁵ and told him: "This is what Jephthah has said: 'Israel did not take away the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites. ¹⁶ Rather, when Israel came up from Egypt, they went through the wilderness to the Red Sea and came to Kadesh. ¹⁷ Israel then

sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, 'Please let us pass through your land!' However, the king of Edom would not listen. They also sent a message to the king of Moab, but he refused. So, Israel remained at Kadesh. ¹⁸ Then they journeyed through the wilderness and went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, arrived on the eastern side of the land of Moab and camped on the other side of the Arnon. However, they did not enter the territory of Moab. For the Arnon was the boundary of Moab. ¹⁹ Israel then sent messengers to Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who reigned at Heshbon. Israel told him, 'Please let us pass through your land to our own place!' ²⁰ However, Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. Sihon gathered all his people together, pitched camp at Jahaz and fought against Israel. ²¹ Then the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hands of Israel, and they struck them down. Israel took possession of all the land of the Amorites who used to live in that region. ²² They took possession of all the territory of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan. ²³ Now therefore, the LORD, the God of Israel, has driven the Amorites out before His people Israel. So, should you take possession of the land? ²⁴ Will you not possess what your god Chemosh gives you to possess? We shall possess all that the LORD, our God, has taken possession of as we advanced. ²⁵ Now therefore, are you so much better than Balak, the son of Zippor, the king of Moab? Did he ever quarrel with Israel or did he ever go to war against them? ²⁶ While Israel was living in Heshbon and its villages, in Aroer and its villages and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, for three hundred years, why did you not liberate them during that time? ²⁷ I, therefore, have not sinned against you, and you are doing me wrong by making war against me. Let the LORD, the Judge, decide this matter today between the Israelites and the Ammonites!" ²⁸ However, the king of the Ammonites paid no attention to the message that Jephthah had sent to him. ²⁹ Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Jephthah. He went across Gilead and Manasseh, passed on to Mizpah in Gilead and advanced from Mizpah in Gilead against the Ammonites.

The rash vow of Jephthah

³⁰ Jephthah made a vow to the LORD: "If You indeed deliver the Ammonites into my hands, ³¹ then whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return from the Ammonites in peace shall belong to the LORD, and I shall sacrifice it as a burnt offering."

³² So, Jephthah went across to the Ammonites to fight against them, and the LORD delivered them into his hands. ³³ He struck them down in a very great defeat from Aroer to the neighbourhood of Minnith, where there were twenty cities, and as far as Abel-Keramim.

So, the Ammonites were subdued before the Israelites.

The consequence of Jephthah's rash vow for his daughter

³⁴ When Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah, he saw his daughter coming out to meet him with tambourines and with dancing. She was his only daughter. He had no son or daughter besides her. ³⁵ When he saw her, he tore his clothes and said: "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low and have cut me off from social life. I have made a promise to the LORD and cannot go back on it."

³⁶ She told him: "My father, if you have made a promise to the LORD, do to me what you have promised, now that the LORD has taken revenge for you on your enemies, the Ammonites!"

³⁷ Then she told her father: "Let this thing be done for me: Leave me alone for two months, that my friends and I may go up and down on the mountains and mourn that I shall never be married!"

³⁸ He said, "Go!"

Then he sent her away for two months. She went with her companions and wept in the hills that she would never be married. ³⁹ After the two months, she returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed. She did not marry a man and so it became a custom in Israel ⁴⁰ that for four days every year the young women of Israel go to sing laments for the daughter of Jephthah, the Gileadite.

12

Civil war between Jephthah and Ephraim

¹ The men of Ephraim were called together, went across to Zaphon and asked Jephthah: "Why have you gone across to fight against the Ammonites without summoning us to go with you? We shall burn down your house over you!"

² Jephthah replied to them: "My people and I had a great dispute with the Ammonites, and, when I called you, you did not save me from their hands. ³ When I saw that you would not save me, I risked my life and went across against the Ammonites, and the LORD delivered them into my hands. Why, therefore, have you come up to me today to fight against me?"

⁴ Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. The men of Gilead struck Ephraim, down, because they had said, "You people of Gilead among Ephraim and Manasseh are fugitives from Ephraim!"

⁵ The men of Gilead occupied the crossing places of the Jordan against the men of Ephraim. When any of the survivors of Ephraim said, "Let me cross over!" the men of Gilead asked him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he replied, "No," ⁶ they told him, "Please, say Shibboleth!" He would say, "Sibboleth." For he could not pronounce it correctly. Then they seized him and slaughtered him at the crossing places of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand men of Ephraim were killed at that time. ⁷ Jephthah ruled Israel as a judge for six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was bur-

ied in one of the cities in Gilead.

The leadership of Ibzan as the judge of Israel

⁸ After him Ibzan from Bethlehem was a judge of Israel. ⁹ He had thirty sons. He also sent thirty daughters to marry outside his clan and brought in thirty young women from outside his clan to marry his sons. He was a judge in Israel for seven years. ¹⁰ Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

The leadership of Elon as the judge of Israel

¹¹ After him Elon from Zebulun was a judge in Israel and judged Israel for ten years. ¹² Then Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

The leadership of Abdon as the judge of Israel

¹³ After him Abdon, the son of Hillel, from Pirathon, was a judge in Israel. ¹⁴ He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who used to ride on seventy donkeys. He was a judge in Israel for eight years. ¹⁵ Then Abdon, the son of Hillel, from Pirathon, died and was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill-country of the Amalekites.

13

The appearance of the Angel of the LORD to Samson's parents

¹ When the Israelites again did what the LORD regarded as evil, the LORD delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. ² There was a certain man from Zorah, belonging to a clan of the people of Dan, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren and had no children. ³ The Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and told her, "Look! You are barren and have not had any children but you will conceive and bear a son.

The requirement for their son to be a Nazirite — compare Numbers 6:1-21

⁴ "Now therefore, be careful that you **do not drink any wine or other fermented drink** and do not eat anything unclean. ⁵ For, you see, you will conceive and bear a son. No razor shall be used on his head! For the boy will be a Nazirite, bound by a vow to God **from before his birth**. He will begin to deliver Israel from the power of the Philistines."

⁶ Then the woman came and told her husband: "A Man of God came to me. He looked very awesome, like an angel of God. I did not ask Him where He came from, and He did not tell me His name. ⁷ However, He told me, 'Look! You will conceive and bear a son. Now therefore, **do not drink any wine or other fermented drink** and do not eat anything unclean! For the boy will be a Nazirite, bound to God by a vow **from before his birth** until the day when he dies.'" ⁸ Then Manoah prayed to the LORD: "O LORD, with Your permission, let the Man of God, whom You sent, come to us again, that He may teach us what we are to do with the boy who will be born!"

⁹ God listened to what Manoah asked, and the Angel of God came to the woman again while she was sitting out in the field. However, her husband Manoah was not with her. ¹⁰ The woman ran quickly and told her

husband, "Look! The Man who came to me the other day has appeared to me."

¹¹ Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the Man, he asked Him, "Are You the Man who spoke to my wife?"

He said, "I am."

¹² Manoah said, "So, when what You have said comes true, by what rules shall the boy live and what shall his task be?"

¹³ The Angel of the LORD told Manoah: "Your wife must carefully observe everything that I have told her!

¹⁴ She shall not eat anything that comes from the grapevine or drink any wine or other fermented drink or eat anything unclean! She shall observe everything that I have commanded her!"

¹⁵ Manoah told the Angel of the LORD, "Please let us keep You here that we may prepare a young goat and serve it to you!"

¹⁶ However, the Angel of the LORD told Manoah: "If You keep Me back here, I shall not eat any of your food. However, if you prepare a burnt offering, you shall offer it to the LORD."

For Manoah did not know that He was the Angel of the LORD. ¹⁷ Then Manoah asked the Angel of the LORD, "What is Your name, that we may honour You when what You have said comes true?"

¹⁸ However, the Angel of the LORD told him, "Why do you ask for My name, when it is marvellous?"

¹⁹ So, Manoah took the young goat with the grain-offering and offered it on a rock to the LORD. The Angel did a marvellous thing while Manoah and his wife were watching. ²⁰ While the flame was going up towards heaven from the altar, the Angel of the LORD went up in the flame from the altar. When Manoah and his wife saw that, they bowed down with their faces touching the ground. ²¹ When the Angel of the LORD did not appear again to Manoah and to his wife, Manoah realised that He had been the Angel of the LORD. ²² Manoah told his wife, "We shall certainly die, because we have seen God!"

²³ However, his wife told him: "If the LORD had meant to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain-offering at our hands. He would not have shown us all these things or told us such a thing as this at this time."

²⁴ The woman gave birth to a son and named him "Samson." The boy grew up, and the LORD blessed him. ²⁵ The Spirit of the LORD began to impel him at Mahaneh-Dan,^{*80} between Zorah and Eshtaol.

14

The riddle of Samson at his wedding to a Philistine woman at Timnah

¹ Samson went down to Timnah and at Timnah he saw a young Philistine woman. ² When he came back up he told his father and mother, "I have seen a young Philistine woman in Timnah. Now therefore, get her

⁸⁰ Mahaneh-Dan means, "Camp of Dan."

for me as my wife!”

³ However, his father and mother asked him, “Is there no young woman among your relatives or among all our people, that you should go to get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?”

However, Samson told his father, “Get her for me! For I consider that she is the right one for me.”

⁴ His father and mother did not know that this was from the LORD. For He was looking for an opportunity to deal with the Philistines. At that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel. ⁵ When Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother and came to the vineyards of Timnah, a young lion suddenly came roaring against him. ⁶ Then the Spirit of the LORD came on him strongly and, although he had nothing in his hand, he tore the lion in pieces as he might have torn a young goat. However, he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. ⁷ Then he went down and talked with the woman and Samson thought that she was right for him. ⁸ After this, when he went back to marry her, he turned aside to look at the lion’s carcass. He found that there was a swarm of bees with some honey in the lion’s carcass. ⁹ He scraped some out into his hands and ate as he went along. When he came to his father and mother he gave some to them, and they too ate it. However, he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey out of the lion’s carcass. ¹⁰ When his father went down to the woman, Samson prepared a feast there, for that was what the young men used to do. ¹¹ When the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him. ¹² Samson told them: “Please, let me ask you a riddle! If you find the answer and tell it to me correctly within the seven days of the feast, I shall give you thirty undergarments and thirty colourful garments. ¹³ However, if you cannot tell me the answer, you must give me thirty undergarments and thirty colourful garments!”

They told him, “Tell us your riddle, and let us hear it!”

¹⁴ He told them, “Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet.”

However, for three days they could not give the answer to the riddle. ¹⁵ On the fourth day they told Samson’s wife: “Coax your husband to tell us the answer to the riddle! Otherwise, we shall burn up you and your father’s house. Have you people invited us here to take away our property? Is that not so?”

¹⁶ Samson’s wife wept over him and said: “You only hate me. You do not love me. You have asked my people the riddle but have not told me the answer.”

He told her, “Look! I have not explained it to my father or my mother, so should I explain it to you?”

¹⁷ She kept weeping on him for the seven days that they held the feast, and on the seventh day he told her, because she had been pressing him hard. Then she explained the riddle to her people. ¹⁸ Before sunset on

the seventh day the men of the city asked him, “What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion?”

¹⁹ When the Spirit of the LORD came on him strongly, he went down to Ashkelon and struck down thirty of their men. He took the clothes that he stripped off them and gave the colourful garments to those who had explained the riddle. Then in hot anger he went up to his father’s house. ²⁰ Samson’s wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

15

The leadership of Samson as the judge of Israel and his revenge on the Philistines at Timnah

¹ After some days, at the time of wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat and went to visit his wife. He said, “I shall go in to my wife in her room.”

However, her father would not allow him to go in.

² Her father said: “I really thought that you thoroughly hated her, so I gave her to your companion. Is her younger sister not better than she is? Please, take her instead!”

³ However, Samson told them, “This time the Philistines cannot blame me when I harm them.”

⁴ So, Samson went and caught three hundred foxes. He took torches, turned the foxes tail to tail and put a torch between each pair of tails. ⁵ He set fire to the torches and let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines. He set fire to the stacked grain as well as the standing grain and the olive orchards. ⁶ Then the Philistines asked, “Who has done this?”

They were told, “Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and has given her to his companion.”

So, the Philistines came up and burned her and her father. ⁷ Samson told them, “If this is what you do, I swear that I shall have taken revenge on you before I stop.”

⁸ He struck them down hip and thigh and slaughtered many of them. Then he went down and lived in a space under the overhanging rock at Etam.

The attempt of the Philistines to capture Samson and his slaughter of a thousand Philistines at Lehi

⁹ Then the Philistines went up, camped in Judah and spread out near Lehi. ¹⁰ The men of Judah asked, “Why have you come up against us?”

They answered, “We have come up to tie Samson up, to do to him as he has done to us.”

¹¹ Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cave in the rock at Etam and asked Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?”

He told them, “I have done to them as they have done to me.”

¹² They told him, “We have come down to tie you up, that we may hand you over to the Philistines.”

Samson told them, “Swear to me that you will not attack me yourselves!”

¹³ They told him: “No! We shall only tie you up that

we may hand you over to them. We shall certainly not kill you.”

So, they tied him up with two new ropes and led him up from the rock. ¹⁴ When he approached Lehi, the Philistines came to meet him shouting in triumph. When the Spirit of the LORD came on him strongly, the ropes that were on his arms became like flax threads that have caught fire and the ropes restraining him broke loose from his hands. ¹⁵ He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out, took it in his hand and struck down a thousand men with it. ¹⁶ Then Samson said: “With the jawbone of a donkey, one heap, two heaps! With the jawbone of a donkey I have struck down a thousand men!”

¹⁷ When he had finished saying this, he threw away the jawbone in his hand. That place was called “Ramath-Lehi.”⁸¹

¹⁸ Because Samson was very thirsty, he cried out to the LORD: “You have granted this great victory through me, Your servant but now I shall die of thirst and be brought down by uncircumcised men.”

¹⁹ Then God split open the hollow place in Lehi, and water came out of it. When Samson had drunk, his strength was refreshed, and he revived. That is why the spring was named “En-Hakkore,”⁸² and it is at Lehi to this day.

²⁰ Samson ruled Israel as judge for twenty years during the time of the Philistines.

16

The failure of the Philistines at Gaza to capture Samson

¹ Samson went to Gaza, saw a prostitute there and had relations with her. ² When the people of Gaza were told, “Samson has come here,” they surrounded the place and waited in ambush for him all night at the gate of the city. They kept still all night, saying: “Let us wait until daylight! Then we shall kill him!”

³ However, after Samson had lain there until midnight, he got up at midnight, took hold of the doors of the city-gate and the two gateposts and pulled them out, bar and all. He put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.

Samson's infatuation with Delilah at Gaza and his blinding after he revealed the secret of his strength

⁴ After this, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was “Delilah.” ⁵ The princes of the Philistines went up to her and told her: “Seduce him and find out what makes him so strong, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may tie him up to subdue him! Each of us will give you one thousand, one hundred pieces of silver.”

⁶ So, Delilah told Samson, “Please tell me what makes you so strong, and by what means you may be tied up, to subdue you!”

⁷ Samson told her, “If people were to tie me up with seven animal sinews that are fresh and have not been

dried, then I should become weak and be like any other man.”

⁸ Then the princes of the Philistines brought up to her seven animal sinews that were fresh and had not been dried, and she tied him up with them. ⁹ When some men were hiding in the bedroom with her, she told him, “The Philistines have come against you, Samson!”

However, he tore up the sinews, as a skein of flax fibres is snapped in two when it comes close to a flame. So, the secret of his strength was not discovered.

¹⁰ Then Delilah told Samson: “Look! You have cheated me and told me lies. Now please tell me what might be used to tie you up!”

¹¹ He told her, “If people were to tie me up securely with new ropes that have not been used, then I should become weak and be like any other man.”

¹² So, Delilah took new ropes, tied him up with them and told him, “The Philistines have come against you, Samson!” while some men were hiding in the bedroom. However, he tore the ropes off his arms as if they were threads. ¹³ Then Delilah told Samson: “Until now you have cheated me and told me lies. Tell me with what you might be tied up!”

He told her, “If you were to weave the seven locks of hair on my head with the warp threads of a loom—.”

¹⁴ So, Delilah made his hair tight with the pin of a loom and told him, “The Philistines have come against you, Samson!”

However, he awoke from his sleep and pulled out the pin of the loom and its warp-threads. ¹⁵ She asked him: “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when you do not confide in me? You have deceived me these three times and have not told me what makes you so strong.”

¹⁶ When she pressed him hard with her talking day after day and kept urging him, he grew impatient to the point of death. ¹⁷ He told her the whole secret of his life: “No razor has ever been used on my head. For I have been bound to God by a vow from before my mother gave birth to me. If I were shaved, my strength would leave me, I would be weak and become like any other man.”

¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her the whole secret of his life, she sent word and asked the princes of the Philistines to come. She said: “Come up just once more! For he has told me the whole secret of his life.”

Then the princes of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money with them. ¹⁹ When she had put him to sleep on her knees she called a man and had him shave the seven locks of hair from his head. Then she began to subdue him, and his strength left him.

²⁰ Then she said, “The Philistines have come against you, Samson!”

When he awoke from his sleep, he thought, “I shall go out as at other times, that I may shake myself free.”

⁸¹ Ramath-Lehi means, “The hill of the jawbone.”

⁸² En-Hakkore means, “Spring of the One who calls.”

However, he did not know that the LORD had left him. ²¹ The Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. Then they took him down to Gaza and tied him up with double bronze chains, and he became a grain-grinder in the prison.

Samson's killing of three thousand Philistines and himself at the temple of Dagon

²² However, the hair on his head began to grow again after it had been shaved. ²³ The princes of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon, their god, and to celebrate. They said, "Our god has delivered our enemy Samson into our hands."

²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said: "Our god has delivered our enemy into our hands, the one who was making our land desolate and who has killed many of us."

²⁵ When they were in high spirits, they said, "Call Samson, that he may entertain us!"

They called Samson out of the prison, and he performed before them. They made him stand between the pillars. ²⁶ Samson told the young man who was holding him by the hand, "Let me touch the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them!"

²⁷ The building was full of men and women. All the princes of the Philistines had come there, and there were about three thousand men and women on the roof watching Samson performing to amuse them.

²⁸ Then Samson called to the LORD: "O Lord GOD, please remember me! Please give me strength just this once, O God, that I may with one blow get revenge on the Philistines for my two eyes!"

²⁹ Then Samson felt out for the two middle pillars, on which the house rested. He leaned his weight against them, with his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. ³⁰ Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!"

Then he bent forward with all his strength, and the building fell on the princes and all the people who were in it. So, he killed many more when he died than he killed while he was alive. ³¹ Then his relatives and his father's whole family went down, took him, carried him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had been ruling Israel as judge for twenty years.

17

Micah's idols

¹ There was a man from the hill-country of Ephraim whose name was Micah. ² He told his mother: "Look! I have the one thousand, one hundred pieces of silver that had been taken from you. You spoke a curse about them, and I also heard you speak it. I myself had taken them."

His mother said, "May the LORD bless you, my son!"

³ When he gave the one thousand, one hundred pieces of silver back to his mother, she said: "I have solemnly dedicated the silver from my hand to the LORD, that my son may make a carved image and an image

of cast metal. Now therefore, I shall give it back to you."

⁴ When he gave the money back to his mother, she took two hundred pieces of silver and gave it to a silversmith, and he made it into an idol and an image of cast metal. They were put in Micah's home. ⁵ This man Micah had a shrine and made a priestly garment and figurines. He installed one of his sons, who became his priest.

⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone used to do what he thought was right. ⁷ There was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, belonging to the family of Judah. He was a Levite and was staying there. ⁸ The man left the city of Bethlehem in Judah to stay wherever he could find a place. As he travelled, he came to the house of Micah in the hill-country of Ephraim. ⁹ Micah asked him, "Where do you come from?"

He answered him: "I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah. I am going to stay wherever I can find a place."

¹⁰ Micah told him: "Stay with me and be my father and priest! I shall pay you ten pieces of silver a year, a set of clothes and your keep."

So, the Levite moved in. ¹¹ The Levite agreed to live with the man, and he treated the young man as one of his own sons. ¹² Micah installed the Levite, and the young man became Micah's priest and a member of his household. ¹³ Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will make things go well for me, because I have acquired a Levite as my priest."

18

The migration of the tribe of Dan to Laish — Joshua 19:47-48

¹ In those days there was no king in Israel, and in those days the tribe of the descendants of Dan was looking for a place of their own to live in. For until then they had not yet obtained an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. ² So, the descendants of Dan sent five warriors representing their clans from Zorah and from Eshtaol in their territory, to spy out the land and to explore it. They told them, "Go and explore the land!"

When they came to Micah's house in the hill-country of Ephraim, they stayed there for a night. ³ When they were near the house of Micah, they recognised the voice of the young Levite. So, they went over there and asked him: "Who has brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?"

⁴ He told them: "These are the things that Micah has done for me: he has hired me, and I have become his priest."

⁵ They told him, "Please, inquire of God, that we may find out whether the journey that we are making will be successful!"

⁶ The priest told them, "**Go in peace!** The LORD approves of the journey you are on."

⁷ Then the five men left and arrived at Laish. They saw that the people felt safe living there, quietly and

securely, like the people of Sidon. No one in the land was harming them at all. No one was driving them out or oppressing them. They were far away from the people of Sidon and had no ties with anyone else.

⁸ When they came to their relatives at Zorah and Eshtaol, their relatives asked them, "What do you report?"

⁹ They answered: "Come on, let us go up against them! For we have seen that the land is very good. Are you going to put off doing something? Do not hesitate to leave, to go in and to take possession of the land!" ¹⁰ When you go in, you will come to an unsuspecting people. The land is spacious. Indeed, God has put it into your hands. It is a place where there is no lack of anything on the earth."

¹¹ So, six hundred men of the clans of the people of Dan, equipped with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol. ¹² They went up and set up camp at Kiriath-Jearim in Judah. That is why that place, which is west of Kiriath-Jearim, is called "Mahaneh-Dan" to this day. ¹³ They passed on from there to the hill-country of Ephraim and came to Micah's house. ¹⁴ Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish asked the other members of their tribe: "Do you know that in these houses there are a priestly garment, figurines, an idol and an image cast from metal? Now therefore, consider what you should do!"

¹⁵ They went over there and came to the house of the young Levite, at Micah's home and gave him a friendly greeting. ¹⁶ The six hundred men of the people of Dan, equipped with their weapons of war, were standing at the entrance of the gate. ¹⁷ Then the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up and went inside there. They took the idol, the priestly garment, the figurines and the image of cast metal. The priest was standing at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men who were equipped with weapons of war. ¹⁸ When those other men went into Micah's house and took the idol, the priestly garment, the figurines and the image of cast metal, the priest asked them, "What are you doing?"

¹⁹ They told him: "Keep quiet! Put your hand on your mouth and come with us! Become our father and priest! Is it better for you to be the priest of one man's home or to be the priest of a tribe and clan in Israel?"

²⁰ The priest consented gladly. He took the priestly garment, the figurines and the idol and went along with the people. ²¹ So, they turned away and left, putting their little children, their livestock and their valuable property in front of them. ²² When they had gone some distance from the home of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house were called out and caught up with the people of Dan. ²³ When they called out to the people of Dan, the people of Dan turned around and asked Micah, "What is the matter with you, that you have called up men to fight?"

²⁴ He said: "You have taken my gods, which I have made, and the priest and you are leaving. What, then, do I have left? How, then, can you ask me, 'What is the matter with you?'"

²⁵ The descendants of Dan told him, "Do not let us hear any longer from you or else some hot-tempered men will attack you and your family, and you will lose your lives!"

²⁶ Then the descendants of Dan continued on their way. When Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back home.

The occupation of Laish by the tribe of Dan and their idolatry

²⁷ However, the people of Dan took what Micah had made and the priest who had belonged to him and went on to Laish, to a people who were quiet and unsuspecting. They struck them with the edge of the sword and burned down the city. ²⁸ There was no one to rescue it, because it was far away from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone else. The city was in the valley that belonged to Beth-Rehob. Then the people of Dan rebuilt the city and settled there. ²⁹ They named the city "Dan," after the name of their forefather Dan, who was a son of Israel. However, the original name of the city had been "Laish." ³⁰ Then the people of Dan set up the idol for themselves and Jonathan, the descendant of Gershom, the son of Moses and his sons were the priests of the tribe of the people of Dan down to the time when the country was taken captive. ³¹ So, they set up for themselves the idol that Micah had made, all through the time when the house of God was at Shiloh.

19

A Levite's attempt to fetch back his concubine

¹ In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite was living in a remote part of the hill-country of Ephraim. He took a woman as a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. ² His concubine was unfaithful to him. She left him and went to her father's home at Bethlehem in Judah. After she had been there for four months, ³ her husband started out and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back. He had with him his servant and a pair of donkeys. She took him into her father's house. When the girl's father saw him, he gladly welcomed him. ⁴ His father-in-law, the girl's father, urged him to stay, and he remained with him for three days. So, they ate, drank and spent the night there. ⁵ On the fourth day they got up early in the morning, and he prepared to leave, but the girl's father told his son-in-law: "Refresh yourself with something to eat! After that you may leave."

⁶ So, the two of them sat down, ate and drank together. Then the girl's father told the man, "Please agree to stay tonight and enjoy yourself!"

⁷ When the man got up to leave, his father-in-law urged him strongly, and so he stayed there for another night. ⁸ On the fifth day he arose early in the morning to leave, but the girl's father said, "Please, refresh

yourself and stay on until the afternoon!"

So, the two of them ate together. ⁹ When the man, his concubine and the man's servant got up to leave, his father-in-law, the girl's father, told him: "Look! Now the day has dwindled toward evening. Please, spend the night here! Look! The day is coming to an end. Stay for the night and enjoy yourself! Early tomorrow morning you people can get up and leave on your way back to your tent."

¹⁰ However, the man refused to stay for another night. When he started out and left, he arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a pair of saddled donkeys, and his concubine was also with him. ¹¹ When they were near Jebus and the day was nearly over, the servant told his master, "Come now! Let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites and stay there for the night!"

¹² However, his master told him: "We shall not turn aside into the city of foreigners. They do not belong to the Israelites. Instead, we shall go across to Gibeah."

¹³ He told his servant, "Come! Let us approach one of these places, that we may spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah!"

¹⁴ So, they went past and continued. The sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. ¹⁵ They turned aside there, to stay in Gibeah for the night. He went in and sat down in the open square of the city, but no one took them into his home to spend the night. ¹⁶ Just then an old man was coming from his work in the field in the evening. Although the man was from the hill-country of Ephraim, he was staying in Gibeah. The men of the place were Benjaminites. ¹⁷ When he looked up, he saw the traveller in the open square of the city. The old man asked, "Where are you going, and where do you come from?"

¹⁸ He told him: "We are on our way from Bethlehem in Judah to a remote part of the hill-country of Ephraim. I came from there and went to Bethlehem in Judah. I am going to the house of the LORD, but no one has taken me into his house. ¹⁹ We have straw and feed for our donkeys. We, your servants, also have bread and wine with us for your maidservant, the young man and myself. We do not lack anything."

²⁰ The old man said: "Peace be to you! However, let me supply all you need! You simply must not spend the night in the open square!"

²¹ So, he took him into his house and fed the donkeys with mash. After they had washed their feet, they ate and drank.

The crime of the Benjaminites at Gibeah

²² While they were enjoying themselves, suddenly some wicked men of the city surrounded the house and kept pushing each other against the door. They told the old man, the master of the house, "Bring out the man who has come into your house, that we may have relations with him!"

²³ However, the master of the house went out to them

and told them: "No, my fellow-countrymen, do not act so wickedly! Please, since this man has come into my home, do not commit this serious sin! ²⁴ Look! Here are my virgin daughter and the man's concubine. Please, let me bring them out now! Violate them and do to them whatever you wish! However, do not do this shameful thing to this man!"

²⁵ However, the men refused to listen to him. Then the man took hold of his concubine and made her go out to them. They raped her and abused her all night until the morning. When the dawn began to break, they let her go. ²⁶ At daybreak, the woman came and fell at the door of the man's house where her master was and lay there until daylight. ²⁷ When her master got up in the morning, opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way, there was his concubine lying at the entrance of the house, with her hands on the threshold. ²⁸ He told her, "Get up! Let us be going!"

However, there was no answer. Then he put her on his donkey, set out and went home.

The horrified reaction in Israel

²⁹ When he entered his house, he took a knife, took hold of his concubine, cut her into twelve pieces, limb by limb and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. ³⁰ Everyone who saw it kept saying: "Such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day when the Israelites came up out of the land of Egypt until this day! Think about it! Decide! Speak up!"

20

The determination of the other Israelite tribes to punish the tribe of Benjamin

¹ Then all the Israelites from Dan to Beer-Sheba and from the land of Gilead came out and the congregation assembled as one man before the LORD at Mizpah. ² The leaders of all the people of all the tribes of Israel took their positions in the assembly of the people of God. There were four hundred thousand foot-soldiers who could draw a sword. ³ The people of Benjamin heard that the Israelites had gone up to Mizpah. The Israelites said, "Tell us how this evil thing has happened!"

⁴ The Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, answered: "I came with my concubine to Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to stay there for the night.

⁵ The citizens of Gibeah came to attack me. They surrounded the house against me by night. They meant to kill me but raped my concubine, and she died. ⁶ So, I took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces and sent some of her to every region of Israel's inheritance. For they have committed an infamous and shameful act in Israel. ⁷ Look, all you Israelites! Speak up and give your advice here!"

⁸ All the people rose up as one man and said: "None of us will go to his tent and none of us will return to his house. ⁹ Now therefore, this is what we shall do to Gibeah: we shall go up against it as is determined by

lot. ¹⁰ We shall take ten out of every hundred men from all the tribes of Israel, a hundred from a thousand and a thousand from ten thousand, to bring provisions for the army. Then, when the army arrives at Gibeah in Benjamin, they will repay Gibeah of Benjamin for the whole outrageous thing that they have committed in Israel.”

¹¹ So, all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united together as if they were one man.

Benjamin's support for Gibeah

¹² Then the tribes of Israel sent men throughout the tribe of Benjamin, to ask: “What is this evil that that has been committed among you? ¹³ Now therefore, surrender those wicked men in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and rid Israel of the evil!”

Repeated defeats of the Israelites by the tribe of Benjamin

However, the Benjaminites refused to listen to what their fellow-Israelites were saying. ¹⁴ Instead, the people of Benjamin gathered out of their cities to Gibeah to go out and fight against the other Israelites.

¹⁵ On that day the people of Benjamin mustered twenty-six thousand swordsmen of their cities and in addition they mustered seven hundred chosen men from those who were living in Gibeah. ¹⁶ Among all this army there were seven hundred chosen men who were left-handed. Each of them could sling a stone at a hair without missing. ¹⁷ The men of Israel, apart from Benjamin, mustered four hundred thousand swordsmen. All these were fighting men. ¹⁸ The Israelites proceeded up to Bethel and inquired of God, “Who should go up the first time for us to fight against the people of Benjamin?”

The LORD said, “Judah shall go up first!”

¹⁹ The next morning the Israelites rose and pitched camp against Gibeah. ²⁰ The men of Israel went out to fight against Benjamin and arranged their men in battle order against them at Gibeah. ²¹ The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of Israel. ²² However, the people, the men of Israel, showed themselves courageous and again formed the battle line in the position where they had formed up on the first day. ²³ Then the Israelites went up and wept before the LORD until the evening. They inquired of the LORD: “Shall we come to close quarters again to fight against our fellow-countrymen, the people of Benjamin?”

The LORD said, “Go up against them!”

²⁴ The Israelites advanced against the people of Benjamin on the second day. ²⁵ Benjamin came out of Gibeah against them on the second day and struck down to the ground eighteen thousand more men of the Israelites. All these were swordsmen. ²⁶ Then all the Israelites, the whole army, went up to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the LORD, went without food that day until the evening and offered burnt offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD. ²⁷ Then the Israelites inquired of the LORD. (In those days the

Ark of the Covenant of God was there, ²⁸ and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was serving before it in those days). They asked, “Shall we go out once more to battle against our fellow-countrymen, the people of Benjamin, or shall we refrain?”

The LORD said, “Go up! For tomorrow I shall deliver them into your hands.”

The near-annihilation of the tribe of Benjamin

²⁹ Then Israel set men in ambushes around Gibeah.

³⁰ The Israelites went up against the people of Benjamin on the third day and arranged their battle order against Gibeah, as they had done on the previous times. ³¹ When the people of Benjamin came out against the people they were drawn away from the city. As on the previous occasions they began to strike and kill some of the people of Israel in the highways. One of these goes up to Bethel, and another to Gibeah. About thirty men of Israel fell in the open country. ³² The people of Benjamin said, “They are defeated before us, as at the first.”

However, the Israelites said, “Let us retreat and draw them away from the city onto the highways!”

³³ All the men of Israel moved out of their places and arranged their battle line at Baal-Tamar. Then the men of Israel who were in ambush broke loose from their place on the exposed side of Gibeah. ³⁴ Then ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel came to a place opposite Gibeah, and the fighting was so fierce that the Benjaminites did not realise how near calamity had come. ³⁵ The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and the Israelites struck down twenty-five thousand, one hundred men of Benjamin that day. All of these were swordsmen. ³⁶ Then the people of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to Benjamin, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. ³⁷ The men in ambush had quickly dashed out against Gibeah, spread out and struck down the entire city with the edge of the sword. ³⁸ The arranged signal that the men in the ambush would give to the other men of Israel was that they would send up a big column of smoke from the city. ³⁹ Then the men of Israel would turn back to fight. Benjamin had begun to inflict about thirty casualties on men of Israel. For they had said, “Surely, they have been thoroughly defeated before us, as in the first battle.”

⁴⁰ However, when the column of smoke, which was the fire signal, had begun to rise out of the city, the Benjaminites turned back and saw that the whole city was going up to the sky in smoke. ⁴¹ When the men of Israel turned around, the men of Benjamin were terrified, because they realised that calamity had overtaken them. ⁴² Therefore, they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness. However, the battle caught up with them. The men of Israel kept striking down whoever joined them out of the

cities. ⁴³ They surrounded the men of Benjamin, pursued them to places where they were stopping to rest and trod them down on the eastern side of Gibeah. ⁴⁴ Eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell. All of them had been brave fighting men. ⁴⁵ The other Benjaminites turned and fled towards the wilderness to the Rock of Rimmon, but the Israelites cut down five thousand of the stragglers on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly as far as Gidom and struck down two thousand more of them. ⁴⁶ So, the total of the men of Benjamin who fell that day was twenty-five thousand swordsmen. All of these had been brave fighting men. ⁴⁷ However, six hundred men turned, fled toward the wilderness to the Rock of Rimmon and stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months. ⁴⁸ The men of Israel turned back against the rest of the people of Benjamin from the cities and struck them with the edge of the sword. They struck down both healthy people and livestock and everything else that could be found. They also set on fire all the cities to which they came.

21

The Israelites' regret that one of their tribes had been destroyed

¹ The men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah: "None of us shall give his daughter in marriage to anyone from Benjamin!"

² When the people came to Bethel and sat there before God until evening, they raised their voices and wept bitterly. ³ They said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, why has this happened in Israel, that today one tribe is missing in Israel?"

⁴ The next day the people rose early, built an altar there and offered burnt offerings and peace-offerings.

⁵ The Israelites asked, "Is there anyone from all the tribes of Israel who has failed to come up in the assembly before the LORD?"

For they had taken a solemn oath about anyone who failed to come up before the LORD to Mizpah: "He shall certainly be put to death!"

⁶ However, the Israelites felt sorry for their close relatives, the men of Benjamin and said: "Today one tribe has been cut off from Israel. ⁷ What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since we ourselves have sworn by the LORD that we shall not give them any of our daughters in marriage?"

⁸ Then they asked, "Is there anyone from the tribes of Israel who has not come up before the LORD at Mizpah?"

They discovered that no one had come to the camp for the assembly from Jabesh-Gilead. ⁹ When the people were counted, they found that none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead was there. ¹⁰ The congregation sent twelve-thousand of their fighting men there. They ordered them: "Go and strike down the inhabitants of

Jabesh-Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and the children. ¹¹ This is what you shall do: you shall destroy every male and every woman who has had relations with a male!"

¹² They found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead four hundred young women who were virgins, who had not had sexual relations with a male and brought them to the camp at Shiloh in the land of Canaan.

¹³ Then the whole congregation sent word to the people of Benjamin who were at the Rock of Rimmon with a declaration of peace to them. ¹⁴ So, the men of Benjamin came back at that time and were given the women whom the Israelites had spared from the women of Jabesh-Gilead. However, they had not found enough for them. ¹⁵ The people felt sorry for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a gap in the tribes of Israel. ¹⁶ Then the elders of the congregation asked, "What shall we do to provide wives for those who are left, now that the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?"

The stratagem to provide wives for the surviving men of Benjamin to save the tribe from extinction

¹⁷ They said: "The survivors of Benjamin must have an inheritance, that a tribe may not be eliminated from Israel! ¹⁸ However, we ourselves cannot give them any of our daughters to marry."

For the Israelites had sworn, "Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to a Benjaminite!"

¹⁹ They said: "Look! Every year there is a feast of the LORD at Shiloh to the north of Bethel on the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem and to the south of Lebonah."

²⁰ Therefore, they instructed the people of Benjamin: "Go and lie in ambush in the vineyards, ²¹ and watch! If you see that the girls of Shiloh have come out to take part in the dances, come out of the vineyards, and each of you should seize a girl of Shiloh and take her away to the land of Benjamin to be his wife! ²² When their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, we shall tell them, 'Do us a kindness by providing the girls to them. Truly, we did not get wives for each of them during the war. As it is, you yourselves are not incurring guilt by having given the girls to them at this time.'"

²³ That is what the people of Benjamin did. While the girls were dancing, they caught and forcibly carried off enough of them for their number, to be their wives. Then they left, returned to their inheritance, rebuilt the cities and lived in them. ²⁴ At that time the Israelites left that place. Each one went to his tribe and clan. Everyone went out from there to his own inheritance. ²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what he thought was right.

RUTH

1

The move of the family of Elimelech from Bethlehem to Moab and Naomi's bereavement

¹ In the days when the judges were ruling, there was a famine in the land. A man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to stay as a foreigner in the country of Moab. ² The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. As descendants of Ephrathah they came from Bethlehem in Judah to the country of Moab and were staying there. ³ Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left alone with her two sons. ⁴ They married women from Moab. The name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth. They continued to live there for about ten years. ⁵ Then both Mahlon and Chilion died too, and Naomi was left alone, without her two children and without her husband.

The return of Naomi from Moab

⁶ Then Naomi and her daughters-in-law started out on the way back from the country of Moab, because while still in Moab she had heard that the LORD had taken care of His people and had given them food.

⁷ Therefore, she left the place where she had been staying, and her two daughters-in-law went with her. They walked along the road back to the land of Judah.

Naomi's appeal to her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab

⁸ However, Naomi told her two daughters-in-law: "Go! Return, each of you, to your mother's home! May the LORD be kind to you, as you have been kind to those who are now dead and to me! ⁹ May the LORD grant that each of you will find security in the home of her husband!"

Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. ¹⁰ They told her, "No! We shall go back with you to your people."

¹¹ However, Naomi said: "Go back, my daughters! Why should you come with me? Do I have any more sons in my womb, that they should become your husbands? ¹² Go back, my daughters! Leave me, because I am too old to have another husband. If I should say, 'I still have hope even if I had a husband tonight, and, even if I gave birth to sons, ¹³ would you wait until they grew up and remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters! It is certainly more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"

¹⁴ Then they began to weep aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth firmly clung to her. ¹⁵ Then Naomi said: "Look! Your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Go back after your sister-in-law!"

Ruth's commitment to Naomi when Naomi returned to Bethlehem

¹⁶ However, Ruth answered: "Do not urge me to leave you or to turn back and stop following you! For where you go, I shall go, and where you lodge, I shall lodge.

Your people will be my people, and your God my God. ¹⁷ I shall die in the place where you die and be buried there. May the LORD treat me harshly and even worse if anything except death separates you from me!"

¹⁸ When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

The arrival of Naomi in Bethlehem

¹⁹ So, the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived at Bethlehem, the whole city was excited because of them. The women asked, "Is this Naomi?"

²⁰ She told them, "Do not call me 'Naomi!' ⁸³ Call me 'Mara!' ⁸⁴ For the Almighty has been treating me very bitterly. ²¹ I was full when I went away, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why do you call me 'Naomi,' when the LORD has testified against me and when the Almighty has injured me?"

²² When Naomi had come back, together with Ruth, the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who was migrating from the country of Moab, they arrived at Bethlehem when the barley harvest was beginning.

2

The meeting of Ruth with Boaz and her experience of his kindness

¹ Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a wealthy landowner belonging to the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. ² Ruth, the Moabite, asked Naomi, "Let me go to the field and pick up the leftover heads of grain behind someone who may be kind to me!"

Naomi told her, "Go, my daughter!"

³ So, she left and went and gleaned in the field behind the reapers. She happened to come to the plot of ground in the country that belonged to Boaz, who was a member of the clan of Elimelech. ⁴ Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem. He greeted the reapers: "May the LORD be with you!"

They answered him: "May the LORD bless you!"

⁵ Then Boaz asked the foreman of his reapers, "Whose young woman is this?"

⁶ The foreman of the reapers answered: "She is the young Moabite woman who has come back from the country of Moab with Naomi. ⁷ She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers!' So, she has come and has been on her feet from morning until now, except for a short rest in the shelter."

Boaz's kindness to Ruth

⁸ Then Boaz told Ruth: "You have heard me, my daughter, have you not? Do not go to glean in another field or leave this one! Instead, stay close to my servant girls here! ⁹ Keep your eyes on the field that they are reaping and follow the servant girls! Have I not

⁸³ Naomi means, "Pleasant."

⁸⁴ Mara means, "Bitter."

ordered the men servants not to touch you? When you are thirsty, go to the water jars and drink some of the water that the men servants draw!”

¹⁰ Then she fell on her face, bowing down to the ground and asked him, “Why have you been so kind to me, that you take notice of me, since I am a foreign woman?”

¹¹ However, Boaz answered her: “I have been fully informed about all that you have been doing for your mother-in-law since your husband died and that you have left your father and mother and your native land and have come to a people that you had not known before. ¹² May the LORD repay you for what you have been doing! May a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to look for refuge!”

¹³ Then she said: “May you continue to be kind to me, my master! For you have stilled my anxiety and have encouraged me, your maid servant, although I am not like one of your other maid servants.”

¹⁴ At mealtime Boaz told her, “Come closer here, eat some bread and dip your piece of bread into the sour wine!”

So, she sat beside the reapers, and he passed some roasted grain to her. She had all she wanted to eat and had some left over. ¹⁵ When she got up to glean, Boaz instructed his men servants: “Even if she gleans among the sheaves, do not reprimand her! ¹⁶ Yes, actually pull some stalks of grain out of the bundles for her, leave them for her to glean and do not scold her!”

¹⁷ So, she gleaned in the field until the evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it amounted to about one bushel and a third of barley. ¹⁸ Then she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. Ruth also brought out the food that she had left over after she had had enough to eat and gave it to Naomi. ¹⁹ Her mother-in-law asked her: “Where have you been gleaning today? Where have you been working? May the man who was considerate to you be blessed!”

So, Ruth told her mother-in-law with which man she had been working. She said, “The name of the man with whom I have been working today is ‘Boaz’.”

Naomi's information to Ruth about Boaz

²⁰ Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by the LORD, because he has not ceased being kind to the living and the dead!” Naomi also told her, “The man is a close relative of ours, one of our family-redeemers.”

²¹ Ruth, the Moabitess, said, “He even told me, ‘You must keep close to my men servants until they have finished my whole harvest!’”

²² Naomi told Ruth, her daughter-in-law: “It is good, my daughter, that you should go out with his servant girls. Then no one will molest you in another field.”

²³ So, Ruth stayed close to the servant girls of Boaz and gleaned until the end of the barley harvest and the wheat harvest, while she lived with her mother-in-law.

3

Naomi's plan for Ruth's marriage

¹ Then Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, asked her: “My daughter, should I not try to find a secure place for you that you may be well provided for? ² Now therefore, is not Boaz, with whose servant girls you have been, a relative of ours? Look! He is winnowing barley at the threshing floor tonight. ³ Wash, put on some perfume, put on your good clothes and go down to the threshing floor! However, do not let the man know that you are there until he has finished eating and drinking! ⁴ When he lies down, notice the place where he is lying! Then go in, uncover the place at his feet and lie down there! He will tell you what you should do.”

⁵ Ruth answered her: “I shall do everything that you say.”

The meeting of Ruth and Boaz at the threshing floor

⁶ She went down to the threshing floor and did exactly as her mother-in-law had commanded her. ⁷ When Boaz had eaten and drunk and was feeling contented, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came quietly, uncovered a place at his feet and lay down. ⁸ At midnight the man was startled, felt around and discovered that a woman was lying in a place at his feet. ⁹ He asked, “Who are you?”

She answered: “I am Ruth, your maidservant. Spread the skirt of your garment out over your maidservant! For you are a family-redeemer.”

¹⁰ He said: “May the LORD bless you, my daughter! You have made this last kindness of yours greater than the first, in that you have not gone after young men, either poor or rich. ¹¹ Now therefore, my daughter, do not be afraid! I shall do for you all that you are asking. For everyone at the city-gate of my people knows that you are a worthy woman. ¹² Now therefore, although it is true that I am a family-redeemer, there is another family-redeemer who is a closer relative than I am. ¹³ Stay here tonight! In the morning, if he is willing to redeem you, that is fine. Let him redeem you! However, if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as surely as the LORD lives, I myself shall redeem you. Lie down until the morning!”

¹⁴ So, she lay in the place at his feet until the morning. However, she got up before any person could recognise another. Boaz said, “Do not let it be known that you, a woman, have come to the threshing floor!”

¹⁵ He also said, “Bring the shawl that you are wearing and hold it out!”

The return of Ruth to Bethlehem

Then she held it out, and he measured out six measures of grain and placed it on her. Then he went into the city. ¹⁶ When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, “Is that you, my daughter?”

Then she told her all that the man had done for her. ¹⁷ She also said: “He has given me these six measures of grain. For he told me: ‘Do not go to your mother-

in-law empty-handed!”

¹⁸ She replied: “Wait here, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out! For the man will not waste time but will settle the matter today.”

4

Boaz' arrangements to marry Ruth as a kinsman-redeemer according to the levirate custom — Deuteronomy 25:5-10

¹ Boaz went up to the city-gate and sat down there. When he saw the family-redeemer whom he had mentioned going past, Boaz said, “Come over here, my friend, and sit down!”

So, he went over and sat down. ² Boaz took ten of the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here!”

Then they sat down. ³ Then he told the family-redeemer: “Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, has put up for sale the piece of land that belongs to our relative Elimelech. ⁴ So, I thought that I would tell you about it and say, ‘Buy it in the presence of those who are sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people!’ If you are willing to redeem it, redeem it! However, if you are not willing, tell me, that I may know! For no one has a greater claim to redeem it than you have, and I come after you.”

Then he said, “I shall redeem it.”

⁵ Boaz said: “On the day when you acquire the field from Naomi, you have also acquired it from Ruth, the Moabitess, the widow of the dead man, to preserve the name of the dead man on his inheritance.”

⁶ Then the family-redeemer said: “I cannot redeem it for myself. If I did, I would spoil my own inheritance. Take over my right to redeem it yourself! For I cannot redeem it.”

⁷ This had been the former custom in Israel for the redemption and transfer of property: To confirm any transaction, one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other man. This was the way a declaration used to be made in Israel. ⁸ So, when the family-redeemer told Boaz, “Buy it for yourself!” he took off his sandal. ⁹ Then Boaz told the elders and all the people: “You are witnesses today that I have bought from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. ¹⁰ I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, as my wife, to preserve the name of the dead man on his inheritance, that the name of the dead man may not be cut off from his relatives or from the city-gate of his hometown. You are witnesses today.”

¹¹ Then all the people who were at the city-gate, including the elders, said: “We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom have built up the family of Israel! May you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem! ¹² From the children that the LORD gives you through this young woman, may your family be like the family of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah!

The marriage of Boaz and Ruth and the birth of David's ancestor Obed

¹³ So, Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. He had relations with her, and the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi: “Blessed be the LORD, who today has not left you without a family-redeemer! May the child's name be famous in Israel! ¹⁵ May he be one who renews your life and provides for you in your old age! For he is the child of your daughter-in-law, who loves you, and who is better to you than seven sons.”

¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child, laid him on her lap and became his nurse. ¹⁷ The women in the neighbourhood gave him a name. They said, “A son has been born to Naomi,” and they named him “Obed.”⁸⁵ He became the father of Jesse, who was the father of David.

The genealogy of David — 1 Chronicles 2:5-15, Matthew 1:2-6, Luke 3:31-33.

¹⁸ This is the family-line of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron. ¹⁹ Hezron was the father of Ram. Ram was the father of Amminadab. ²⁰ Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was the father of Salmon. ²¹ Salmon was the father of Boaz. ²² Boaz was the father of Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse, and Jesse was the father of David.

⁸⁵ Obed means, “Servant (of God).”

1 SAMUEL

1

The birth of Samuel

¹ There was a certain man of Ramathaim-Zophim in the hill-country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah. He was the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph. He belonged to Ephraim. ² He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah,^{*86} and the name of the other was Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. ³ This man used to go up from his city every year to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh. There the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD. ⁴ Whenever the day came when Elkanah offered a sacrifice, he used to give portions of it to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. ⁵ However, he used to give Hannah one portion before the others, because he loved Hannah, even though the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶ Her rival used to provoke her cruelly to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb. ⁷ This is what used to happen year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the LORD, Peninnah used to provoke Hannah, so that Hannah used to cry and would not eat.

⁸ Elkanah, her husband, asked her: "Hannah, why are you crying? Why are you not eating and why are you downhearted? Do I not mean more to you than ten sons?"

⁹ After they had finished eating and drinking at Shiloh, Hannah got up. Eli the priest was sitting on his chair near a doorpost of the Temple of the LORD.

¹⁰ She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD while she was weeping copiously. ¹¹ She made this vow: "LORD of hosts, if **You really look at the misery of Your maidservant**, remember me and do not forget Your maidservant but give Your maidservant a male child, then I shall give him to the LORD all his life. No razor will be used on his head."

¹² While Hannah kept on praying for a long time before the LORD, Eli was watching her mouth.

¹³ Hannah was praying silently. Only her lips were trembling. Her voice could not be heard. Therefore, Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴ Eli asked her: "How long will you go on acting like a drunk? Get rid of your wine!"

¹⁵ Hannah answered: "No, my master. I am a deeply troubled woman. I have not been drinking wine or other strong drink but have been pouring out my heart before the LORD. ¹⁶ Do not regard me, your maidservant, as a wicked woman! For until now I have been speaking because of my great concern and grief."

¹⁷ Then Eli answered: "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant your request, which you have been ask-

ing from Him!"

¹⁸ She said, "May you continue to regard your maidservant kindly!"

When the woman went on her way and ate, her face was not downcast any longer. ¹⁹ They rose early in the morning and worshipped before the LORD. Then they returned and arrived home at Ramah. Elkanah had relations with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. ²⁰ In the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him "Samuel,"^{*87} saying, "Because I asked the LORD for him."

²¹ The man Elkanah went up with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the LORD and to fulfil his vow. ²² However, Hannah did not go up. For she told her husband: "As soon as the boy is weaned, I shall bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the LORD and may always live there."

²³ Elkanah her husband told her: "Do what you think is best for you! Wait until you have weaned him! Only, may the LORD make His Word come true!"

Hannah's dedication of Samuel to God

The woman stayed and nursed her son until she weaned him. ²⁴ When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with three bulls, forty litres of flour and a skin of wine. She brought the boy to the house of the LORD at Shiloh while he was still young. ²⁵ When they had slaughtered the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. ²⁶ Hannah said: "With your permission, as surely as you live, my master, I am the woman who was standing near you here, praying to the LORD. ²⁷ I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me my petition, which I made to Him. ²⁸ I have also lent him to the LORD. All his life he is lent to the LORD."

Then Samuel worshipped the LORD there.

2

Hannah's prayer — compare Luke 1:46-55

¹ Hannah prayed:

"My heart has been rejoicing in the LORD. In the LORD my horn has been lifted high. My mouth has opened wide over my enemies. For I rejoice in Your salvation.

² "There is no one holy like the LORD. For there is no one besides You, and there is no rock like our God.

³ "Do not keep talking so haughtily! Let no insolent haughtiness come out of your mouths! For the LORD is a God who knows and is the One who examines actions.

⁴ "The battle bows of mighty men have been filled with terror, but those who stumbled have been strapping strength on themselves.

⁵ "Those who were well fed have hired themselves out

⁸⁶ Hannah means, "Gracious."

⁸⁷ Samuel means, "Name of God."

for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to be hungry. Even she who was childless has given birth to seven children, but she who has had many children has wasted away.

⁶ “The LORD kills and makes alive. He sends people down to the abode of the dead and raises them up.

⁷ “The LORD dispossesses and makes rich. He brings low and also exalts.

⁸ “He raises up poor people from the dust. He lifts needy people up from the ash heap, to make him sit with nobles and makes them inherit a splendid throne. For the pillars of the earth belong to the LORD. He has set the world on them.

⁹ “He will guard the feet of His faithful people, but wicked people will be silenced in darkness. For by strength no one will prevail.

¹⁰ “Those who oppose the LORD will be struck down. He will send thunder against them in the heavens. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to His king and **exalt** the horn of His Anointed One.”

The disobedience of Eli's sons

¹¹ Then Elkanah went home to Ramah. However, the boy ministered to the LORD in the presence of Eli the priest. ¹² Nevertheless, the sons of Eli were wicked. They did not know the LORD. ¹³ This is what the priests used to do to the people: Whenever anyone was offering a sacrifice, and while the meat was boiling, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand. ¹⁴ He used to plunge it into the pan, kettle, cauldron or pot. The priest used to take for himself whatever the fork brought up. This is what they used to do at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. ¹⁵ Moreover, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant used to come and tell the man who was sacrificing: “Give some meat for the priest to roast! For he will not accept boiled meat from you but only raw meat.”

¹⁶ If the man told him, “They should really burn the fat first: then take whatever you want!” the priest's servant used to say, “No, you must give it now! Otherwise, I shall take it by force.”

¹⁷ The LORD regarded the sin of the young men as very serious. For the men treated the offering of the LORD with contempt.

The service of the boy Samuel at Shiloh

¹⁸ Samuel was ministering before the LORD as a boy, wearing a linen priestly apron. ¹⁹ His mother used to make a little robe for him and take it up to him each year when she came up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. ²⁰ Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, “May the LORD give you children from this woman in return for the request that she made to the LORD!”

Then they would go back home. ²¹ Indeed, the LORD treated Hannah kindly, and she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

Eli's rebuke to his sons

²² When Eli was very old, he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and that they used to have relations with the women who were serving at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ²³ He asked them: “Why do you do such things? For I keep hearing about your wicked deeds from all these people.

²⁴ No, my sons! For the rumour that I hear the people of the LORD spreading is not good. ²⁵ If someone sins against another man, God will arbitrate about him. However, if someone sins against the LORD, who will pray for him?”

Nevertheless, they would not listen to what their father said. For the LORD wanted to put them to death.

²⁶ The boy Samuel continued to grow up, and the LORD was kind to him, and people were too.

A prophecy about the rejection of Eli's family from the Aaronic priesthood

²⁷ Then a man of God came to Eli and told him: “This is what the LORD has said, ‘Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the family of your forefather when they were subject to the dynasty of Pharaoh in Egypt?’

²⁸ Did I not choose your forefather out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to go up to My altar, to burn incense and to wear a priestly garment in My presence? Did I not also give to the family of your forefather all My offerings, which the people of Israel make by fire? ²⁹ Why, then, do you scorn My sacrifices and My offerings, which I commanded at My dwelling, and why do you honour your sons more than Me by fattening yourselves on the best parts of every offering of My people Israel?’ ³⁰ Therefore, the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: ‘I promised that your family and the family of your forefather would go in and out before Me for ever.’ However, now the LORD declares: “Far be it from Me! Rather, I shall honour those who honour Me, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed. ³¹ Look! The days are coming when I shall cut off your strength and the strength of your father's family, so that there will be no old man in your family. ³² You will see distress in My dwelling. Although God will treat Israel well, there will never be an old man in your family. ³³ Anyone of yours whom I shall not cut off from My altar will only make your eyes go blank and make your heart feeble. In addition, all your next generation will die in the prime of life. ³⁴ What will happen to your two sons Hophni and Phinehas will be a sign to you. Both of them will die on the same day. ³⁵ Then I shall raise up for Myself a faithful priest. He will do what is in My heart and in My mind. I shall establish a lasting family for him, and he will live before My anointed one for ever. ³⁶ Everyone who is left in your family will come and bow down before him for a piece of silver and a crust of bread. He will ask, “Please associate me with one of the priestly positions, that I may eat a little food!””

1 Samuel

God's Message to Samuel about Eli's priestly family

¹ The boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The Word of the LORD was rare in those days. Visions were infrequent. ² At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow so dim that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. ³ The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the Temple of the LORD, where the Ark of God was. ⁴ Then the LORD called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am."

⁵ He ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. For you have called me."

However, Eli said, "I have not called you. Go back and lie down!"

So, Samuel went and lay down. ⁶ Then the LORD called again, "Samuel!"

Samuel got up, went to Eli and said, "Here I am. For you have called me."

Eli answered: "I have not called you, my son. Go back and lie down!"

⁷ Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the Word of the LORD was not yet being revealed to him.

⁸ Then the LORD called Samuel again, a third time. Samuel got up, went to Eli and said: "Here I am. For you have called me."

Then Eli realised that the LORD was calling the boy.

⁹ Therefore, Eli told Samuel: "Go and lie down! If He calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening!'"

So, Samuel went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰ Then the LORD came, stood there and called as He had called at the other times: "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel answered, "Speak! For Your servant is listening."

¹¹ Then the LORD told Samuel: "Look! I am about to do something in Israel and the two ears of everyone who hears about it will tingle. ¹² On that day, I shall carry out against Eli everything I have spoken about his family, from the beginning to the end. ¹³ I have told him that I shall condemn his family for ever for the guilt about which he has known. For, although his sons were calling a curse down on themselves, he did not restrain them. ¹⁴ This is why I have sworn concerning Eli's family that no sacrifice or offering will certainly ever atone for the guilt of Eli's family."

¹⁵ Samuel lay down until the morning. Then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. However, Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision.

¹⁶ Then Eli summoned Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son!"

Samuel answered, "Here I am."

¹⁷ Eli asked: "What is the Message that He has told you? Please, do not hide it from me! May God treat you harshly and even worse if you hide anything from me out of the Message that He has spoken to you!"

¹⁸ So, Samuel told him everything and did not hide anything from him. Eli answered: "He is the LORD.

Let Him do what He thinks is right!"

¹⁹ As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and did not let any of His Words remain unfulfilled.

²⁰ All Israel from Dan to Beer-Sheba knew that Samuel was a reliable prophet of the LORD. ²¹ The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh. For the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh through the Word of the LORD.

4

¹ The Word of Samuel reached all Israel.

The defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines and the capture of the Ark of the Covenant

Israel went out to fight against the Philistines. They camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines camped at Aphek. ² The Philistines arranged their battle-line against Israel. When the fighting finished, the Philistines had defeated Israel and had struck down about four thousand men in their battle-line on the field.

³ When the soldiers came to the camp, the elders of Israel asked: "Why has the LORD brought defeat on us today before the Philistines? Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD here to us from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies!"

⁴ The people sent men to Shiloh and brought from there the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned between the cherubim. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the Ark of the Covenant of God. ⁵ When the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the earth rang with echoes.

⁶ When the Philistines heard the sound of the shouting, they asked, "What does this sound of loud shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?"

When they found out that the Ark of the LORD had come into the camp, ⁷ the Philistines were afraid. Indeed, they said, "A god has come into the camp." They said: "How terrible for us! For nothing like this has ever happened before. ⁸ How terrible for us! Who will deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians down with every kind of plague in the wilderness. ⁹ Show your courage and be men, Philistines, that you may not become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been your slaves! Be men and fight!"

¹⁰ So, the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and everyone fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great. Israel lost thirty thousand foot-soldiers. ¹¹ The Ark of God was captured and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

The death of Eli

¹² A man of Benjamin ran from the battle-line and arrived at Shiloh on the same day, with his clothes torn and with soil on his head. ¹³ Just when he arrived, Eli was sitting on his chair next to the road watching. For his heart was trembling because of the Ark of God. When the man entered the city to tell the news,

the entire city cried out. ¹⁴ When Eli heard the sound of the outcry, he asked, "What does the sound of this uproar mean?"

Then the man came quickly and told Eli. ¹⁵ Eli was ninety-eight years old, and his eyes were motionless, so that he could not see. ¹⁶ The man told Eli: "I am the one who has come from the line of battle. I myself have fled from the line of battle today."

Eli asked, "What happened, my son?"

¹⁷ The messenger replied: "Israel has fled before the Philistines. There has also been a great defeat among the soldiers. Your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead and the Ark of God has been captured."

¹⁸ When he mentioned the Ark of God, Eli fell over backwards from his chair at the side of the city gate. His neck was broken, and he died. For the man was old and heavy. He had been ruling Israel as judge for forty years. ¹⁹ His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and about to give birth. When she heard the news that the Ark of God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bent over and gave birth, for her labour-pains came on her. ²⁰ About the time when she died, the women who were attending her told her: "Do not be afraid! For you have given birth to a son."

However, she did not answer or pay any attention.

²¹ She named the boy "Ichabod,"⁸⁸ saying, "The glory has departed from Israel!" because the Ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. ²² She said, "The glory has departed from Israel. For the Ark of God has been captured."

5

The plagues caused by the presence of the Ark in Ashdod, Gath and Ekron

¹ When the Philistines captured the Ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. ² The Philistines took the Ark of God, brought it into the temple of Dagon and set it down beside Dagon. ³ When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon! It had fallen face downward on the ground before the Ark of the LORD. They took Dagon and put it back in its place. ⁴ However, when they rose early on the next morning, there was Dagon! It had fallen face downward on the ground before the Ark of the LORD. However, the head of Dagon and both palms of its hands were cut off and lying on the threshold. Only the trunk of Dagon was left to it. ⁵ This is why the priests of Dagon and all who enter the temple of Dagon avoid treading on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day. ⁶ The hand of the LORD came down heavily against the people of Ashdod. He disconcerted and plagued Ashdod and its territory with tumours. ⁷ When the men of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said: "The Ark of the God of Israel must not stay with us! For His hand has been heavy against us and

against our god Dagon."

⁸ They sent for all the princes of the Philistines and gathered them to where they were. They asked: "What shall we do with the Ark of the God of Israel?"

The princes answered: "Let the Ark of the God of Israel be brought around to Gath!"

So, they made the Ark of the God of Israel move on.

⁹ However, after they had taken it around there, the hand of the LORD put that city into a very great panic. He afflicted the people of the city, both young and old, by causing tumours to break out on them. ¹⁰ So, they sent the Ark of God to Ekron. However, when the Ark of God came into Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out, "They have brought the Ark of the God of Israel around to us to kill us and our people."

¹¹ They sent for all the princes of the Philistines and gathered them together. They said: "Send the Ark of the God of Israel away! Let it go back to its own place! Then it will not kill us and our people."

For there was a panic of death throughout the whole city. The hand of God had been very severe there.

¹² The people who had not died had been plagued with tumours, and the cry of the city had gone up to heaven.

6

The plagues on the Philistines because of the Ark

¹ The Ark of the LORD had been in the territory of the Philistines for seven months. ² The Philistines summoned the priests and those who practised divination and asked: "What shall we do with the Ark of the LORD? Tell us how we should send it back to its place!"

³ They answered: "If you are sending the Ark of the God of Israel away, do not send it away empty! Rather, you shall certainly send a compensating gift back to Him! Then you will be healed and find out why His hand is not leaving you alone."

⁴ The Philistines asked, "What compensating gift shall we send back to Him?"

They answered: "Five golden tumours and five golden rats, the same number as the princes of the Philistines. For the same plague has been striking all of you and your princes. ⁵ You must make representations of your tumours and representations of your rats, which have been ravaging the land, and you must give glory to the God of Israel! Perhaps He will lift His heavy hand away from you, your gods and your land. ⁶ Why should you become stubborn as the Egyptians and Pharaoh became stubborn? After He had made fools of them, did they not allow the people to leave, so they could go on their way? ⁷ Now therefore, take a new cart and make it ready, together with two cows that are feeding calves and that have never been under a yoke! Then hitch the cows to the cart but take their calves away from them, back to their yard! ⁸ Then take the Ark of the LORD and place it on the cart! Put the golden objects, which you are sending back to

⁸⁸ Ichabod means, "No glory."

Him as a compensating gift, in a saddlebag beside it! Then send it off, that it may go on its way! ⁹ Then watch! If it goes up on the road to its own territory, towards Beth-Shemesh, then it is He who has been doing us this great harm. However, if it does not, then we shall know that it has not been His hand that has been striking us, but that what has happened to us has been a coincidence.”

¹⁰ The men did this. They took two cows that were feeding calves, hitched them to the cart and shut their calves in their yard. ¹¹ Then they put the Ark of the LORD on the cart together with the saddlebag holding the golden rats and the representations of their tumours. ¹² Then the cows went straight along the road towards Beth-Shemesh. They kept on the highway, bellowing as they went. They did not turn off to the right or to the left, and the princes of the Philistines kept following them as far as the border of Beth-Shemesh.

The return of the Ark to Beth-Shemesh in Judah

¹³ The people of Beth-Shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley. When they looked up and saw the Ark, they were glad to see it. ¹⁴ The cart came into the field of Joshua, a man of Beth-Shemesh, and stopped where there was a large rock. The men chopped up the wood of the cart and sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹⁵ The Levites took down the Ark of the LORD and the saddlebag that was beside it, which contained the golden articles, and placed them on the large rock. On that day the men of Beth-Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices to the LORD. ¹⁶ When the five princes of the Philistines saw this, they went back that same day to Ekron. ¹⁷ These are the golden tumours that the Philistines sent back as a compensatory gift to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath and one for Ekron. ¹⁸ They also sent as many golden rats as there were cities of the Philistines belonging to the five princes, including walled cities and unwalled rural villages. The large rock of Abel, on which they set down the Ark of the LORD, remains to this day in the field of Joshua, the man of Beth Shemesh. ¹⁹ The Ark struck down some of the men of Beth-Shemesh, because they had looked into the Ark of the LORD. It struck down seventy of them (There were fifty thousand men). Then the people observed mourning rites because of the heavy blow that the LORD had dealt them. ²⁰ Then the men of Beth-Shemesh asked: “Who can stand in the presence of the LORD, this holy God? To whom should the Ark be taken, that it may leave us?”

²¹ They sent messengers to the people living at Kiriath-Jearim. They said: “The Philistines have sent back the Ark of the LORD. Come down and take it up to where you are!”

7

The removal of the Ark to Kiriath-Jearim

¹ The men of Kiriath-Jearim came, took away the Ark of the LORD and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. Then they consecrated his son Eleazar to take care of the Ark of the LORD.

The defeat of the Philistines at Mizpah when Samuel was the judge

² From the day when the Ark was lodged at Kiriath-Jearim a long time passed. It was twenty years, and all the family of Israel remained loyal to the LORD.

³ Samuel told all the family of Israel: “If you are returning to the LORD with all your hearts, get rid of the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth, commit your hearts to the LORD and serve Him alone, that He may deliver you from the control of the Philistines!”

⁴ So, the people of Israel got rid of the Baals and the Ashtaroth and served the LORD alone. ⁵ Then Samuel said, “Assemble all Israel at Mizpah, that I may pray to the LORD for you!”

⁶ When they gathered at Mizpah, they drew water, poured it out before the LORD, went without food on that day and there they confessed, “We have sinned against the LORD.”

Samuel ruled the people of Israel as judge at Mizpah.

⁷ When the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the princes of the Philistines went up to attack Israel. The people of Israel heard about it and were afraid of the Philistines. ⁸ The people of Israel told Samuel: “Do not stop crying out to the LORD, our God, for us, that He may save us from the hands of the Philistines!”

⁹ Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him.

¹⁰ While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines came closer to fight against Israel. However, the LORD thundered very loudly that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion. So, they were defeated before Israel. ¹¹ The men of Israel went out from Mizpah, pursued the Philistines and struck them down, to a point below Beth-Car. ¹² Then Samuel took a stone, set it up between Mizpah and Shen and named it “Ebenezer.”⁸⁹ For he said, “Until now the LORD has been helping us.”

¹³ So, the Philistines were subdued and did not invade the territory of Israel again. The hand of the LORD was against the Philistines throughout Samuel’s lifetime. ¹⁴ The cities that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath, and Israel delivered their territory from the control of the Philistines. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites. ¹⁵ Samuel ruled Israel as judge all his life. ¹⁶ Every year he went on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah and continued to judge Israel at all these places. ¹⁷ Then he used to return to Ramah, for his home was there. He also judged Israel there and built an altar to the LORD there.

⁸⁹ Ebenezer means, “Stone of help.”

8

The Israelites' request for a king

¹ When Samuel became old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. ² The name of his first son was Joel, and the name of his second was Abijah. They were judges at Beer-Sheba. ³ However, his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest profit. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel assembled and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ They told him: "Look! You have become old and your sons have not been following your example. Now appoint a king for us to judge us, such as all the other nations have!"

⁶ However, Samuel was displeased with their request, "Give us a king to judge us!"

So, Samuel prayed to the LORD. ⁷ The LORD told Samuel: "Listen to everything that the people are telling you! Indeed, they have not rejected you but rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. ⁸ They are also doing to you exactly as they have been doing from the time when I brought them up out of Egypt until this day. They have been forsaking Me and have been serving other gods. ⁹ So now, comply with what they are saying! However, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them about the legal claims that the king will make when he reigns over them!"

¹⁰ Then Samuel reported everything that the LORD had said to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹ Samuel said: "These will be the legal claims of the king who will be reigning over you: He will take your sons and assign them to his own chariots, to be his horsemen and to run in front of his chariots.

¹² He will appoint them to be his officers over thousands and officers over fifties, to plough his ground, harvest his crops and to make his weapons of war and the equipment for his chariots. ¹³ He will take your daughters to be mixers of perfume, cooks and bakers.

¹⁴ He will take the best of your fields, vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his officials. ¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage and give it to his court-officials and his other servants.

¹⁶ He will take your male-servants, your female-servants, the best of your young men and your donkeys, that they may labour at his own work. ¹⁷ He will take a tenth of your flocks. In addition, you yourselves will be his servants. ¹⁸ When that day comes, you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen. However, the LORD will not answer you on that day."

¹⁹ Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to what Samuel was saying. They replied: "No! On the contrary, there must be a king over us! ²⁰ Then we also shall be like all the other nations, with our king to judge us, to go out ahead of us and to fight our battles."

God's granting of the Israelites' request for a king

²¹ When Samuel heard everything that the people

were saying, he reported it to the LORD. ²² Then the LORD told Samuel, "Listen to what they are saying and make them a king!"

Samuel then told the Israelites: "Each of you should go to his own city!"

9

Saul's search for lost donkeys

¹ There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish. Kish was the son of Abiel, a son of Zeror, a son of Becorath, a son of Aphiah, a descendant of Benjamin. He was a wealthy man. ² He had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was no one among the Israelites who was more handsome than he was. From his shoulders up he was taller than any of the other people were. ³ When the female donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, became lost, Kish told his son Saul: "Please take one of the servants with you! Take action, go and look for the donkeys!"

⁴ Saul went through the hill-country of Ephraim and through the region of Shalisha, but they did not find them. Next, they went through the district of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then they went through the region of the people of Benjamin but did not find them. ⁵ When they came to the district of Zuph, Saul told his servant, who was with him: "Come! Let us go back! Otherwise my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and worry about us."

The meeting of Saul and Samuel

⁶ The servant told him: "Look! There is a man of God in this city. He is highly respected, and everything that he says really comes true. Let us go there now! Perhaps he will tell us which way we should take."

⁷ Saul told his servant: "Look! If we go, what shall we take to the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone, and we have no gift to present to the man of God. What do we have?"

⁸ The servant answered Saul again: "Look! I have three grams of silver here with me. I shall give it to the man of God, that he may tell us which way we should take."

⁹ Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he said, "Come! Let us go to the seer!" For a man who is now called a "prophet" used to be called a "seer." ¹⁰ Saul told his servant, "Well said! Come! Let us go!"

They went to the city where the man of God was.

¹¹ While they were going up the hill to the city, they met some girls coming out to draw water. They asked them, "Is the seer here?"

¹² They answered them: "He is. Look! He is ahead of you. Hurry now! For he has come to the city today, because the people are having a sacrifice today at the high place. ¹³ As soon as you enter the city you will find him, before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, because he will bless the sacrifice. After that those who have been invited will eat. Go up now! For you should find him

at about this time.”

¹⁴ So, they went up to the city. When they were entering the city, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way up to the high place. ¹⁵ On the day before Saul came, the LORD had made a spoken revelation to Samuel: ¹⁶ “Tomorrow at about this time I shall send a man to you from the land of Benjamin. You shall anoint him as the leader over My people Israel! He will save My people from the control of the Philistines. For I have looked on My people, because their cry has been coming to Me.”

¹⁷ When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, “Here is the man about whom I have told you! He will govern my people.”

¹⁸ Then Saul approached Samuel in the gateway and asked, “Please, tell me where the house of the seer is!”

¹⁹ Samuel answered Saul: “I am the seer. Go up ahead of me to the high place, that both of you may eat with me today! Then in the morning I shall let you go and shall tell you all that is on your mind. ²⁰ As for your donkeys, which were lost three days ago, do not worry about them! For they have been found. Besides, whom does Israel fully desire? Is it not you and all your father’s family?”

²¹ Saul answered: “Am I not a Benjaminite, from the smallest tribe of Israel? Is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why, then, have you said such a thing to me?”

²² Then Samuel took Saul and his servant, brought them into the hall and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited, who numbered about thirty persons. ²³ Samuel told the cook, “Bring the piece of meat that I gave you, about which I told you, ‘Keep this in reserve!’”

²⁴ So, the cook took up the leg and what was on it and set them before Saul. Samuel said: “Look! This has been set aside to be served to you. Eat it! For it has been reserved for you for this occasion, ever since I said that I have invited the people.”

Saul ate with Samuel on that day. ²⁵ When they came down from the high place into the city, Samuel talked with Saul on the roof of his house.

The anointing of Saul as king

²⁶ They rose at about daybreak, and Samuel called to Saul on the flat roof, “Get up, that I may send you on your way!”

When Saul got up, both he and Samuel went out into the street. ²⁷ While they were going down to the edge of the city, Samuel told Saul: “Tell the servant to go on ahead of us! When he has passed on, you yourself remain here now, that I may make known to you what God says!”

10

¹ Then Samuel took his flask of olive-oil, poured it on Saul’s head, kissed him and said: “Is this not because the LORD has anointed you to be prince over his inheritance? ² When you leave me today, you will meet

two men beside Rachel’s tomb at Zelzah on the border of Benjamin. They will tell you, ‘The donkeys that you went to search for have been found. Look! Now your father has stopped being concerned about the donkeys and is worried about both of you. He is asking, “What shall I do about my son?”’ ³ Then you will go on further from there and come to the large tree at Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there. One will be carrying three young goats, another will be carrying three loaves of bread, and another will be carrying a jar of wine. ⁴ They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, and you will accept them from them. ⁵ After that you will come to the Hill of God, where the Philistines have a military post. There, as you are approaching the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place. They will have a harp, a tambourine, a flute and a lyre leading them and will be prophesying. ⁶ Then the Spirit of the LORD will come on you powerfully. You will prophesy with them and be changed into a different person. ⁷ When these signs come true for you, do whatever your hand finds to do! For God is with you. ⁸ Then you shall go down ahead of me to Gilgal! I shall certainly come down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace-offerings. You shall wait for seven days, until I come to you, that I may inform you what to do!”

The choice of Saul as king and his prophesying when the Spirit of God came over him

⁹ When Saul turned around to leave Samuel, God transformed Saul’s heart. On that day all these signs also came true. ¹⁰ When they arrived at Gibeah, there was a group of prophets coming to meet him. The Spirit of God came on him powerfully, and he prophesied among them. ¹¹ When all the people who had known him previously saw that he was prophesying with the prophets, they asked one another: “What has happened here to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?”

¹² A man from that place answered, “Who, then, is their father?” That is why it became a proverb: “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

¹³ After Saul had finished prophesying, he went to the high place. ¹⁴ Saul’s uncle asked him and his servant, “Where have you gone?”

Saul said: “To search for the donkeys. When we saw that they were nowhere to be found, we went to Samuel.”

¹⁵ Saul’s uncle asked, “Please tell me what Samuel told you!”

¹⁶ Saul replied to his uncle, “He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found.”

However, he did not tell him what Samuel had told him about becoming king.

The proclamation of Saul as the king over Israel

¹⁷ Then Samuel summoned the people to the LORD at Mizpah. ¹⁸ He told the Israelites: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel has said, ‘I brought Israel up

out of Egypt and delivered you from the control of the Egyptians and from the control of all the other kingdoms that were oppressing you.’¹⁹ However, today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses, and you have told Him, ‘No. You must appoint a king over us.’ Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans!”

²⁰ Then Samuel made all the tribes of Israel come closer, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen by lot.

²¹ When he had made the tribe of Benjamin come closer by its clans, the clan of the Matrites was chosen by lot. Then Saul the son of Kish was chosen by lot. However, when they searched for him, he could not be found. ²² They inquired further of the LORD, “Has the man come here yet?”

The LORD answered, “Look! He has hidden himself in the baggage.”

²³ Then they ran and brought him from there. When he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the other people were from his shoulders upward.

²⁴ Samuel asked all the people: “Have you seen the one whom the LORD has chosen? Indeed, there is none like him among all the people.”

Then all the people shouted, “Long live the king!”

²⁵ Then Samuel explained to the people the legal decisions about the kingship. He wrote them down on a scroll and deposited it before the LORD. Then Samuel dismissed all the people, each one to his own home.

²⁶ Saul also went to his home at Gibeah. Some brave men, whose hearts God had impressed, also went with Saul. ²⁷ However, some worthless fellows asked, “How can this man save us?”

They despised him and would not bring him any gift. However, Saul showed no disapproval.

11

Saul's rescue of the city of Jabesh-Gilead from the Ammonites

¹ Then Nahash the Ammonite came up and besieged Jabesh-Gilead. All the men of Jabesh told Nahash: “Make a treaty with us! Then we shall be subject to you.”

² However, Nahash the Ammonite replied to them: “I shall make a treaty with you on this condition, that I put out all your right eyes, that I may bring disgrace on all Israel.”

³ The elders of Jabesh answered him: “Leave us alone for seven days, that we may send messengers through all the territory of Israel! Then, if there is no one to save us, we shall come out to you.”

⁴ When the messengers came to Saul's city of Gibeah, they reported these terms to the people, and all the people wept aloud. ⁵ Just then Saul was returning from the field, behind his oxen. Saul asked, “What is wrong with the people, that they should be weeping?” So, they told him what the men of Jabesh had said.

⁶ The Spirit of God came on Saul powerfully when he heard these words, and he became very angry. ⁷ He

took a pair of oxen, cut them in pieces and used messengers to send them throughout all the territory of Israel. They proclaimed, “This is what will be done to the oxen of anyone who does not come out with Saul and Samuel!”

Then the terror caused by the LORD fell on the people, and they came out as if they were one man.

⁸ When Saul mustered the Israelites at Bezek, they numbered three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah numbered thirty thousand. ⁹ They told the messengers who had come: “This is what you shall tell the men of Jabesh-Gilead: ‘Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you will be rescued!’”

When the messengers went and reported this to the men of Jabesh, they were glad. ¹⁰ Therefore, the men of Jabesh told the Ammonites, “Tomorrow we shall come out to you, and you may do to us whatever you think is right.”

¹¹ The next day Saul arranged the army in three companies. They invaded the camp of the Ammonites during the morning watch and struck down the Ammonites until the day became hot. Those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

The reaffirmation of Saul's kingship

¹² Then the people said to Samuel: “Who was it who asked, ‘Should Saul reign over us?’ Bring the men, that we may put them to death!”

¹³ However, Saul said: “No one shall be put to death today! For today the LORD has achieved salvation in Israel.”

¹⁴ Then Samuel told the people: “Come! Let us go to Gilgal, that we may reaffirm the kingship there!”

¹⁵ Then all the people went to Gilgal, and there at Gilgal they made Saul king in the presence of the LORD. There they also sacrificed peace-offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the Israelites held a great celebration.

12

Samuel's address to the Israelites

¹ Samuel told all Israel: “Look! I have listened to everything that you have told me and have appointed a king over you. ² Now therefore, you see the king leading you, and I myself am old and grey. You also see my sons here with you. I have been moving about among you since I was young until today. ³ Here I am. Testify against me before the LORD and before His anointed king! Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I oppressed? Whom have I ill-treated? Or from whom have I accepted a bribe so that I should make my eyes blind with it? If so, I shall make restitution to you.”

⁴ They replied, “You have not oppressed us, ill-treated us or accepted anything from anyone.”

⁵ Samuel told them: “The LORD is witness against you and His anointed king is witness today, that you have not found anything in my possession.”

They answered, "He is witness."

⁶ Then Samuel told the people: "The LORD is witness, the One who appointed Moses and Aaron and who brought your forefathers up out of the land of Egypt. ⁷ Now therefore, stand here, that I may put you on trial in the presence of the LORD and cite all the righteous deeds that the LORD has been performing for you and for your fathers! ⁸ When Jacob had gone to Egypt and your fathers cried out to the LORD, the LORD sent Moses and Aaron. They led your forefathers out of Egypt and settled them in this place. ⁹ However, they forgot the LORD, their God. So, He sold them into the control of Sisera, the commander of the army of Hazor, into the control of the Philistines and into the control of the king of Moab, and they fought against them. ¹⁰ Then they cried out to the LORD and said, 'We have been sinning, because we have forsaken the LORD and have been serving the Baals and the Ashtaroth. However, now deliver us from the control of our enemies, that we may serve You!' ¹¹ Then the LORD sent Jerub-Baal, Barak, Jephthah and Samuel and delivered you from the control of your enemies on every side, and you lived in safety. ¹² However, when you saw that Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, had come against you, you told me, 'No, but a king should be reigning over us!' although the LORD, your God, was your King. ¹³ Now therefore, you see the king whom you have chosen and whom you had requested. You see that the LORD has set a king over you. ¹⁴ If you fear the LORD, serve Him, listen to what He says and do not rebel against what the LORD commands, then both you and the king who has begun to reign over you will continue to follow the LORD, your God. ¹⁵ However, if you do not listen to what the LORD says but rebel against what the LORD commands, then the hand of the LORD will be against you as it was against your fathers. ¹⁶ Now therefore, stand here and look at this great thing, which the LORD will do while you are watching! ¹⁷ Is it not the wheat harvest today? I shall call on the LORD, that he may send thunder and rain. Then you will realise and see that you were doing something that the LORD regarded as very wicked when you were asking for your own king."

¹⁸ Then Samuel called on the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people feared the LORD and Samuel very much. ¹⁹ All the people asked Samuel: "Pray to the LORD, your God, on behalf of your servants, that we may not die! For we have added to all our sins the evil of asking for our own king."

²⁰ However, Samuel told the people: "Do not be afraid! You have done all this evil. Nevertheless, do not turn aside from following the LORD but serve the LORD with all your hearts! ²¹ Do not turn away after meaningless idols! They cannot do you any good and cannot rescue you. For they do not exist. ²² For the

LORD will not abandon His people for the sake of His great name. For the LORD has conferred the benefit of making you His own people. ²³ Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray on your behalf! I shall also teach you the way that is good and right. ²⁴ Only fear the LORD and serve Him faithfully with all your hearts! For consider what great things He has done for you! ²⁵ However, if you persist in being wicked, both you and your king will be swept away."

13

War against the Philistines

¹ Saul reigned for one year and when, he had reigned for two years over Israel, ² Saul chose three thousand men from Israel. Two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and in the hill-country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan at Gibeah in Benjamin. He sent the rest of the army back to their homes. ³ Jonathan defeated the military post of the Philistines that was at Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul blew the ram's horn throughout the whole land, saying, "Let the Hebrews listen!"

⁴ All Israel heard the report: "Saul has defeated the military post of the Philistines, and Israel has also become odious to the Philistines."

Then the army was called out to join Saul at Gilgal.

⁵ The Philistines assembled to fight against Israel. There were thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horsemen and as many soldiers as the sand on the seashore. They went up and camped in Michmash, to the east of Beth-Aven. ⁶ When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble, because the soldiers were hard pressed, the soldiers hid in caves, in thorn-bushes, in rocks, in cellars and in cisterns. ⁷ Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. However, Saul was still at Gilgal, and all the soldiers who were with him trembled with fear.

Saul's disobedient offering of a sacrifice

⁸ He waited for seven days, the time appointed by Samuel. However, Samuel had not come to Gilgal, and the soldiers were leaving him and scattering. ⁹ Then Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering and the peace-offerings here to me!"

So, he offered the burnt offering. ¹⁰ As soon as he had finished making the burnt offering, Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet him and to greet him. ¹¹ Samuel asked, "What have you done?"

Saul replied: "I saw that the soldiers were leaving me and scattering, that you had not come at the set time and that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash.

¹² So, I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal before I have conciliated the presence of the LORD.' I took a risk and performed the burnt offering."

¹³ Samuel told Saul: "You have behaved foolishly. You have not kept the Commandment that the LORD, your God, has given you. Otherwise, the LORD

would have made your kingdom over Israel last for ever. ¹⁴ However, now your kingdom will not continue. The LORD has looked for **a man after His own heart** and the LORD has appointed him to be the leader over His people. For you have not kept what the LORD has commanded you.”

¹⁵ Then Samuel left Gilgal and went up to Gibeah in Benjamin. When Saul counted the soldiers who were present with him, they numbered about six hundred men.

Israel's difficulty in resisting the Philistines without weapons

¹⁶ Saul, his son Jonathan and the soldiers who were present with them stayed at Geba in Benjamin, while the Philistines camped at Michmash. ¹⁷ Raiding parties came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies. One company turned towards Ophrah, to the region of Shual. ¹⁸ Another company turned towards Beth-Horon, and another company turned towards the borderland that overlooks the valley of Zeboim facing the wilderness. ¹⁹ No blacksmith could be found throughout the land of Israel. For the Philistines said, “Otherwise the Hebrews will make swords or spears!” ²⁰ Everyone in Israel went down to the Philistines to sharpen his plough-point, his mattock, his axe and his sickle. ²¹ The charge for sharpening the plough-points and the mattocks was eight grams of silver each and four grams of silver for a sharpened iron, for axes and for re-pointing ox-goats. ²² Therefore, on the day of the battle there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the soldiers with Saul and Jonathan. However, Saul and his son Jonathan had them.

²³ A detachment of Philistine sentries had gone out to the pass at Michmash.

14

Jonathan's surprise-attack on a Philistine sentry-post

¹ One day, Jonathan, the son of Saul, told the young man who used to carry his armour, “Come! Let us go across to the Philistine sentry-post over there on the other side!”

However, he did not tell his father. ² Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah at the pomegranate tree in Migron. He had about six hundred soldiers with him.

³ Among them was Ahijah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the priest of the LORD at Shiloh, who was wearing a priestly garment. The soldiers did not know that Jonathan had left. ⁴ Between the ravines where Jonathan tried to find a way to go across to attack the Philistine sentry-post there was a rocky crag on the one side and another rocky crag on the other side. The name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other was Seneh.

⁵ The one crag rose like a pillar on the north facing Michmash, and the other was on the south facing Geba. ⁶ Jonathan told the young man who was carrying his armour: “Come! Let us go across to the sentry-post of these uncircumcised people! Perhaps the

LORD will work for us. For nothing can prevent the LORD from saving whether He uses many or few.”

⁷ His armour-bearer told him: “Do all that you have in mind! Go ahead! I am here with you in what you are planning.”

⁸ Then Jonathan said: “Very well, we are going across to the men and shall make ourselves known to them.

⁹ If they answer us in this way: ‘Wait until we reach you!’ then we shall stand still where we are and not go up to them. ¹⁰ However, if they answer like this, ‘Come up to us!’ then we shall go up. For the LORD has given them into our hands. This will be the sign for us.”

¹¹ So, both of them showed themselves to the Philistine sentry-post. The Philistines said, “Look! Hebrews are coming out of the caves where they have been hiding!”

¹² The men at the sentry-post called out to Jonathan and his armour-bearer: “Come up to us, that we may inform you of something!”

Jonathan told his armour-bearer: “Come up after me! For the LORD has delivered them into the hands of Israel.”

¹³ Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and knees, with his armour-bearer following him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armour-bearer came behind him and killed them. ¹⁴ That first strike, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made, killed about twenty men inside an area of about a fifth of a hectare.

Israel's defeat of the Philistines

¹⁵ There was a panic in the camp, in the open country and among all the people. The sentry-post and the raiders also trembled with fear. The earth quaked. This became a panic sent by God. ¹⁶ When the look-outs of Saul at Gibeah in Benjamin looked, they saw that the crowd was melting away and moving in different directions. ¹⁷ Then Saul told the soldiers who were with him: “Please take a count and see who has left us!”

When they had taken a count, they realised that Jonathan and his armour-bearer were absent. ¹⁸ Then Saul told Ahijah, “Bring the Ark of God here!”

For on that occasion the Ark of God accompanied the Israelites. ¹⁹ While Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines became louder and louder. Then Saul told the priest, “Stop what you are doing!”

²⁰ Saul and all the soldiers who were with him assembled and went into the battle. They found the Philistines in extreme confusion, striking each other with their swords. ²¹ Even the Hebrews who had previously sided with the Philistines and who had gone up with them and were distributed in their camp also joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. ²² When all the men of Israel who were hiding in the hill-country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines had fled, they also followed hard after them in the battle.

²³ So, the LORD saved Israel that day. The battle moved on beyond Beth-Aven.

Jonathan's violation of Saul's oath by eating honey

²⁴ The men of Israel had been driven hard on that day, because Saul had threatened the soldiers with a curse, saying, "Cursed be anyone who eats food before evening comes and before I have taken revenge on my enemies!"

So, none of the soldiers had tasted any food. ²⁵ When all the soldiers of the land entered the forest, they saw some honey on the ground. ²⁶ However, when the soldiers entered the forest, although they saw the flowing honey, none of the soldiers put his hand to his mouth, because they feared the oath. ²⁷ Since Jonathan had not heard his father bind the soldiers with the oath, he held out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it into the honeycomb. When he raised his hand to his mouth, he was refreshed. ²⁸ Then one of the soldiers said: "Your father bound the army under a strict oath, saying, 'Cursed be any man who eats food today!' That is why the soldiers are exhausted."

²⁹ Then Jonathan said: "My father has caused trouble for the country. Please observe that I was refreshed when I tasted a little of this honey! ³⁰ Surely it would have been better if today the soldiers had freely eaten some of their enemies' plunder, which they had found. For then would not the slaughter among the Philistines have been all the greater?"

³¹ That day, after the soldiers had struck down the Philistines from Michmash to Aijalon, they were thoroughly exhausted. ³² The soldiers rushed on the plunder, took sheep, cattle and calves and slaughtered them on the ground. The soldiers ate the meat with the blood in it. ³³ Some men told Saul, "Look! The soldiers are sinning against the LORD by eating meat with the blood."

Saul said, "You have broken faith. Roll a large stone over to me at once!"

³⁴ He said: "Scatter around among the soldiers and tell them, 'Everyone should bring his ox or his sheep here to me! You must slaughter them here! Then you may eat. You shall not sin against the LORD by eating meat with the blood in it!'"

So, each of the soldiers brought his ox with him that night and butchered them there. ³⁵ Then Saul built an altar to the LORD. It was the first altar that he built to the LORD. ³⁶ Then Saul said: "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and plunder them until dawn! Let us not leave any survivors among them!"

They replied, "Do whatever you think is best!"

However, the priest said, "Let us approach God here!"

³⁷ Saul inquired of God: "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will You deliver them into Israel's hands?"

However, God did not answer Saul that day.

The rescue of Jonathan from death after Saul's rash oath

³⁸ Saul said: "Come here, all you leaders of the army. Find out and see in what way a sin has been commit-

ted here today. ³⁹ For as surely as the LORD, who rescues Israel, lives, even if it is in my son Jonathan, he will surely die!"

However, not one of all the soldiers would answer him. ⁴⁰ Then he told all the Israelites, "You shall stand on one side, and I and my son Jonathan shall stand on the other side."

The soldiers told Saul, "Do what you think is best!"

⁴¹ Then Saul said, "O LORD, God of Israel, give the right answer!"

Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, and the rest of the soldiers were cleared. ⁴² Then Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan!"

Then Jonathan was taken. ⁴³ Saul asked Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done!"

Jonathan told him: "I merely tasted a little honey on the tip of the staff, which I was holding. Here I am. I must die."

⁴⁴ Saul said, "May God treat me like this and even worse if you do not certainly die, Jonathan!"

⁴⁵ However, the soldiers asked Saul: "Must Jonathan die, when he has brought about this great deliverance in Israel? Not at all! As surely as the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground! For he has been working with God today."

So, the people rescued Jonathan, so that he did not die. ⁴⁶ Then Saul broke off the pursuit of the Philistines, and the Philistines withdrew to their own land.

Wars in which Saul led the Israelites against surrounding nations

⁴⁷ After Saul had assumed the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned he kept punishing them. ⁴⁸ He fought courageously, struck down the Amalekites and rescued Israel from those who had been plundering them.

The family of Saul

⁴⁹ The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi and Malchishua. The name of the elder of his two daughters was Merab, and the name of his younger daughter was Michal. ⁵⁰ The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the commander of his army was Abner, the son of Saul's uncle, Ner. ⁵¹ Saul's father, Kish, and Abner's father, Ner, were the sons of Abiel. ⁵² There was fierce fighting against the Philistines all Saul's life. Whenever Saul saw any warrior or any courageous man, he took him into his service.

15

Saul's defeat of the Amalekites and his disobedient sparing of their king

¹ Samuel told Saul: "The LORD sent me to anoint you king over His people Israel. Now therefore, listen to what the LORD has commanded! ² This is what the LORD of hosts has said, 'I have called to account what the Amalekites did to Israel when they stood in their way while they were coming up from Egypt.

³ Now go, strike down the Amalekites and devote to

destruction everything that they have! You shall not spare them but shall kill men, women, young children, infants, oxen, sheep, camels and donkeys!”

⁴ Saul summoned the soldiers and mustered them at Telaim. He counted two hundred thousand men on foot and ten thousand men from Judah. ⁵ Saul came to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the bed of the stream. ⁶ Then Saul told the Kenites: “Go away! Leave! Go down away from the Amalekites, that I may not exterminate you with them! You yourselves were kind to all the Israelites when they were coming up from Egypt.”

So, the Kenites moved away from the Amalekites.

⁷ Saul struck down the Amalekites from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt. ⁸ He captured Agag, the king of the Amalekites, alive but devoted all the people to destruction with the edge of the sword. ⁹ However, Saul and the soldiers spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the cattle, the more valuable calves and the young rams and everything else that was good. They were unwilling to destroy them totally. However, they devoted everything that was of little value and weak to destruction. ¹⁰ Then the Word of the LORD came to Samuel: ¹¹ “I have come to regret that I made Saul king. For he has turned away from following Me and has not carried out My Instructions.”

Samuel became indignant and cried out to the LORD all that night. ¹² Samuel rose early in the morning and went to meet Saul. However, Samuel was told: “Saul has gone to Carmel. There he set up a monument in his own honour. Next he turned and continued on down to Gilgal.”

¹³ When Samuel reached him, Saul told him: “May the LORD bless you! I have carried out what the LORD told me.”

¹⁴ However, Samuel asked, “What, then, is this bleating of sheep in my ears and the bellowing of cattle that I hear?”

¹⁵ Saul answered: “They have brought them from the Amalekites, because the soldiers have spared the best of the sheep and the cattle, to sacrifice them to the LORD, your God. We have devoted the rest to destruction.”

¹⁶ Then Samuel told Saul: “Stop! Let me tell you what the LORD told me last night!”

Saul told him, “Speak on!”

¹⁷ Samuel said: “Although you did not have a high regard of yourself, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel.

¹⁸ The LORD sent you on an errand. He said, ‘Go and devote those sinners, the Amalekites, to destruction! Fight against them until you exterminate them!’

¹⁹ Why, then, have you not listened to what the LORD has said? Why have you swooped down on the plunder and done what the LORD regards as evil?”

²⁰ However, Saul told Samuel: “I have obeyed what

the LORD has said. I have gone on the errand on which the LORD sent me. I have also brought back Agag, the king of the Amalekites and have devoted the Amalekites to total destruction. ²¹ However, the soldiers took some of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to offer a sacrifice to the LORD, your God, at Gilgal.”

²² However, Samuel replied: “Does the LORD delight in **burnt offerings and sacrifices** as much as in obedience to what the LORD says? Look! Obedience is **better than sacrifice**, and paying attention is better than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is as sinful as divination, and obstinacy is like false worship and idols. Because you have rejected what the LORD has said, He has also rejected you from being king.”

²⁴ Saul told Samuel: “I have sinned. For I transgressed what the LORD commanded and what you said. For I was afraid of the soldiers and listened to what they said. ²⁵ Now therefore, please forgive my sin and come back with me, that I may worship the LORD!”

The rejection of Saul as king

²⁶ However, Samuel told Saul: “I shall not go back with you. For you have rejected what the LORD has said, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.”

²⁷ When Samuel turned around to leave, Saul took hold of the edge of Samuel’s robe, and it tore.

²⁸ Samuel told him: “The LORD has torn the kingship of Israel away from you today and has given it to a neighbour of yours, who is better than you.

²⁹ Moreover, the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind. For He is not a human being, that He should change His mind.”

³⁰ Then Saul replied: “I have sinned. Please honour me now before the elders of my people and before Israel and come back with me, that I may worship the LORD, your God!”

³¹ Then Samuel went back with Saul, and Saul worshipped the LORD. ³² Then Samuel said, “Bring Agag, the king of the Amalekites, here to me!”

Agag came to him cheerfully. Agag said, “Surely the bitterness of death has gone away!”

³³ However, Samuel said, “As your sword has made women childless, so your mother will be childless among women.”

Samuel cut Agag in pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.

³⁴ Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his home in Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵ Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death but Samuel observed mourning rites for Saul. The LORD also regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.

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God’s choice of David to be king and his anointing at Bethlehem

¹ The LORD asked Samuel: “How long are you going to keep observing mourning rites over Saul, although I have rejected him from being king of Israel? Fill your horn with olive-oil and go! I am sending you to Jesse

of Bethlehem. For I have provided Myself a king from one of his sons.”

² Samuel asked: “How can I go? When Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”

The LORD replied: “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD!’ ³ Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice! I shall inform you what to do. You shall anoint for Me the one whom I indicate to you!”

⁴ Samuel did what the LORD had told him and went to Bethlehem. The elders of the city were trembling with fear when they met him. They asked, “Have you come for a friendly purpose?”

⁵ He answered: “For a friendly purpose. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice!”

He consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶ When they came, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the anointed of the LORD is in His presence!”

⁷ However, the LORD told Samuel: “Do not take notice of what he looks like or of how tall he is! For I have rejected him. For it is not what a human being sees that counts. For a human being looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him walk past in front of Samuel. However, Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one, either.”

⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah walk past, but Samuel said, “The LORD has not chosen this one, either.”

¹⁰ When Jesse had made his seven sons walk past in front of Samuel, Samuel told him, “The LORD has not chosen these.”

¹¹ Then Samuel asked Jesse, “Have all the young men come?”

He answered: “There is still the youngest one left. You see, he is looking after the sheep.”

Samuel told Jesse: “Send someone to fetch him! For we shall not sit down around the table until he gets here.”

¹² Jesse sent someone to fetch him. He had a ruddy complexion, attractive eyes and a handsome appearance. The LORD said: “Get up and anoint him! For this is the one.”

¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of olive-oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers. The Spirit of the LORD came on David powerfully and from that day onward. Then Samuel left and went to Ramah.

David's playing of music on his lyre during his service to Saul

¹⁴ However, the Spirit of the LORD had left Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrified him. ¹⁵ Saul's officials told him: “Please consider! An evil spirit from God is terrifying you. ¹⁶ Please, let our master command us, your servants, who are waiting on you, to search for a man who is skilful in playing the lyre! When the evil spirit from God comes on you, let him play it with his hands! Then you will feel better.”

¹⁷ Saul told his officials, “Please provide me with a man who plays well and bring him to me!”

¹⁸ One of the officials answered: “Look! I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who is a skilful player, a brave warrior and a man of war. He is a skilful speaker, a handsome man, and the LORD is with him.”

¹⁹ Therefore, Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, “Send me your son David, who is with the sheep!”

²⁰ Jesse took a donkey-load of bread, a skin of wine and a young goat and had his son David take them to Saul. ²¹ When David came to Saul, he entered his service. Saul loved him very much, and he became his armour-bearer. ²² Saul sent word to Jesse, saying: “Please let David remain in my service! For I have been pleased with him.”

²³ When the spirit from God came on Saul, David used to take his lyre and played it with his hands. Then Saul felt relieved and became well, and the evil spirit used to leave him.

17

David's victory over Goliath

¹ The Philistines gathered their armies for battle. They assembled at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and pitched camp between Socoh and Azekah at Ephes-Dammim. ² Saul and the men of Israel assembled, pitched camp in the Valley of Elah and drew up in battle order against the Philistines. ³ The Philistines were stationed on a mountain on one side, the Israelites were stationed on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them. ⁴ A champion came out of the camp of the Philistines. His name was Goliath, and he was from Gath. His height was three hundred and twenty-five centimetres. ⁵ He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a bronze coat of scale-armour. The coat weighed sixty kilograms. ⁶ He had bronze leggings and slung a bronze javelin between his shoulders. ⁷ The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam. The blade of his iron spear weighed seven kilograms. The man who carried his shield used to walk in front of him. ⁸ Goliath stood and called out to the battle-lines of Israel. He asked them: “Why are you coming out to form up in order for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not Saul's servants? Make someone your representative and let him come down to me! ⁹ If he can fight with me and kills me, then we shall become your slaves. However, if I overpower him and kill him, then you will become our slaves and serve us.”

¹⁰ Then the Philistine said: “I have defied the battle-lines of Israel today. Provide me with a man that we may fight each other!”

¹¹ When Saul and all the other Israelites heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and very afraid.

¹² David was the son of that Ephrathite from Bethlehem in Judah whose name was Jesse. Jesse had eight

sons and in Saul's days he was already an old man among the people. ¹³ Jesse's three eldest sons had gone to follow Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who had gone to the battle were Eliab, the first-born and next to him was Abinadab and the third was Shammah. ¹⁴ David was the youngest. The three eldest followed Saul. ¹⁵ However, David used to go back and forth from Saul to take care of his father's flock at Bethlehem. ¹⁶ The Philistine came forward and took up his position every morning and evening for forty days.

¹⁷ Jesse told his son David: "Take these forty litres of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread to your brothers! Take them quickly to your brothers at the camp! ¹⁸ Take also these ten pieces of cheese to the captain of their regiment! See if your brothers are well and get some evidence from them that you have carried out your errand!"

¹⁹ Saul, David's brothers and all the men of Israel were in the Valley of Elah, fighting against the Philistines. ²⁰ David got up early and left the sheep with a shepherd. Then he took the load and went, as Jesse had told him to do. He came to the encampment as the army was going out to the battle-line and shouting for the battle. ²¹ Israel and the Philistines had drawn up their battle-lines facing each other. ²² David left the supplies that he had been carrying in the hands of the keeper of supplies and ran to the battle-line. When he arrived there, he greeted his brothers. ²³ While he was talking to them, the champion, the Philistine from Gath, whose name was Goliath, came up out of the battle-lines of the Philistines. He repeated his words, and David heard them. ²⁴ When all the men of Israel saw the man, they ran away from him in terror.

²⁵ The men of Israel asked: "Have you seen this man who is coming up? For he keeps coming up to defy Israel. The king will make the man who kills him very rich. He will give his daughter to him and make his father's family exempt from taxes in Israel."

²⁶ David asked the men who were standing near him: "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and frees Israel from this disgrace? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he has defied the battle-lines of the living God?"

²⁷ The soldiers repeated to him what they had been saying. They told him, "This is what will be done for the man who kills him."

²⁸ When Eliab, his eldest brother, heard David talking to the men, Eliab became very angry with him. Eliab asked him: "Why have you come down here and with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how arrogant and insolent you are. For you have come down to watch the battle."

²⁹ David asked him: "What have I done now? Have I not merely asked a question?"

³⁰ He turned away from him to another man and asked the same question, and these soldiers answered him as

the first ones had done. ³¹ What David was saying was overheard and reported to Saul, and Saul sent for him. ³² David told Saul: "No one should be discouraged because of him! I, your servant, shall go and fight with this Philistine."

³³ Saul answered David: "You cannot go against this Philistine and fight with him. For you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior since he was young."

³⁴ David replied to Saul: "I, your servant, have been a shepherd of my father's sheep. When a lion or a bear comes and takes a sheep from the flock, ³⁵ I go out after him, strike him down and snatch the sheep from his mouth. If he attacks me, I take hold of his beard, strike him and kill him. ³⁶ I, your servant, have struck down both a lion and a bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the battle-lines of the living God."

³⁷ David added: "The LORD, who has saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine."

Then Saul told David, "Go! May the LORD be with you!"

³⁸ Saul dressed David in his own tunic. Saul tried to put a bronze helmet on his head and dressed him in a coat of mail. ³⁹ David fastened Saul's sword over his tunic and tried to walk but had not tried them out. David told Saul: "I cannot walk in these. For I have not tried them out."

Therefore, David took them off. ⁴⁰ Then he took his staff in his hand, selected five smooth stones from the stream-bed and put them in his shepherd's bag, in a pouch. He approached the Philistine with his sling in his hand. ⁴¹ The Philistine kept coming closer to David, with the man who was carrying his shield in front of him. ⁴² When the Philistine looked David over, he despised him, because he was only a boy, ruddy and good-looking. ⁴³ The Philistine asked David: "Am I a dog, that you are coming to me with sticks?"

The Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ The Philistine told David: "Come to me, and I shall give your flesh to the birds of the air and the animals in the field!"

⁴⁵ David told the Philistine: "You are coming to me with a sword, a spear and a javelin, but I am coming to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the battle-lines of Israel, whom you have been defying! ⁴⁶ Today the LORD will deliver you into my hands. I shall strike you down and cut off your head. Today I shall also give the corpses of the army of the Philistines to the birds of the sky and the animals on the ground, that the whole world may know that there is a God in Israel, ⁴⁷ and that this whole assembly may know that the LORD does not save with a sword and a spear. For the battle belongs to the LORD, and He will deliver all of you into our control."

⁴⁸ When the Philistine started out and was coming

closer to meet David, David ran quickly towards the opposing battle-line to meet the Philistine. ⁴⁹ Then David put his hand into his bag, took a stone out of it, slung it and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell to the ground on his face.

⁵⁰ Therefore, David defeated the Philistine with a sling and a stone. David struck down the Philistine and killed him, although he did not have a sword in his hand. ⁵¹ David ran and stood over the Philistine. He took Goliath's sword, pulled it out of its scabbard and killed him, cutting off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their hero was dead, they fled.

⁵² Then the men of Israel and Judah started out with a shout, pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gai and to the gates of Ekron. Wounded Philistines fell along the road from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. ⁵³ When the Israelites returned from their hot pursuit of the Philistines, they plundered their camp.

⁵⁴ David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem but put Goliath's armour in his own tent.

⁵⁵ When Saul had seen David going out to meet the Philistine, he had asked Abner, the captain of his army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?"

Abner had answered, "As surely as your soul lives, O king, I do not know."

⁵⁶ The king had said, "Find out personally whose son this young man is."

⁵⁷ When David came back after he had killed the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul. David had the Philistine's head in his hand.

⁵⁸ Saul asked him, "Whose son are you, young man?" David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem."

18

The friendship between David and Jonathan

¹ When David had finished speaking to Saul, Jonathan's soul became bound together with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as much as he loved himself. ² On that day Saul kept David with him and did not permit him to go back to his father's home.

³ Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as much as he loved himself. ⁴ Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his military garment and even his sword, his bow and his belt. ⁵ Therefore, David went out wherever Saul sent him and was successful. Saul put him in charge of the fighting men, and all the people and Saul's officials also approved of him.

Saul's jealousy of David

⁶ When the men were coming home, as David returned after he had struck down the Philistine, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy and with musical instruments. ⁷ The women sang to one another as they danced, "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thou-

sands."

⁸ Saul was very angry, because he disliked these words. He said: "They have ascribed to David ten thousands but have ascribed only thousands to me. What more can he have but the kingdom?"

Saul's attempt to kill David

⁹ Saul treated David with suspicion from that day on.

¹⁰ The next day an evil spirit from God came on Saul powerfully, and he raved inside his house. While David was playing the lyre with his hands, as he usually did, Saul had his spear in his hand. ¹¹ Saul threw the spear, thinking, "I shall impale David to the wall."

However, David got away from him twice. ¹² Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him but had left Saul. ¹³ Saul removed him from his presence and made him the commander of a regiment. So, David marched out and returned at the head of the army. ¹⁴ David was successful in everything he undertook, and the LORD was with him. ¹⁵ When Saul noticed that he was being very successful, he was afraid of him. ¹⁶ Everyone in Israel and Judah loved David, because he moved about among them as their leader.

David's marriage to Saul's daughter Michal

¹⁷ Then Saul told David: "Here is my elder daughter Merab. I shall give her to you as your wife. Only serve me bravely and fight the battles of the LORD!" For Saul thought: "I must not harm him myself. Let the Philistines harm him!"

¹⁸ David asked Saul: "Who am I, what is my life and who are my father's clan in Israel, that I should become the king's son-in-law?"

¹⁹ However, when the time came when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel from Meholah as his wife. ²⁰ Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David. When people told Saul about it, he was pleased. ²¹ Saul thought: "Let me give her to him, that she may be a snare for him and that the Philistines may lay their hands on him!"

Therefore, Saul told David a second time, "You will now become my son-in-law."

²² Saul commanded his officials: "Speak to David in private and tell him, 'Look! The king is pleased with you, and all his officials love you. Now therefore, become the king's son-in-law!'"

²³ When Saul's officials repeated those words to David, he asked: "Do you think it is a trifle to become the king's son-in-law when I am a poor man and people think little of me?"

²⁴ When Saul's officials told him, "David spoke in this kind of way," ²⁵ Saul replied: "This is what you shall tell David, 'The king does not want any bridal money except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that the king may take revenge on his enemies!'"

Saul thought that he would get the Philistines to take David's life. ²⁶ When his officials told David this, the idea of becoming the king's son-in-law appealed to

him. Before the time had expired, ²⁷ David acted. He and his men went and struck down two hundred Philistines. David brought their foreskins and presented the full number to the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal as his wife. ²⁸ When Saul saw for certain that the LORD was with David, and that his daughter Michal loved David, ²⁹ Saul became still more afraid of David. Saul then became David's enemy for the rest of his life. ³⁰ The princes of the Philistines continued to come out to battle, and whenever they came out David had more success than all the rest of Saul's officials did, so that David gained a very high reputation.

19

Jonathan's intercession for David

¹ Saul told his son Jonathan and all his officials that they should kill David. However, Saul's son Jonathan was very fond of David. ² Jonathan told David: "My father Saul is trying to kill you. Now therefore, be on your guard tomorrow morning! Hide in a secret place and stay there! ³ I shall go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are and shall speak to my father about you. If I learn anything I shall tell you."

⁴ Jonathan spoke well about David to his father Saul. He told him: "The king should not sin against his servant David! For he has not sinned against you, and what he has been doing has benefited you greatly. ⁵ He risked his life when he struck down the Philistine, and the LORD accomplished a great victory for all Israel. You were glad when you saw it. Why then will you be guilty of murdering an innocent man by killing David without a reason?"

⁶ Saul listened to Jonathan's advice. Saul swore, "As surely as the LORD lives he will certainly not be put to death."

⁷ Jonathan called David and reported all this to him. Then Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he continued to be in his presence as he had been previously.

⁸ When there was war again, David went out and fought against the Philistines. He inflicted a great defeat on them, and they fled from him.

Saul's attempt to kill David and Michal's rescue of him

⁹ Then an evil spirit from the LORD came on Saul while he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand. While David was playing the lyre with his hands, ¹⁰ Saul attempted to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he escaped from Saul, so that Saul drove the spear into the wall. David escaped and fled that night. ¹¹ Saul had sent messengers to David's house to watch it, that he might kill him in the morning. However, Michal, David's wife, had told him, "If you do not save yourself tonight, you will be killed tomorrow."

¹² So, Michal had let David down through a window, and he had run away and escaped. ¹³ Then Michal took a figurine, laid it on the bed, put a braided cushion

of goats' hair at its head and covered it with the clothes. ¹⁴ When Saul sent messengers to fetch David, she said, "He is sick."

¹⁵ When Saul sent the messengers to see David, he told them, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him!"

¹⁶ When the messengers came in, they saw the figurine in the bed, with the braided cushion of goats' hair at its head. ¹⁷ Saul asked Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?"

Michal answered Saul, "He told me himself, 'Help me get away! Why should I kill you?'"

David's meeting with Samuel at Naioth

¹⁸ When David ran away and escaped, he came to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went to Naioth and stayed there. ¹⁹ Then Saul was told, "You should know that David is at Naioth in Ramah!"

²⁰ Then Saul sent messengers to fetch David. However, when the men saw the group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came on the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. ²¹ When people told Saul about it, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. When Saul sent a third group of messengers, they also prophesied. ²² Then Saul himself went to Ramah. He came to the large cistern at Secu and asked, "Where are Samuel and David?"

Someone answered, "I tell you, they are at Naioth in Ramah."

²³ He went there, to Naioth in Ramah. However, the Spirit of God came on him also and, as he went along, he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah.

²⁴ He also stripped off his robes and prophesied in Samuel's presence. He lay naked all that day and all that night. This is why people use the expression, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

20

Jonathan's assistance to David

¹ Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah, came to Jonathan and asked: "What have I done? Of what am I guilty? What is my sin against your father, that he should be trying to kill me?"

² Jonathan answered him: "Not at all! You will not die! Look! My father does not do anything either great or small without disclosing it to me. Why should my father hide this from me? It is not so!"

³ However, David took another oath and said: "Your father knows for certain that you are kindly disposed towards me. He has been thinking, 'Jonathan must not know this or he will be distressed.' However, as surely as the LORD lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death."

⁴ Then Jonathan told David, "I shall do for you whatever you request."

⁵ David told Jonathan: "Look! Tomorrow is the New

Moon, when I should not fail to sit with the king at dinner. However, let me go, that I may hide in the country until the evening of the day after tomorrow!

⁶ If your father misses me at all, say, 'David earnestly asked my permission to run to his city Bethlehem! For his whole clan has a yearly sacrifice there.' ⁷ If he answers like this: 'Good!' then I, your servant, am safe. However, if he is clearly angry, be sure that he has resolved to harm me! ⁸ Therefore, treat me, your servant, kindly! For you have brought me, your servant, into a covenant of the LORD with you. Nevertheless, if I am guilty, kill me yourself! Why should you take me to your father?"

⁹ Jonathan said: "Put that thought far away! For if I knew for certain that my father had resolved to harm you, would I not tell you?"

¹⁰ Then David asked Jonathan, "Who will tell me whether your father answers you harshly?"

¹¹ Jonathan told David: "Come! Let us go out into the country!"

So, both of them went out into the country.

¹² Jonathan told David: "By the LORD, the God of Israel, I shall certainly sound out my father about this time tomorrow or on the day after tomorrow. If I see that he is favourably disposed towards you, David, shall I not then send you a message and tell you?"

¹³ However, if my father decides to harm you, may the LORD treat me harshly and ever worse if I do not let you know and send you safely on your way! May the LORD be with you, as He has been with my father! ¹⁴ You shall certainly treat me as kindly as the LORD treats people, while I am still alive, that I may not die! ¹⁵ In addition, you shall never stop being kind to my family, not even when the LORD cuts off each of the enemies of David from the surface of the earth!"

¹⁶ Jonathan made a covenant with the family of David, saying, "May the LORD demand an account from David's enemies!"

¹⁷ Jonathan made David swear another oath by his love for him. For he loved him as he loved himself.

¹⁸ Then Jonathan told David: "Tomorrow is the New Moon. You will be missed, because your seat will be empty. ¹⁹ On the day after tomorrow you must go down quickly to the place where you hid on that other occasion and wait beside the stone Ezel! ²⁰ I myself shall shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I were shooting at a target. ²¹ Be sure that I shall send my servant and tell him, 'Go! Find the arrows!' If I clearly tell the young man, 'Look! The arrows are on this side of you. Bring them!' then you shall come! For, as surely as the LORD lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger. ²² However, if I tell the young man, 'Look! The arrows are on the other side of you,' then go! For the LORD has sent you away. ²³ Look! The LORD is the witness between you and me for ever about the matter that you and I have been dis-

cussing."

²⁴ So, David hid in the field. When the New Moon came, the king sat down to eat the meal. ²⁵ The king sat on his seat, as at other times, on the seat at the wall. Jonathan stood up and Abner sat beside Saul, but David's place was empty. ²⁶ Nevertheless, Saul did not say anything that day. For he thought: "Something must have happened to him, so that he is ceremonially unclean. Yes, he must not be clean."

²⁷ However, on the second day of the month David's place was still empty. Saul asked his son Jonathan, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to the meal either yesterday or today?"

²⁸ Jonathan answered Saul: "David earnestly asked me for permission to go to Bethlehem. ²⁹ He said, 'Please, let me go! For our clan is holding a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has required me to be there. So now, if you are kindly disposed towards me, please let me get away and see my brothers!' That is why he has not come to the king's table."

³⁰ Then Saul became angry with Jonathan and said to him: "You son of a disturbed and rebellious woman! Do I not know that you are siding with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who gave birth to you? ³¹ While the son of Jesse is alive on the earth, neither you nor your kingship will be secure. Now therefore, send men and fetch him to me! For he must surely die."

³² Jonathan replied to his father Saul by asking: "Why must he be put to death? What has he done?"

³³ However, Saul threw his spear at him to strike him down. Then Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death. ³⁴ Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate nothing that second day of the month. For he was worried about David, because his father had disgraced him. ³⁵ In the morning Jonathan went out into the open country to keep his appointment with David and took a young boy with him. ³⁶ He told his boy: "Run! Please find the arrows that I am shooting!"

While the boy was running, he shot an arrow beyond him. ³⁷ When the boy came to the place where Jonathan had shot the first arrow, Jonathan called out after the boy, "Is not the arrow further on, past you?"

³⁸ Then Jonathan called after the boy: "Hurry! Go quickly! Do not wait there!"

Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows and returned to his master. ³⁹ However, the boy did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew what it meant.

⁴⁰ Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his boy and told him: "Go! Carry them to the city!"

⁴¹ When the boy had gone, David got up from the southern side, fell on his face to the ground and bowed down three times. They kissed each other and wept together, until David wept aloud. ⁴² Then Jonathan told David: "Go in peace! For we have both sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD

shall be between you and me and your descendants and my descendants for ever!” Then David got up and left, and Jonathan returned to the city.

21

David's request for the holy bread at Nob from Ahimelech, the High Priest of Eli's line

¹ Then David went to the priest Ahimelech at Nob. Ahimelech was trembling when he met David. He asked him: “Why are you alone? Why is no one with you?”

² David told Ahimelech the priest: “The king has commanded me to do something and has told me, ‘No one must know anything about the business on which I am sending you or what I have commanded you!’ I have directed my young men to go to a certain place.

³ Now therefore, what do you have on hand? Supply me with five loaves of bread or whatever can be found!”

⁴ The priest answered David: “I have no ordinary bread on hand. However, there is holy bread, provided that the young men have kept away from women.”

⁵ Then David answered the priest: “Certainly! Women have been kept away from us, as they usually are when I go on a mission. The bodies of the young men are holy even when it is an ordinary journey. How much more will their bodies be holy today?”

⁶ So, **the priest** gave him the holy bread. For there was no bread there except **the bread of the Presence**. It had been removed from the presence of the LORD, to place hot bread there on the day when it was taken away. ⁷ One of Saul's officials was there that day, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg, an Edomite, and Saul's chief shepherd. ⁸ Then David asked Ahimelech: “Do you not have a spear or a sword available here? For I have not brought either my sword or my other weapons with me, because the king's business was urgent.”

⁹ The priest said: “Look! The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you struck down in the valley of Elah, is here, wrapped in a cloth behind the priestly garment. If you want to take that, take it! For there is no sword here but that one.”

David said: “There is none like that one! Give it to me!”

David's escape to the Philistines at Gath for protection

¹⁰ David left that day, fled from Saul and went to Achish, the king of Gath. ¹¹ The officials of Achish asked him: “Is this not David, the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another about him in dances: ‘Saul has struck down his thousands, but David his ten thousands’?”

¹² David took these words to heart and was very afraid of Achish, the king of Gath. ¹³ So, he pretended to be insane in their presence and behaved as if he were mad while he was in their power. He scribbled on the doors of the city-gate and let his saliva run down his beard. ¹⁴ Then Achish told his officials:

“Look! You see that the man is behaving like a madman. Why have you brought him to me? ¹⁵ Am I so short of madmen that you have brought this fellow to behave like a madman in front of me? Must this fellow come into my palace?”

22

David's accumulation of a band of followers and his escape to the cave of Adullam

¹ David left from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and his father's whole family heard about it, they went down there to him.

² Everyone who was in a distressful situation, everyone who was in debt and everyone who had a grudge gathered to him. David became the leader over them. About four hundred men were with him. ³ David went from there to Mizpeh in Moab. He asked the king of Moab, “Please, let my father and my mother come here with you people, until I know what God will do for me!”

⁴ He brought them before the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time David was in the fortification in the mountains. ⁵ However, the prophet Gad told David: “You shall not remain in the mountain-stronghold! Leave and come to the land of Judah!”

So, David left and went to the forest of Hereth.

Saul's slaughter of the priests descended from Eli at Nob

⁶ Saul heard that David and the men who were with him had been located. Saul was sitting under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah with his spear in his hand, and all his officials were standing around him.

⁷ Saul told his officials who were standing around him: “Please listen, men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give fields and vineyards to each of you? Will he appoint each of you commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? ⁸ For all of you have conspired against me. No one discloses it to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as he is doing now.”

⁹ However, Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul's officials, answered: “I saw Jesse's son when he came to Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, at Nob.

¹⁰ Ahimelech made an inquiry to the LORD for him, gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath, the Philistine.”

¹¹ Then the king sent a message to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and his father's whole family, the priests who were at Nob, and they all came to the king. ¹² Saul said, “Please listen, son of Ahitub!”

He answered, “Here I am, my lord.”

¹³ Saul asked him: “Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, by giving him bread and a sword and by making an inquiry to God for him, so that he is rebelling against me and lying in wait, as he is doing today?”

¹⁴ Ahimelech answered the king: “Who among all your servants is as faithful as David, who is the king’s son-in-law, a captain over your bodyguard and highly respected in your household? ¹⁵ Have I just now begun to make inquiries to God for him? No indeed! The king should not accuse his servant of anything or accuse any of his father’s family! For your servant has not known anything about all this, either little or much.”

¹⁶ However, the king said: “You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and your father’s whole family!”

¹⁷ The king told the body-guards who were standing around him: “Move up and kill the priests of the LORD! For they have also sided with David. For when they were aware that he was fleeing, they also did not disclose it to me.”

However, the officials of the king refused to raise their hands to strike the priests of the LORD. ¹⁸ Then the king told Doeg, “You move up and strike the priests!”

Doeg the Edomite moved up and struck down the priests. On that day he killed eighty-five men who used to wear a linen priestly garment. ¹⁹ He also struck down Nob, the city of the priests, with the edge of the sword. He struck down with the edge of the sword men and women, children and infants, cattle, donkeys and sheep. ²⁰ However, one of the sons of Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled to join David. ²¹ Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD. ²² David told Abiathar: “I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would be sure to tell Saul. I myself have assaulted all the persons in your father’s family. ²³ Stay with me! Do not be afraid! For he who is trying to kill me is trying to kill you. You are in safe hands with me.”

23

David’s expulsion of the Philistines from Keilah

¹ Some people told David: “Look! The Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are plundering the threshing floors.”

² David inquired of the LORD: “Shall I go and strike down these Philistines?”

The LORD told David, “Go and strike the Philistines down and save Keilah!”

³ However, David’s men told him: “Look! We ourselves are afraid here in Judah. How much more, then, if we go to Keilah against the battle-lines of the Philistines?”

⁴ When David inquired of the LORD again, the LORD answered him: “Take action! Go down to Keilah! For I shall deliver the Philistines into your hands.”

⁵ David and his men went to Keilah, fought with the Philistines, drove off their livestock and inflicted a great defeat on them. So, David rescued the people who were living in Keilah. ⁶ When Abiathar, the son

of Ahimelech, had fled to David at Keilah, he had brought a priestly garment down with him.

Saul’s attempt to trap David in Keilah

⁷ When Saul was informed that David had gone to Keilah he said: “God has delivered him over into my hands. For he has shut himself in by entering a city that has a double gate and bars.”

⁸ Saul called up all the soldiers for war, to go down to Keilah and besiege David and his men. ⁹ Because David knew that Saul was plotting harm against him, he told Abiathar the priest, “Bring the priestly garment here!”

¹⁰ David said: “O LORD, God of Israel, Your servant has heard definitely that Saul is attempting to come to Keilah to destroy the city because of me. ¹¹ Will the citizens of Keilah hand me over to him? Will Saul come down, as I, Your servant, have heard? O LORD, God of Israel, please tell me, Your servant!”

The LORD said, “He will come down.”

¹² Then David asked, “Will the citizens of Keilah hand me and my men over to Saul?”

The LORD said, “They will hand you over.”

¹³ Then David and his men, who numbered about six hundred, started out and left Keilah. They moved about wherever they could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he halted the campaign. ¹⁴ Then David stayed in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill-country of the Wilderness of Ziph. Although Saul searched for him every day, God did not deliver David into his hands.

Jonathan’s visit to David at Horesh

¹⁵ David had seen that Saul had come out to try to kill him. David was at Horesh in the Wilderness of Ziph.

¹⁶ Saul’s son Jonathan set out, went to David at Horesh and encouraged him in God. ¹⁷ He told him: “Do not be afraid! For the hand of my father Saul will not find you. You will be the king over Israel, and I shall be second to you. My father Saul also knows that this is so.”

¹⁸ The two of them made a covenant before the LORD. Then David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

The frustration by a raid of the Philistines of Saul’s attempt to capture David

¹⁹ Then the men of Ziph went up to Saul at Gibeath and asked: “Is David not hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon? ²⁰ Now therefore, come down, O king, whenever you want to come down! It will be our duty to hand him over to the king.”

²¹ Saul replied: “May you be blessed by the LORD! For you have had compassion on me. ²² Please go! Prepare more! Find out and observe the place where he goes and find out who has seen him there! For people have told me that he is very cunning. ²³ Take notice and find out all the hiding places that he uses and come back to me with definite information! Then I shall go with you. If he is in the land, I shall track

him down among all the clans of Judah.”

²⁴ They set out and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. David and his men were in the Wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. ²⁵ Saul and his men went to search for him. When people told David, he went down to the rock and stayed in the Wilderness of Maon. When Saul heard that, he went into the Desert of Maon in pursuit of David. ²⁶ Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men went on the other side of the mountain. David was hurriedly moving away from Saul, and Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them. ²⁷ However, a messenger came to Saul and said: “Come quickly! For the Philistines have made a raid against the land.”

²⁸ So, Saul broke off his pursuit of David and went back to meet the Philistines. Therefore, that place was called “Sela-Hammahlekoth.”⁹⁰ ²⁹ Then David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En-Gedi.

24

David's sparing of Saul's life at En-Gedi

¹ When Saul came back after pursuing the Philistines, people told him, “Look! David is in the wilderness of En-Gedi.”

² Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to search for David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. ³ When he came to the sheep pens along the road, a cave was there. Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were sitting in the inmost parts of the cave. ⁴ David's men told him: “This is the day about which the LORD told you, ‘Look! I shall deliver your enemy into your hands.’ You may do to him what you think is right.”

Then David got up and cut off a corner of Saul's robe without being noticed. ⁵ Afterwards David's conscience troubled him because he had cut off the corner of Saul's robe. ⁶ David told his men: “The LORD forbid that I should do this to my master, the one whom the LORD has anointed, that I should raise my hand against him! For he is the one whom the LORD has anointed.”

⁷ So, David dispersed his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. Saul got up, left the cave and went along the road. ⁸ After that, David also got up, went out of the cave and called after Saul, “My master, the king!”

When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down respectfully with his face to the ground. ⁹ David asked Saul: “Why do you listen to people when they say, ‘Look! David is trying to harm you’? ¹⁰ Look! Today you have seen with your own eyes that the LORD has delivered you into my hands in the cave today. Although some told me to kill you, I have looked on you sympathetically. I said, ‘I shall not stretch out my hand against my master. For he is the one whom the

LORD has anointed.’ ¹¹ Besides, my father, look! Yes, look at the corner of your robe in my hand. For since I have cut off the corner of your robe without killing you, you should know and perceive that I am innocent of any wrong or rebellion. I have not sinned against you although you are hunting me down to take my life. ¹² May the LORD judge between you and me! May the LORD take revenge against you for me! However, my hand will not be against you. ¹³ It is like the proverb that people long ago used to say: ‘Wickedness comes out of wicked people.’ However, my hand will not be against you. ¹⁴ After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog? One flea? ¹⁵ So, may the LORD be the Judge and decide between you and me! May He be concerned about it, plead my cause and get justice for me by delivering me from your hands!”

¹⁶ When David had finished saying this to Saul, Saul asked, “Is this your voice, my son David?”

Then Saul wept aloud. ¹⁷ He told David: “You are more righteous than I am. For you have treated me well, whereas I have been treating you badly. ¹⁸ You yourself have declared today that you have treated me well, in that you did not kill me when the LORD delivered me into your hands. ¹⁹ For when a man finds his enemy, does he let him go away safely? May the LORD reward you well for the way you have treated me today! ²⁰ Now therefore, look! I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will continue in your hands. ²¹ Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will certainly not cut off my descendants after me and that you will certainly not wipe out my name from my father's family!”

²² So, David swore an oath to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

25

The death of Samuel

¹ Samuel died, and all Israel assembled and mourned for him, and they buried him at his house in Ramah.

The death of Nabal and David's marriage to Abigail

Then David moved down into the wilderness of Paran.

² There was a man in Maon whose business was at Carmel. The man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel. ³ The name of the man was Nabal, and his wife's name was Abigail. The woman was intelligent and beautiful, but the man was severe and evil. He was a descendant of Caleb. ⁴ While David was in the wilderness, he heard that Nabal was shearing sheep. ⁵ David sent ten young men. David told the young men: “Go up to Carmel, visit Nabal and wish him prosperity in my name! ⁶ You shall greet him like this: ‘May you have a prosperous life! Good health to you and good health to your family! Good health to everything that you have! ⁷ Now therefore, I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds have

⁹⁰ Sela Hammahleqoth may mean “Rock of Escape.”

been with us, and we have not harmed them, and while they have been at Carmel nothing of theirs has been missing. ⁸ Ask your young men! They will tell you. Therefore, look favourably on my young men! For we have come on a festive occasion. Please, give whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son David!”

⁹ When David’s young men arrived, they gave this whole message to Nabal on David’s behalf and then they waited. ¹⁰ Nabal answered David’s servants: “Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who are breaking loose from their masters. ¹¹ Should I take my bread, my water and my meat, which I have slaughtered for my shearers and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?”

¹² David’s young men turned around and went back. When they arrived, they reported all these words to David. ¹³ David told his men, “Strap on your swords, each of you!”

Each of them strapped on his sword, and David also strapped on his sword. About four hundred men went up with David, while two hundred men stayed with the baggage. ¹⁴ However, one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal’s wife: “Look! David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master, but he answered them harshly. ¹⁵ Nevertheless, the men have been very good to us, and we have not suffered any harm. We have not missed anything all the time we have been going with them while we have been in the fields. ¹⁶ They have been a wall around us both by night and by day, all the time when we have been looking after the sheep near them. ¹⁷ Now therefore, be aware of this and consider what you should do! For harm has been determined against our master and against all his family, and he is such a worthless fellow that no one can talk to him.”

¹⁸ Then Abigail quickly took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already prepared, thirty-five litres of parched grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs and loaded them on donkeys. ¹⁹ She told her young men: “Go on ahead of me! Look! I am coming behind you.”

However, she did not tell her husband Nabal. ²⁰ While she was riding on her donkey and was coming down under a covered mountain path, there were David and his men coming down towards her, and she met them.

²¹ David had said: “Surely it has been pointless that I have been protecting all this fellow’s property in the wilderness, so that none of his property has gone missing! He has paid me back evil for good. ²² May God spare the enemies of David and treat them even better if by morning I leave alive one male out of all who belong to him!”

²³ When Abigail saw David, she quickly got down from her donkey, fell on her face before him and bowed down on the ground. ²⁴ She fell at his feet and

said: “My master, let the blame for the wrong be on me alone! Please let me, your maidservant, speak to you, and listen to what your maidservant says! ²⁵ Please, my master should pay no attention to this worthless fellow, Nabal! He is like his name. His name is “Nabal,”⁹¹ and godless folly goes with him. However, I, your maidservant, had not seen the young men, whom you, my master, had sent. ²⁶ Now therefore, my master, as surely as the LORD lives and as surely as your soul lives, because the LORD has held you back from proceeding to shed blood and from coming to defend your own cause — now therefore, may your enemies and those who try to harm you, my master, be like Nabal! ²⁷ So now, let this present, which your maidservant has brought to you, my master, be given to the young men who follow my master! ²⁸ Please forgive the rebellious act of your maidservant! For the LORD will certainly make a long-lasting family for my master, because my master is fighting the battles of the LORD. May no wrongdoing be found in you all your life! ²⁹ Some person has arisen to pursue you and tried to kill you. However, your life, my master, will be wrapped up in the bundle of the living under the care of the LORD, your God. He will sling out the lives of your enemies from inside the hollow of a sling. ³⁰ When the LORD does to my master all the good that He has promised about you and has appointed you a prince over Israel, ³¹ then your conscience will not regret this. My master will not blame himself for needlessly shedding blood or for defending his own cause. My master, when the LORD gives you success, remember your maidservant!”

³² David told Abigail: “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you to meet me today!

³³ Blessed also be your good sense, and may you also be blessed! For you have kept me back today from proceeding to shed blood and from defending my own cause. ³⁴ Otherwise, as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, truly by morning light not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive.”

³⁵ Then David accepted from her what she had brought him. He told her: “Go up in peace to your home! See! I have listened to what you have said and have granted your request.”

³⁶ When Abigail went to Nabal, there he was, having the kind of feast in his house that a king provides. Nabal was feeling very good and was very drunk. So, she did not tell him anything, either little or much, until the morning light. ³⁷ In the morning, when the wine had worn off from Nabal, his wife told him these things. Then his heart died inside him and he became like a stone. ³⁸ About ten days later, the LORD struck Nabal, and he died. ³⁹ When David heard that Nabal

⁹¹ Nabal means, “Foolish.”

had died, he said: “Blessed be the LORD, who has defended my cause against the insult that I received from Nabal and has kept me, His servant, back from doing wrong! The LORD has brought Nabal’s wickedness back on his own head.”

Then David sent word to Abigail, asking her to become his wife. ⁴⁰ When David’s servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they told her, “David has sent us to you to fetch you to become his wife.”

⁴¹ She got up, bowed down with her face to the ground and said, “Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of my master’s servants.”

⁴² Abigail quickly got up and rode on a donkey, with five of her female servants following her. She went along behind the messengers of David and became his wife. ⁴³ David had also married Ahinoam of Jezreel and both of them were his wives. ⁴⁴ Saul had given his daughter Michal, David’s wife, to Palti, the son of Laish, who was from Gallim.

26

David’s sparing of Saul’s life in the wilderness of Ziph

¹ Then the men of Ziph came to Saul at Gibeah and said, “Is David not hiding on the hill of Hachilah, which faces Jeshimon?”

² Saul acted and went down to the wilderness of Ziph with three thousand chosen men of Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph. ³ Saul camped beside the road on the hill of Hachilah, which faces Jeshimon. However, David was staying in the wilderness. When David saw that Saul had come after him into the wilderness, ⁴ he sent out spies and learned that Saul had definitely come. ⁵ Then David set out and came to the place where Saul had camped. David saw the place where Saul and Abner, the son of Ner, the commander of his army, had lain down. Saul was lying inside the encampment and the army was camping around him. ⁶ Then David asked the Hittite Ahimelech and Joab’s brother Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, “Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?”

Abishai said, “I shall go down with you.”

⁷ When David and Abishai went to the army by night, David saw Saul lying asleep inside the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abner and the army were lying around him. ⁸ Then Abishai told David: “Today God has delivered your enemy into your hands. Now, please, let me pin him to the ground with one stroke of the spear! I shall not hit him more than once.”

⁹ However, David told Abishai: “Do not destroy him! For who has put out his hand against the one whom the LORD has anointed and been free from guilt?”

¹⁰ David said: “As surely as the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him down or his day will come to die or he will go down into battle and be swept away.

¹¹ May the LORD forbid that I should put out my hand against the one whom the LORD has anointed!

Now, however, please take the spear that is near his head and the jar of water and let us go!”

¹² David took the spear and the jar of water near Saul’s head and they went away. No one saw them or knew about it and no one woke up. For they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen on them. ¹³ Then David went across to the opposite side and stood far off on the top of the mountain, with a great distance between them. ¹⁴ David called out to the army and to Abner, the son of Ner: “Will you not answer, Abner?”

Then Abner answered, “Who are you, who have called out to the king?”

¹⁵ David asked Abner: “Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why, then, have you not been guarding your master, the king? For one of the people has come in to destroy your master, the king. ¹⁶ What you have been doing here is not good. As surely as the LORD lives, you deserve to die, because you have not been guarding your master, the one whom the LORD has anointed. Now therefore, notice where the king’s spear and the jar of water that was near his head are!”

¹⁷ Saul recognised David’s voice and asked, “Is that your voice, my son David?”

David answered, “It is my voice, my master, O king.”

¹⁸ He added: “Why is my master pursuing his servant like this? For what have I done? Of what wrong am I guilty? ¹⁹ Now therefore, please let my master, the king, hear what I, his servant, am saying! If the LORD is the One who has stirred you up against me, may He enjoy the smell of an offering! However, if the descendants of Adam have done so, may they be cursed before the LORD! For they have now driven me away from my share in the inheritance of the LORD and tell me, ‘Go, serve other gods!’ ²⁰ Now therefore, let my blood not fall to the ground away from the presence of the LORD! For the king of Israel has come out to search for a single flea, like someone who is hunting a partridge in the mountains.”

²¹ Then Saul said: “I have sinned. Come back, David my son! For I shall not harm you again, because you have regarded my life as something precious today. Indeed, I have been acting foolishly and have been making a very great mistake.”

²² David answered: “Here is the king’s spear. One of the young men should come across and get it! ²³ The LORD will reward everyone for being righteous and being faithful. The LORD delivered you into my hands today, but I refused to stretch out my hand against the one whom the LORD has anointed.

²⁴ Look! As I have valued your life highly today, so may the LORD value my life highly and may He deliver me from all trouble!”

²⁵ Then Saul said to David: “May you be blessed, my son David! You will do great things and will certainly also be successful!”

So, David went his way, and Saul went back home.

27

David's residence among the Philistines at Gath under king Achish

¹ However, David thought to himself: "I shall be destroyed one day now by Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will desist from searching for me any longer anywhere in Israel, and I shall slip out of his grasp."

² So, David and the six hundred men who were with him left and went across to Achish, the son of Maach, the king of Gath. ³ While David and his men stayed with Achish at Gath, each man had his family with him, and David had his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, who had been Nabal's wife.

⁴ When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he did not search for him any longer. ⁵ Then David told Achish: "If you are kindly disposed towards me, let people give me a place in one of the country towns, that I may live there! Why should I, your servant, live in the royal city with you?"

⁶ So, on that day Achish gave him Ziklag. That is why Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day.

⁷ The length of time that David lived in the country of the Philistines was one year and four months. ⁸ David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites and the Amalekites. For these peoples had been living from ancient times in the land on the way to Shur and as far as the land of Egypt.

⁹ David used to attack the land without leaving any man or woman alive. However, he used to take away sheep, cattle, donkeys, camels and garments. When he returned and came to Achish, ¹⁰ Achish asked, "Have you men not made a raid today?"

David said, "Against the Negev of Judah," or, "Against the Negev of the Jerahmeelites," or, "Against the Negev of the Kenites."

¹¹ David would not spare the life of any man or woman and bring them to Gath. He thought: "I do not want them to give information about us and say, 'This is what David has done.'" He regularly did this all the time he lived in the country of the Philistines.

¹² Achish trusted David. He thought, "Because he has made his people Israel utterly detest him, he will always be my servant."

28

Saul's visit to the witch at Endor — compare Deuteronomy 18:9-14

¹ In those days the Philistines gathered their forces for war, to fight against Israel. Achish told David, "You should understand clearly that you and your men are coming out with me in the army!"

² David told Achish, "Very well, you shall learn for yourself what I, your servant, can do!"

Achish told David, "Very well, I shall make you my bodyguard for life."

³ Samuel had died and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his own city of Ramah. Saul had

expelled the mediums and the spiritists from the land.

⁴ The Philistines assembled and came to Shunem, where they set up camp. Saul gathered all Israel, and they set up camp at Gilboa. ⁵ When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid and very perturbed at heart. ⁶ When Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by the Urim or by the prophets. ⁷ Then Saul told his officials, "Search out for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her!"

His officials told him, "Indeed, there is a woman medium at En-Dor."

⁸ Saul disguised himself by putting on different clothes. Saul left with two men, and they went to the woman by night. He said, "Please use a spirit to practise divination and bring up for me the one whom I shall name to you!"

⁹ However, the woman told him: "Surely you yourself know what Saul has done. He has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why, then, are you laying a trap for my life to bring about my death?"

¹⁰ However, Saul swore to her by the LORD, "As surely as the LORD lives, you will not be punished in any way for this."

¹¹ Then the woman asked, "Whom shall I bring up for you?"

He said, "Bring Samuel up for me!"

¹² When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out aloud. The woman asked Saul: "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!"

¹³ The king told her: "Do not be afraid! However, what have you seen?"

The woman told Saul, "I have seen a spirit of the dead coming up out of the ground."

¹⁴ He asked her, "What does he look like?"

She said, "An old man is coming up and wrapping himself in a robe."

Then Saul knew that it was Samuel and bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground.

¹⁵ Then Samuel asked Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"

Saul answered: "I am in great distress. The Philistines are making war against me. God has also turned away from me and has not been answering me any longer, either through prophets or by dreams. So, I have called on you to inform me what I shall do."

¹⁶ Samuel said: "Why, then, do you ask me, since the LORD has turned from you and has become your enemy?" ¹⁷ The LORD has done to you what He told you through me. The LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to your neighbour, David.

¹⁸ Because you did not listen to what the LORD had said and did not carry out His fierce wrath against Amalek, the LORD has done this to you this day.

¹⁹ The LORD will also give both Israel and you into the hands of the Philistines and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also deliv-

er the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines.”

²⁰ Then immediately Saul fell full length on the ground. He was very afraid because of what Samuel had said. He had no strength in him, for he had not eaten any food all that day and all that night. ²¹ When the woman came to Saul she saw that he was terrified. She told him: “Look! I, your maidservant, have obeyed you. I have risked my life and have listened to what you have told me. ²² Now therefore, you yourself should please also obey me, your maidservant! Let me set a piece of bread before you! Then eat, that you may be strong when you go on your way!”

²³ However, he refused and said: “I shall not eat.” However, his officials and the woman urged him, and he followed their advice. So, he got up from the ground and sat on the bed. ²⁴ The woman had a fattened bull-calf at her house. She quickly butchered it, took some flour, kneaded it and used it to bake bread without yeast. ²⁵ When she had served it to Saul and his officials and they had eaten, they got up and went away that night.

29

David's dilemma about being forced to fight against Israel and Achish's dismissal of David to Ziklag

¹ The Philistines had gathered all their forces at Aphek. The Israelites had camped beside the spring that is in Jezreel. ² While the princes of the Philistines were marching along in companies of hundreds and thousands, David and his men were marching along at the rear with Achish. ³ The commanders of the Philistines asked, “What about these Hebrews?”

Achish told the commanders of the Philistines: “Is this not David, the servant of Saul, the king of Israel? He has been with me already for a year or two. I have found no fault in him from the day when he deserted to me until now.”

⁴ However, the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him. The commanders of the Philistines told him: “Send the man back, that he may return to his place, to which you have assigned him! He must not go down with us into battle, that he may not turn against us during the battle! For how could this fellow regain his master's favour? Would it not be with the heads of the men here? ⁵ Is not this David, about whom people sing to one another in dances: ‘Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his ten thousands’?”

⁶ Then Achish called David and told him: “As surely as the LORD lives, you have been honest, and I consider that it is right that you should associate with me in the army. For I have found nothing wrong in you from the day when you came to me until today. Nevertheless, the princes do not approve of you. ⁷ Now therefore, go back! Leave in peace, without doing anything to displease the princes of the Philistines!”

⁸ David asked Achish: “Indeed, what have I done? What have you found against me, your servant, from

the day when I came to you until now, that I should not go and fight against the enemies of my master, the king?”

⁹ Achish answered David: “I know that I consider that you are as good as an angel of God. Nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, ‘He shall not come into the battle with us!’ ¹⁰ Now therefore, get up early in the morning with the servants of your Lord, who have come with you! Get up early in the morning and leave as soon as you have light!”

¹¹ David and his men got up early in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines, but the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

30

A raid of the Amalekites on Ziklag and David's destruction of the Amalekites

¹ Before David and his men arrived at Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid against the Negev and against Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burnt it. ² They had taken captive the women and all the rest who were in it, both young and old. They had not killed anyone but had carried them off and gone on their way. ³ When David and his men reached the city, they found that it had been destroyed by fire and that their wives, sons and daughters had been taken captive. ⁴ Then David and the soldiers who were with him wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. ⁵ David's two wives had also been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. ⁶ David was in great difficulty, because the soldiers spoke about stoning him. For all the soldiers were grieving, each for his sons and daughters. However, David felt himself strengthened in the LORD, his God. ⁷ David told the priest Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, “Please bring me the priestly garment!”

So, Abiathar brought the priestly garment to David.

⁸ David inquired of the LORD: “Shall I pursue this raiding party? Shall I catch up with them?”

He answered him: “Pursue them! For you will certainly catch up and will certainly succeed in a rescue.”

⁹ So, David and the six hundred men who were with him set out and reached the Besor Brook, where some were left to remain behind. ¹⁰ David and four hundred men went in pursuit and two hundred men stayed behind. They were too exhausted to cross the Besor Brook. ¹¹ They found an Egyptian in the open country and brought him to David. They gave him food to eat and water to drink. ¹² They also gave him a slice of a cake of figs and two cakes of raisins. When he had eaten, he revived, for he had not eaten food or drunk water for three days and three nights. ¹³ David asked him: “To whom do you belong? Where are you from?”

He said: “I am an Egyptian servant, the slave of an Amalekite. My master left me behind because I became ill three days ago. ¹⁴ We had made a raid against

the Negev of the Cherethites, against the territory of Judah, against the Negev of Caleb and burned Ziklag.”

¹⁵ David asked him, “Will you lead me down to this raiding party?”

He said: “Swear to me by God that you will not kill me and that you will not hand me over to my master! Then I shall lead you down to this raiding party.”

¹⁶ When he had taken him down, they saw them spread about all over the open countryside, eating, drinking and dancing, because they had taken so much plunder from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. ¹⁷ David struck them down from the light before dawn until the evening of the next day. None of them escaped, except for four hundred young men, who rode off on camels and fled. ¹⁸ David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken. David also rescued his two wives. ¹⁹ They had lost nothing, either young or old, sons or daughters, plunder or anything else that the raiders had taken. David brought everything back. ²⁰ David also seized all the sheep and cattle. The soldiers drove them ahead of the other livestock and said, “This is David’s plunder.”

²¹ Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow David and whom the others had left behind at the Brook Besor. They came out to meet David and to meet the rest of the soldiers who were with him. When David approached those soldiers, he greeted them. ²² Then all the wicked and worthless fellows among the men who had gone with David said: “Because they have not gone with us, we shall not give them any of the plunder that we have recovered. However, each man may take away his wife and children and leave.”

²³ However, David said: “You shall not do that, my brothers, with what the LORD has given us! He has protected us and put into our hands the raiding party that had come against us. ²⁴ Who would listen to you on this subject? For the share of the man who stays with the baggage shall be the same as that of the man who goes down into the battle! They shall share alike!”

²⁵ He made it a rule and a custom for Israel from that day until today. ²⁶ When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the plunder to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, “Here is a present for you from the plunder taken from the enemies of the LORD.”

²⁷ He sent it to those who were at Bethel, at Ramoth

in the Negev, at Jattir, ²⁸ at Aroer, at Siphmoth, at Eshtemoa, ²⁹ at Racal, in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, in the cities of the Kenites, ³⁰ at Hormah, at Borashan, at Athach, ³¹ at Hebron and for all the places where David and his men had been moving back and forth.

31

The death of Saul and his three sons at Mount Gilboa — 1 Chronicles 10:1-14

¹ When the Philistines were fighting against Israel, the men of Israel fled before the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ² The Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons and the Philistines struck down Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchi-Shua, the sons of Saul. ³ The battle grew fierce against Saul. When the archers who were shooting hit him, they wounded him severely. ⁴ Then Saul told his armour-bearer: “Draw your sword and stab me with it, that these uncircumcised men may not come, stab me and abuse me!”

However, his armour-bearer refused, because he was very afraid. So, Saul took his own sword and fell on it.

⁵ When his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his own sword and died with him. ⁶ So, Saul, his three sons, his armour-bearer and all his men died together that day. ⁷ When the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley and those across the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled. Then the Philistines came and lived in them. ⁸ The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹ They cut off his head, stripped off his armour and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim the good news in the temples of their idols and among the people.

¹⁰ They put his armour in the temple of Ashtaroath and fastened his body to the wall of Beth-Shan. ¹¹ However, when the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹² all the brave men set out, walked all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-Shan. Then they came back to Jabesh and burned them there. ¹³ They took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh and then fasted for seven days.

2 SAMUEL

1

The report to David about Saul's death— 1 Samuel 31:1-13, 1 Chronicles 10:1-12

¹ After Saul died and David returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained in Ziklag for two days. ² On the third day a man arrived from Saul's camp. His clothes were torn, and he had dust on his head. When he came to David, he fell to the ground to pay him honour. ³ David asked him, "Where then do you come from?"

He answered him: "I have escaped from the camp of Israel."

⁴ David asked him, "How has the business turned out? Please tell me!"

He answered: "The army fled from the battle and many of the soldiers have also fallen and are dead. Saul and his son Jonathan are also dead."

⁵ Then David asked the young man who was bringing him the report, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?"

⁶ Then the young man who was bringing the report said: "I happened to be on Mount Gilboa and saw Saul leaning on his spear and look! The chariots and the horsemen had caught up with him. ⁷ When he looked behind him and saw me, he called out to me. I answered, 'Yes, I am here.' ⁸ He asked me, 'Who are you?' I told him: 'I am an Amalekite.' ⁹ Then he told me: 'Please, stand over me and kill me! For a seizure of weakness has gripped me, and yet I am still fully alive.' ¹⁰ I stood over him and killed him. For I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. Then I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm and have brought them here to my master."

¹¹ Then David took hold of his own clothes and tore them. All the men who were with him did the same.

¹² Then they mourned, wept and fasted until evening for Saul, for Jonathan his son, for the army of the LORD and for the family of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. ¹³ Then David asked the young man who had brought him the report, "Where then are you from?"

He answered, "I am the son of a foreign resident, an Amalekite."

¹⁴ David asked him, "How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the one whom the LORD had anointed?"

¹⁵ Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go up to him and attack him!"

He struck him down so that he died. ¹⁶ David told him: "Your blood be on your own head! For your own mouth testified against you, when you said, 'I have killed the one whom the LORD anointed.'"

David's lament for Saul and Jonathan

¹⁷ David sang this song of mourning over Saul and his son Jonathan. ¹⁸ He gave the order that the people of

Judah should be taught this lament of the bow. Indeed, it is recorded in the Book of Jashar.

¹⁹ "Your beauty, O Israel, has been slain on your high places. How the warriors have fallen!

²⁰ "Do not tell it in Gath! Do not tell the news in the streets of Ashkelon, that the daughters of the Philistines may not be glad, that the daughters of the uncircumcised may not be triumphant!

²¹ "You mountains in Gilboa, may there be no dew or rain on you, no fields that yield offerings! For the shields of warriors have been defiled there. The shield of Saul is no longer anointed with olive-oil.

²² "The bow of Jonathan did not draw back from the blood of slain men or from the fat of warriors. The sword of Saul also did not return without success.

²³ "Saul and Jonathan — they were loved and pleasant while they were living. They were not parted when they died. They were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions.

²⁴ "You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet and with ornaments and who put golden jewellery on your dresses!

²⁵ "How the warriors have fallen in the middle of the battle! On your high places Jonathan has been slain.

²⁶ "I am grieving over you, my brother Jonathan. You have been very dear to me. Your love has been more wonderful to me than the love of women.

²⁷ "How the warriors have fallen! How the weapons of war have been ruined!"

2

The anointing of David as the king of Judah

¹ After this, David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up into one of the cities of Judah?"

The LORD told him, "Go up!"

David asked, "Where shall I go up?"

He said, "To Hebron."

² David went up there, together with his two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. ³ David also brought up his men, who were with him, each man with his family, and they lived in the cities around Hebron. ⁴ Then the men of Judah came and there they anointed David to be the king over the family of Judah. Some people told David, "The men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul."

⁵ So, David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-Gilead and told them: "May the LORD bless you! For you have performed this faithful, loving act to your master, Saul, and have buried him. ⁶ Now therefore, may the LORD treat you mercifully and faithfully! Because you have done this, I shall also repay you for this kindness. ⁷ Now therefore, be strong and courageous! For your master Saul is dead and the family of Judah has also anointed me as king over them."

The crowning of Ish-Bosheth as king of Israel and the war between the families of David and Saul

⁸ However, Abner the son of Ner, the commander of Saul's army, had taken Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul and brought him across to Mahanaim. ⁹ He had made him king over Gilead, the Ashurites, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin and over all the rest of Israel. ¹⁰ Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he became king over Israel and reigned for two years. Nevertheless, the family of Judah followed David. ¹¹ The length of time during which David was king in Hebron over the family of Judah was seven years and six months.

The contest between the followers of David and followers of the family of Saul at Gibeon

¹² Abner, the son of Ner, and the officials of Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul, left Mahanaim and went to Gibeon. ¹³ Joab, the son of Zeruiah, and the officials of David went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. One group sat down on one side of the pool, and the other group on the other side of the pool. ¹⁴ Abner told Joab, "Please, let the young men get up and have a contest before us!"

Joab answered, "Let them get up!"

¹⁵ They stood up and were counted as they went across. There were twelve for Benjamin and Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul, and twelve from the officials of David. ¹⁶ Each grasped his opponent by the head and thrust his sword into his opponent's side. Therefore, they fell together. Therefore, that place at Gibeon was called "Helkath-Hazzurim."⁹² ¹⁷ There was very fierce fighting that day, and David's officials defeated Abner and the men of Israel. ¹⁸ The three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, Abishai and Asahel. Asahel was as fast on his feet as a wild gazelle.

¹⁹ Asahel pursued Abner and, as he followed him, he turned neither to the right hand nor to the left. ²⁰ When Abner looked behind him he asked, "Is that you, Asahel?"

Asahel answered, "Yes, it is."

²¹ Abner told him, "Turn off to the right or to the left, catch one of the young men and take his equipment!" However, Asahel would not stop chasing him. ²² Then Abner told Asahel again: "Stop chasing me! Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I look your brother Joab in the face?"

²³ However, he refused to go away. So, Abner struck him in the stomach with the butt end of his spear, so that the spear came out at his back. Asahel fell there and died on the spot. Everyone stood still when he came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died.

²⁴ Joab and Abishai also pursued Abner. At sunset they came to the Hill of Ammah, which is opposite Giah, on the road to the Wilderness of Gibeon. ²⁵ The people of Benjamin rallied behind Abner. They formed one group and took their stand on the top of a hill. ²⁶ Then Abner called out to Joab: "Must the sword devour for ever? Do you not know that this will

come to a bitter end? How long will it be before you tell your men to stop pursuing their fellow-Israelites?"

²⁷ Joab answered: "As surely as God lives, if you had not spoken, the men would certainly not have stopped pursuing their fellow-Israelites until morning."

²⁸ So, Joab blew the trumpet and all the men came to a halt. They did not pursue Israel any longer or fight any longer. ²⁹ Abner and his men walked all that night through the Arabah. They crossed over the Jordan, went through the whole valley and arrived at Mahanaim. ³⁰ Joab returned from pursuing Abner. When he had gathered all the soldiers together, nineteen of David's servants were missing besides Asahel. ³¹ However, the servants of David had struck down and killed three hundred and sixty men of Benjamin and men who had been with Abner. ³² They took up Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb, which was at Bethlehem. Joab and his men marched all night and arrived at Hebron at daybreak.

3

¹ The war between the family of Saul and the family of David lasted for a long time. David became stronger and stronger, while the family of Saul became weaker and weaker.

David's family — 1 Chronicles 3:1-4

² Sons were born to David at Hebron. His first-born was Amnon, the son of Ahinoam from Jezreel. ³ His second was Chileab, the son of Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. The third was Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, the king of Geshur. ⁴ The fourth was Adonijah, the son of Haggith. The fifth was Shephatiah the son of Abital. ⁵ The sixth was Ithream, the son of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David at Hebron.

Abner's decision to join David

⁶ During the war between the family of Saul and the family of David, Abner kept making himself more powerful in Saul's family. ⁷ Saul had had a concubine named Rizpah, who was the daughter of Aiah. Ish-Bosheth asked Abner, "Why have you slept with my father's concubine?"

⁸ Abner became very angry because of Ish-Bosheth's question. He replied: "Am I a dog's head, on Judah's side? To this day I keep on showing loyal kindness to the family of your father, Saul, and to his relatives and his friends. I have also prevented you from falling into the hands of David. Yet now you have accused me of an offence involving this woman! ⁹ May God deal severely with Abner and do even worse to him, if I do not accomplish for David what the LORD has promised to him with an oath, ¹⁰ by transferring the kingdom from the family of Saul and establishing the throne of David over Israel in addition to Judah, from Dan to Beer-Sheba!"

¹¹ Ish-Bosheth did not dare to say another word to Abner, because he was afraid of him. ¹² Abner sent messengers to David on his behalf, to ask: "To whom

⁹² Helkath-Hazzurim means, "Field of Flint Blades."

does the land belong? Make your covenant with me, and I shall certainly assist you personally to make all Israel change sides and join you.”

¹³ David said: “Good! I shall make a covenant with you. Nevertheless, I require one thing from you. You shall not come into my presence unless you first bring Saul’s daughter Michal when you first come to me!”

¹⁴ Then David sent messengers to Ish-Bosheth, Saul’s son, to ask: “Give me my wife Michal, to whom I became engaged with the price of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.”

¹⁵ Ish-Bosheth sent instructions to take her away from her husband Paltiel, the son of Laish. ¹⁶ However, her husband went with her, weeping behind her all the way to Bahurim. When Abner told him, “Leave and go back!” he went back. ¹⁷ Abner had conferred with the elders of Israel, saying: “For some time past you have been trying to get David to be king over you.

¹⁸ Now therefore, do it! For the LORD has promised David, ‘Through My servant David I shall save My people Israel from the Philistines and from all their other enemies.’”

¹⁹ Abner also spoke to Benjamin in person. Then Abner also went to tell David in person at Hebron everything that Israel and the whole family of Benjamin had decided to do. ²⁰ When Abner came with twenty men to David at Hebron, David prepared a feast for Abner and the men who were with him. ²¹ Abner told David: “I shall go at once, that I may gather all Israel to my master, the king, that they may make a covenant with you and that you may be king over all that your heart desires.”

David sent Abner away, and he left in peace.

Joab’s murder of Abner

²² Just then the servants of David arrived with Joab from a raid and brought much plunder with them. However, Abner was no longer with David at Hebron. For David had sent him away, and he had left in peace. ²³ When Joab and all the army that was with him arrived, Joab was told: “Abner, the son of Ner, has come to the king. He has sent him away, and he has left in peace.”

²⁴ Then Joab went to the king and asked: “What have you done? Look! When Abner came to you, why is it that you have sent him away, so that he has already left? ²⁵ You know that Abner, the son of Ner, came to deceive you, to find out about your movements and to get to know everything that you are doing.”

²⁶ When Joab had left David, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah. However, David did not know about it.

²⁷ When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside to the middle of the gateway to speak with him privately. There he stabbed him in the stomach. So, Abner died because he had killed Joab’s brother Asahel. ²⁸ Afterwards, when David heard about it, he said: “I and my kingdom are for ever guiltless before

the LORD for the murder of Abner, the son of Ner. ²⁹ May it fall on the head of Joab and on all his father’s family! May the family of Joab never be without someone with a running sore, afflicted with a skin-disease, who can only grasp the disk on a spindle, who falls by the sword or who lacks food!”

³⁰ Joab and his brother Abishai had murdered Abner, because he killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon. ³¹ Then David told Joab and all the people who were with him: “Tear your clothes! Put on sack-cloth and walk in mourning in front of Abner!”

King David also followed the open casket. ³² They buried Abner at Hebron. The king wept aloud at the grave of Abner. All the people also wept. ³³ The king sang this lament for Abner: “Should Abner die as a fool dies? ³⁴ Your hands were not tied up. Your feet were not placed in bronze chains. You fell as someone falls before wicked men.”

Then all the people wept over him again. ³⁵ Then all the people came to give David food to comfort him while it was still daylight. However, David swore an oath, saying, “May God deal severely with me and do even worse, if I taste bread or any other food before the sun sets!”

³⁶ All the people took notice of it and approved of it, as all the people approved of everything else that the king did. ³⁷ On that day all the people and all Israel knew that it had not been the king’s intention to put Abner, the son of Ner, to death. ³⁸ Then the king asked his officials: “Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen in Israel today? ³⁹ I have been weak today, although I am the anointed king. These men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too cruel for me. May the LORD repay the evildoer as his evil deed deserves!”

4

The murder of Ish-Bosheth

¹ When Saul’s son heard that Abner had died at Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel was dismayed.

² Saul’s son had two men who were captains of raiding parties. The name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other was Rechab. They were men of Benjamin, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth. Indeed, Beeroth also used to be considered a part of Benjamin.

³ However, the people of Beeroth fled to Gittaim and have been living there like foreigners to this day.

⁴ Jonathan, the son of Saul, had a son with crippled feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse picked him up and fled. While she was hurrying to leave, he fell and became lame. His name was Mephi-Bosheth.

⁵ Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth, set out for the house of Ish-Bosheth and arrived at the hottest time of the day, while he was taking his midday rest. ⁶ They came into the inner part of the house as if to get some wheat and stabbed him in the stomach. Then Rechab and his brother Baanah

escaped. ⁷ They had come into the house while he was lying on his bed in his bedroom, had struck him, had put him to death and had beheaded him. Then they took his head and walked all night by way of the Jordan Valley. ⁸ They brought the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron. They told the king: “Here is the head of Ish-Bosheth, the son of Saul, your enemy, who tried to take your life. The LORD has given my master the king revenge today on Saul and on his descendants.”

⁹ However, David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth: “As surely as the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from all distress, ¹⁰ when someone told me, ‘Look! Saul is dead,’ and thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag. That was the reward I gave him for his news. ¹¹ How much more, when wicked men have killed an innocent man in his own house on his bed! Shall I not now hold you accountable for your murder of him and rid the earth of you?”

¹² So, David gave an order to his men, and they killed them. They cut off their hands and feet and hanged their bodies beside the pool in Hebron. However, they took the head of Ish-Bosheth and buried it in Abner’s tomb at Hebron.

5

The anointing of David as king over all Israel — 1 Chronicles 11:1-3

¹ All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said: “Look! We are your own bone and flesh. ² Even in times past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out on campaigns and brought them home again. The LORD told you, ‘**You will shepherd My people Israel and become the leader over Israel.**’”

³ When all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. ⁴ David had been thirty years old when he had become king and reigned for forty years.

⁵ At Hebron he had reigned over Judah for seven years and six months. Then at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah for thirty-three years.

The capture and enlargement of Jerusalem — 1 Chronicles 11:4-9, 1 Chronicles 14:1-7

⁶ The king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, who were living in the land. They told David: “You will certainly not get in here. Even the blind and the lame have been keeping you away!” They thought, “David will not get in here.”

⁷ Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is, the City of David. ⁸ On that day David had said: “Anyone who defeats the Jebusites will have to attack ‘the lame and the blind,’ whom David despises, by using the water shaft.”

That is why there is the saying, “The blind and the lame will not get inside the house.”

⁹ David lived in the stronghold and called it “The City of David.” David built up the area all around, on the inside of the supporting terraces. ¹⁰ David became increasingly powerful, because the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.

Hiram’s friendship with David — 1 Chronicles 3:5-9, 14:1-7

¹¹ Hiram, the king of Tyre, sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs, as well as carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David.

¹² David knew that the LORD had established him as the king over Israel and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

¹³ David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem after he had come from Hebron, and more sons and daughters were born to David. ¹⁴ These are the names of the children who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵ Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶ Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet.

David’s defeat of the Philistines — 1 Chronicles 14:8-17

¹⁷ When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines came up to search for David. However, David heard about it and went down to the stronghold. ¹⁸ The Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁹ David inquired of the LORD: “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hands?”

The LORD told David: “Go up! For I shall certainly deliver the Philistines into your hands.”

²⁰ David went to Baal-Perazim and David defeated them there. He said, “The LORD has broken through my enemies before me like the bursting of a dam.”

That is why he named that place “Baal-Perazim.”^{*93}

²¹ The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them away. ²² The Philistines came up yet again and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. ²³ When David inquired of the LORD, He said: “You shall not go up! Circle around behind them and approach them from the direction of the balsam trees! ²⁴ When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then pay attention! For then the LORD has gone out ahead of you to strike down the army of the Philistines.”

²⁵ David did as the LORD commanded him and struck down the Philistines all the way from Geba to Gezer.

6

The bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem — 1 Chronicles 13:1-14, 1 Chronicles 15:25-16:3

¹ David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand men. ² David and all the people who were with him started out from Baale-Judah and went to bring up the Ark of God from where it was, the Ark that is called by the Name, the name of the LORD of hosts, who sits over the cherubim. ³ They placed the

⁹³ Baal-Perazim means, “Master of the breakthrough.”

Ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart. ⁴ They brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. As they accompanied the Ark of God, Ahio was walking in front of the Ark. ⁵ David and all the family of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of instruments made from fir wood, lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals. ⁶ When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out to the Ark of God and took hold of it, because the oxen caused it to go loose. ⁷ The LORD became very angry with Uzzah and God struck him down there because of his irreverent act. So, he died there beside the Ark of God. ⁸ David was angry because the LORD had burst forth against Uzzah. That place has been called “Perez-Uzzah” to this day.⁹⁴ ⁹ David was afraid of the LORD that day and asked, “How can the Ark of the LORD come to me?” ¹⁰ So, David was not willing to take the Ark of the LORD to be with him in the City of David. Instead, David took it aside to the house of Obed-Edom, who was from Gath. ¹¹ The Ark of the LORD remained at the house of Obed-Edom, the Gittite, for three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-Edom and his whole family. ¹² King David was told, “The LORD has been blessing the family of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the Ark of God.” Then David went and joyfully brought the Ark of God up from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David. ¹³ When those who were carrying the Ark of the LORD had gone six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ David was dancing in the presence of the LORD with all his might. David was wearing a linen priestly garment. ¹⁵ So, David and all the family of Israel kept bringing up the Ark of the LORD with shouts of joy and with the blowing of horns. ¹⁶ When the Ark of the LORD came to the City of David, Michal, Saul’s daughter, looked down through a window. saw King David leaping and dancing in the presence of the LORD and despised him in her heart. ¹⁷ They brought the Ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had put up for it. Then David sacrificed burnt offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD. ¹⁸ When David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. ¹⁹ He also distributed to all the people, to the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women, one loaf of bread, one cake of dates and one cake of raisins. Then all the people went to their homes. ²⁰ When David returned to bless his family, Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet David and said: “How the king of Israel has distinguished him-

self today! He has exposed himself today for the maidservants of his officials to see him, as one of the vulgar fellows might shamelessly expose himself!”

²¹ David told Michal: “It was before the LORD, who has chosen me rather than your father and all his family, and He has appointed me as the leader over Israel, the people of the LORD. So, I shall celebrate before the LORD. ²² I shall make myself even more undignified than this and have a humble opinion of myself. However, I shall be held in honour by the maidservants about whom you have spoken.”

²³ Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no children all her life.

7

The promise about David's divine Descendant — 1 Chronicles 17:1-15

¹ When the king settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his neighbouring enemies, ² the king told Nathan the prophet, “Look! I am living in a house of cedar, while the Ark of God remains inside the curtains of a tent.”

³ Nathan told the king: “Go and do whatever you have in mind! For the LORD is with you.”

⁴ However, that night the Word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying: ⁵ “Go and tell My servant David: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Are you the one who will build a house for Me to live in? ⁶ For I have not lived in a house since I brought the Israelites up from Egypt, until this time. Instead, I have been moving about in a tent as a dwelling. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about with all the Israelites, have I ever spoken a Word to anyone from the tribes of Israel whom I had commanded to shepherd My people Israel, to ask: ‘Why have you not built a house of cedar for Me?’”’”

⁸ Now therefore, this is what you shall tell My servant David: ‘This is what **the LORD of hosts has said**: “I have taken you from the pasture where you were following the sheep to be **a leader over My people Israel**. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies who were in front of you. I shall make a great name for you, like the names of the greatest men on the earth. ¹⁰ I shall provide a place for My people Israel and plant them, that they may live in a place of their own and not be disturbed any longer. Wicked people will no longer oppress them as they used to do at the beginning, ¹¹ since the time when I appointed judges over My people Israel. I shall give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also tells you that the LORD will make a house for you. ¹² When your days are complete and you lie down with your ancestors, I shall raise up **your Descendant** after you, who will **come from your body**, and I shall establish **His kingdom**. ¹³ He will build a house for My name and I shall make **the throne of His kingdom stand for ever**. ¹⁴ **I shall be His Father, and He will be My Son**. If He becomes guilty, I shall discipline Him with the rod of men and with

⁹⁴ Perez-Uzzah means, “Bursting forth of Uzzah.”

blows inflicted by men. ¹⁵ I shall not stop being faithfully loving to Him as I did to Saul, whom I put out of your way. ¹⁶ Your **house** and your kingdom will **stand firm before you for ever**. Your **throne will be established for ever**.””

¹⁷ Nathan told David all these Words, exactly as everything had been revealed in the vision.

David's prayer in response — 1 Chronicles 17:16-27

¹⁸ Then King David went in and sat down before the LORD. He asked: “Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my family, that You have brought me as far as this?”

¹⁹ Moreover, You have considered even this a small thing, O Lord GOD. You have also spoken about the distant future of Your servant's family, and this is the teaching about the Man, O Lord GOD. ²⁰ What more, then, can David still say to You, since You know Your servant, O Lord GOD? ²¹ Because of Your promise and according to Your own will You have brought about all this greatness and so You are making them known to Your servant. ²² Therefore, You are great, O Lord GOD. For there is no one like You and there is no other God except You, exactly as we have heard with our own ears. ²³ Moreover, who is like Your people Israel? It is the one nation on the earth that God has come to redeem to be His own people and to make a name for Himself. You have also done great and awesome things for Yourself, to benefit Your own land. You have done them in the presence of Your people, whom You have redeemed to be Your own, from Egypt, from the nations and from their gods. ²⁴ You have established Your people Israel for Yourself, to be Your very own people for ever. You, O LORD, have also become their God. ²⁵ Now therefore, O LORD God, make the promise that You have made about Your servant and about his house come true for ever! Do also as You have promised, ²⁶ that Your name may be great for ever, when people say, ‘The LORD of hosts is God over Israel!’ Then the house of Your servant David will be established in Your presence. ²⁷ For You, O LORD of hosts, O God of Israel, have revealed it for Your servant to hear, by saying, ‘I shall build a house for you.’ That is why Your servant has found the courage to make this prayer to You. ²⁸ Now therefore, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your Words will be true, since You have promised this good thing to Your servant. ²⁹ Now therefore, please proceed to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue in Your presence for ever! For You, O Lord GOD, have promised it and, with Your blessing, the house of Your servant will be blessed for ever.”

8

David's victories in various wars — 1 Chronicles 18:1-13

¹ After this, David defeated the Philistines and made them his subjects. David also took Metheg-Ammah away from the control of the Philistines. ² When he defeated Moab, he made the Moabites lie down on the

ground and measured them off with a length of rope. He measured two lengths of them to be put to death and one full length to be allowed to live. Then the Moabites became subjects of David and paid taxes to him. ³ David also defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, the king of Zobah, when he went to restore his control at the Euphrates River. ⁴ David captured from him one thousand, seven hundred horsemen and twenty thousand foot-soldiers. David cut the leg tendons of all the chariot horses but left enough for a hundred chariots. ⁵ When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, the king of Zobah, David struck down twenty-two thousand Arameans. ⁶ Then David put garrisons among the Arameans around Damascus and the Arameans became subjects of David and paid taxes to him. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. ⁷ David took the golden shields that belonged to the officials of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸ King David also took a very large quantity of bronze from the cities Bethah and Berothai, which belonged to Hadadezer. ⁹ When Toi, the king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, ¹⁰ Toi sent his son Joram to King David, to ask about his health and to congratulate him for his victory in battle over Hadadezer. For Hadadezer had often been at war against Toi. Joram brought with him articles of gold, silver and bronze. ¹¹ King David also dedicated these articles to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the other nations that he had subdued. ¹² They came from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines and the Amalekites and included some of the plunder taken from Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, the king of Zobah. ¹³ David made a name for himself when he returned after striking down eighteen thousand Arameans in the Valley of Salt. ¹⁴ Then he put garrisons in Edom. He put garrisons everywhere in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's subjects. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

A list of David's officials — 1 Chronicles 18:14-17

¹⁵ So, David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people. ¹⁶ Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was over the army and Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was the recorder. ¹⁷ Zadok, the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, were the priests and Seraiah was the secretary. ¹⁸ Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was in charge of both the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons were chief ministers.

9

David's kind treatment of Mephi-Bosheth

¹ David asked, “Is there still anyone left of the family of Saul, that I may treat him kindly for Jonathan's sake?”

² Saul's family had a servant whose name was Ziba. They called him to come to David. The king asked

him, "Are you Ziba?"

He replied, "Yes, I am your servant."

³ The king asked, "Is there no one still left of Saul's family, that I may show the kindness of God to him?"

Ziba told the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan, whose feet are crippled."

⁴ The king asked him, "Where is he?"

Ziba told the king, "He is, indeed, at the home of Machir, the son of Ammiel, at Lo-Debar."

⁵ Then King David sent men and brought him from the home of Machir, the son of Ammiel, at Lo-Debar.

⁶ When Mephi-Bosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he fell reverently on his face. David said, "Mephi-Bosheth!"

He answered, "Yes, I, your servant, am here."

⁷ David told him: "Do not be afraid! For I shall certainly treat you kindly for the sake of your father Jonathan. I shall also restore to you all the land of your grandfather, Saul, and you shall always eat at my table."

⁸ Mephi-Bosheth bowed down and asked, "What is your servant, that you should have concerned yourself about a dead dog like me?"

⁹ Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and told him: "I have given your master's grandson all that belonged to Saul and to his whole family. ¹⁰ You, your sons and your servants shall cultivate the land for him and shall bring in the produce, that your master's grandson may have bread to eat! However, Mephi-Bosheth, your master's grandson, shall always eat at my table!"

Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. ¹¹ Then Ziba told the king, "I, your servant, shall do whatever my master, the king, commands me, his servant, to do."

So, Mephi-Bosheth used to eat at David's table like one of the king's sons. ¹² Mephi-Bosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. All who lived at Ziba's house became Mephi-Bosheth's servants. ¹³ Mephi-Bosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he always ate at the king's table. He was crippled in both his feet.

10

David's defeat of the Ammonites and the Arameans — 1 Chronicles 19:1-19

¹ After this, the king of the Ammonites died, and Hanun, his son, succeeded him as king. ² David thought, "I shall treat Hanun, the son of Nahash, kindly as his father has been treating me kindly."

So, David sent a message through his officials to express sympathy to him concerning his father. When David's officials came to the land of the Ammonites,

³ the princes of the Ammonites asked their master Hanun: "Do you think that David is honouring your father, because he has sent men to you to express sympathy? Has not David sent his officials to you to investigate the city, to spy it out and to overthrow it?"

⁴ So, Hanun took David's officials, shaved off half of

each man's beard, cut their garments off in the middle, at their buttocks and sent them away. ⁵ When people told David, he sent men to meet them, for those men were deeply humiliated. The king said, "Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown and then come back!"

⁶ When the Ammonites realised that they had made themselves odious to David, the Ammonites sent men and hired twenty thousand foot-soldiers from the Arameans of Beth-Rehob and the Arameans of Zobah, as well as the king of Maacah with one thousand men and twelve thousand men from Tob. ⁷ When David heard about it, he sent Joab out with the whole army of fighting men. ⁸ The Ammonites came out and drew up in battle formation at the entrance of the city-gate, and the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the open country. ⁹ When Joab saw that there were battle lines against him both in front and in the rear, he selected some of the best soldiers in Israel and deployed them against the Arameans. ¹⁰ He put the rest of the army under the command of his brother Abishai and deployed them against the Ammonites. ¹¹ Joab said: "If the Arameans are too strong for me, you shall come to rescue me! However, if the Ammonites are too strong for you, I shall come to rescue you. ¹² Be brave and let us show ourselves courageous for our people and for the cities of our God! Then the LORD will do what He considers good."

¹³ Then Joab and the troops who were with him advanced to fight against the Arameans, and they fled before him. ¹⁴ When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans had fled, they also fled from Abishai and went inside the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem. ¹⁵ However, when the Arameans saw that Israel had defeated them, they gathered together. ¹⁶ Hadadezer sent a message and brought out the Arameans who were on the other side of the Euphrates. They came to Helam, with Shobach, the commander of the army of Hadadezer, leading them. ¹⁷ When David was told about this, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan and went to Helam. The Arameans drew up their lines of battle against David and fought against him. ¹⁸ The Arameans fled from Israel, and David killed seven hundred Aramean chariot drivers and forty thousand Aramean horsemen. He also struck down Shobach, the commander of their army, and he died there. ¹⁹ When all the kings who had been subject to Hadadezer saw that Israel had defeated them, they made peace with Israel and became subject to them. The Arameans were afraid to come to rescue the Ammonites again.

11

David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah

¹ In the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, David sent out Joab with his officers and

all Israel. They ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. However, David remained at Jerusalem. ² In the evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the royal palace. From the roof, he saw a woman bathing and the woman was very beautiful. ³ David sent someone to ask about the woman, and he asked, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

⁴ Then David sent messengers, and they fetched her. She came to him and he lay with her. She had just cleansed herself from her uncleanness. Then she went back home. ⁵ The woman conceived and she sent someone to tell David, "I am pregnant."

⁶ Then David sent word to Joab: "Send Uriah the Hittite to me."

Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. ⁸ Then David told Uriah, "Go down to your home and wash your feet!"

Uriah left the king's palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him. ⁹ However, Uriah slept at the entrance of the royal palace among all his master's officials and did not go down to his home. ¹⁰ David was told, "Uriah has not gone down to his home."

David asked Uriah: "Have you not come in from a journey? Why have you not gone down to your home?"

¹¹ Uriah answered David: "The Ark, Israel and Judah are living in tents, and my master, Joab, and my master's officers are camping in the open field. Should I, then, go to my house to eat, drink and go to bed with my wife? As surely as you are alive and as surely as your soul is alive, I shall certainly not do that!"

¹² Then David told Uriah: "Stay here today also! Then tomorrow I shall send you away."

So, Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³ When David invited him, he ate and drank in his presence, and David made him drunk. However, in the evening Uriah went out to lie down on his couch among his master's officials and did not go down to his house. ¹⁴ In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and had Uriah take it with him. ¹⁵ He had written in the letter: "Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is the fiercest! Then you should withdraw from him, that he may be struck down and die!"

¹⁶ While Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were brave warriors. ¹⁷ When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell. Uriah the Hittite also died. ¹⁸ Then Joab sent David a full report about the battle. ¹⁹ He instructed the messenger: "When you have finished telling the king all about the battle, ²⁰ if the king's anger flares up and he asks you, 'Why did you go so close to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?' ²¹ Who killed Abimelech, the son of Jerubesheth? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone

on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so close to the wall?" then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah, the Hittite, is also dead!'"

²² The messenger set out and came and told David everything that Joab had sent him to say. ²³ The messenger told David: "The men gained an advantage over us and came out against us in the open, but we drove them back to the entrance of the city-gate.

²⁴ Then the archers shot arrows at your servants from the wall. Some of the king's servants died. Your servant Uriah, the Hittite, is also dead."

²⁵ David told the messenger: "This is what you shall tell Joab, 'Do not let this incident upset you! For the sword devours one as well as another. Intensify your attack against the city and demolish it!' Encourage him!"

²⁶ When Uriah's wife heard that her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband. ²⁷ When the time of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. However, what David had done displeased the LORD.

12

Nathan's rebuke to David and David's forgiveness — 1 Chronicles 20:1-3

¹ The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he told him: "There were two men in a certain city. One was rich, and the other was poor. ² The rich man had very many sheep and cattle, ³ but the poor man had nothing but one little female lamb, which he had bought. He kept her alive, and she grew up together with him and his children. She would eat some of his own little supply of food and drink from his cup. She used to lie down in his lap and was like a daughter to him. ⁴ When a visitor came to the rich man, the rich man could not bear to take any of his own sheep or cattle to prepare one for the traveller who had come to him. Instead, he took the poor man's young ewe lamb and prepared her for the man who had come to him."

⁵ David became very angry with the man and told Nathan: "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die! ⁶ He must also pay back the price of the lamb four times over! For he has done this and has had no pity."

⁷ Then Nathan told David: "You are the man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: 'I have anointed you king over Israel and have rescued you from the hand of Saul. ⁸ I have given you your master's house and put your master's wives into your arms. I have also given you the family of Israel and Judah. In addition, if that had not been enough, I would have given you even more like that. ⁹ Why have you despised the Word of the LORD by doing what I regard as evil? You have struck down Uriah, the Hittite, with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife. You have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰ Now therefore, the sword will nev-

er depart from your family, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’¹¹ This is what the LORD has said, ‘Look! I shall raise up evil against you from your own family. I shall take your wives and, before your own eyes, I shall give them to someone who is close to you. He will go to bed with your wives in broad daylight.’¹² For you have done this secretly. However, I shall make this happen before all Israel and in broad daylight.’”

¹³ Then David told Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.”

Nathan told David: “The LORD has also put away your sin. You will not die.¹⁴ Nevertheless, because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son who is born to you will also certainly die.”

¹⁵ Then Nathan went home.

The death of Bathsheba’s child

The LORD afflicted the child that Uriah’s wife had borne to David, and he became ill.¹⁶ David pleaded with God on behalf of the child. David fasted and used to go in and lie on the ground all night.¹⁷ The elders of his palace came and stood beside him, to get him up from the ground, but he refused and would not eat any food with them.¹⁸ On the seventh day the child died. David’s servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said: “Indeed, while the child was alive, we spoke to him, and he would not listen to what we said. How then can we tell him, ‘The child is dead’? He may do some harm.”

¹⁹ However, when David saw that his servants were whispering to each other, David understood that the child was dead. David asked his servants, “Is the child dead?”

They replied, “He is dead.”

²⁰ Then David got up from the ground, washed, anointed himself, changed his clothes, went into the house of the LORD and worshipped. Then he went to his own house, and, at his request they served him food, and he ate.²¹ His servants asked him: “What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but, when the child died, you got up and ate food.”

²² He answered: “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept, because I thought, ‘Who knows whether the LORD may be gracious to me, that the child may live?’²³ However, now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? Although I go to him, he will not come back to me.”

The birth of Solomon

²⁴ Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son and named him “Solomon.”⁹⁵ The LORD loved him,²⁵ and sent a Message through Nathan the prophet.

Then he named him “Jedidiah,”⁹⁶ because of the LORD.

The defeat of the Ammonites and the capture of Rabbah — 1 Chronicles 20:1-3

²⁶ When Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, he captured the royal citadel.²⁷ Then Joab sent messengers to David and said: “I have been fighting against Rabbah and have also captured the water supply of the city.²⁸ Now gather the rest of the army together, pitch a camp against the city and capture it! Otherwise I shall capture the city, and it will be named after me.”

²⁹ So, David gathered the whole army, went to Rabbah, fought against it and captured it.³⁰ He took the crown of their king from his head. It weighed thirty-five kilograms of gold and had a precious stone in it. It was placed on David’s head. He also took a very great quantity of plunder out of the city.³¹ He brought out the people who were in it and consigned them to labour with saws, iron picks and iron axes and transferred them to the moulding of bricks. He continued to do this to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and the whole army returned to Jerusalem.

13

Amnon’s seduction of Tamar

¹ David’s son, Absalom, had a beautiful sister, whose name was Tamar. After this, David’s son Amnon fell in love with her.² Amnon became so anxious because of his sister Tamar that he became ill. For she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for Amnon to do anything to her.³ However, Amnon had a friend by the name of Jonadab, the son of David’s brother Shimeah. Jonadab was a very crafty man.⁴ He asked Amnon: “Why are you, the king’s son, so dejected one morning after another? Will you not tell me?”

Amnon told him, “I am in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.”

⁵ Jonadab told him: “Lie down on your bed and pretend to be ill! When your father comes to see you, ask him, ‘Please let my sister Tamar come and give me some food to eat! Let her prepare the food in front of me, that I may watch and then eat from her hand!’”

⁶ So, Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to see him, Amnon asked the king, “Please let my sister Tamar come and bake a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat from her hand!”

⁷ David sent word to Tamar at the palace: “Please go to your brother Amnon’s house and prepare some food for him!”

⁸ So, Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house, where he was lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, made cakes while he was watching and baked the cakes.⁹ When she took the baking-pan and served it out to him, he refused to eat. Amnon said, “Have everyone leave me!”

⁹⁵ Solomon means, “Peaceable.”

⁹⁶ Jedidiah means, “The loved one of the LORD.”

So, everyone left him. ¹⁰ Then Amnon told Tamar, “Bring the food into the bedroom, that I may eat from your hand!”

Tamar took the cakes that she had made and brought them to her brother Amnon in his bedroom.

¹¹ However, when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her and told her: “Come! Lie with me, my sister!”

¹² She told him: “No, my brother! Do not rape me! For such a thing should not be done in Israel! Do not do this disgraceful thing! ¹³ As for me, where could I take my disgrace? As for you, you would be like one of the disgraceful fools in Israel. Now therefore, please speak to the king! For he will not keep me back from you.”

¹⁴ However, he would not listen to what she said. He was stronger than she was, forced her down and raped her. ¹⁵ Then Amnon hated her very intensely. Indeed, his hatred for her was greater than the love he had felt for her. Amnon told her, “Get up and go!”

¹⁶ However, she told him: “No! For this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other thing that you have done to me.”

However, he refused to listen to her. ¹⁷ He called his servant, who waited on him, and said: “Please put this woman outside, away from me and lock the door behind her!”

¹⁸ So, his servant put her out so that he could lock the door behind her. She was wearing a long robe reaching to the ankles. For that was the kind of robe that the king’s daughters wore if they were virgins. ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the long robe that she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and went away, crying aloud as she went. ²⁰ Her brother Absalom asked her: “Has your brother Amnon been with you? Now therefore, do not say anything, my sister! He is your brother. Do not take this thing to heart!”

So, Tamar lived out of contact with people in her brother Absalom’s house. ²¹ When King David heard about all these things, he was very angry. ²² However, Absalom did not say a word to Amnon, either good or bad. For Absalom hated Amnon for raping his sister Tamar.

Absalom’s murder of Amnon for the violation of his sister and Absalom’s banishment

²³ After two full years, when Absalom had men shearing sheep at Baal-Hazor, which is near Ephraim, Absalom invited all the king’s sons to come there.

²⁴ Absalom came to the king and said: “Look! I, your servant, have men shearing sheep. Would the king and his officials please come with me, your servant?”

²⁵ However, the king told Absalom: “No, my son. Let us not all go, that we may not be too much trouble for you!”

Although Absalom urged him, David refused to go but gave him his blessing. ²⁶ Then Absalom asked, “If not, please let my brother Amnon come with us!” The king asked him, “Why should he go with you?”

²⁷ However, Absalom urged him until he let Amnon and all the rest of the king’s sons go with him. ²⁸ Then Absalom commanded his servants: “Watch now! When Amnon is in high spirits from drinking wine and I tell you, ‘Strike Amnon down!’ kill him! Do not be afraid! Have I not commanded you myself? Be strong and courageous!”

²⁹ When Absalom’s servants did to Amnon what Absalom had commanded, all the king’s sons got up and each one mounted his mule and fled. ³⁰ While they were still on the road, the report reached David, “Absalom has struck down all the king’s sons, and not one of them is left!”

³¹ Then the king stood up, tore his clothes and lay down on the ground. All his servants also stood there with their clothes torn. ³² However, Jonadab, the son of David’s brother Shimeah, said: “My master should not suppose that they have killed all the young men, the king’s sons. For only Amnon is dead. For Absalom has been determined to do this ever since the day when Amnon raped his sister Tamar. ³³ Now therefore, my master, the king should not be concerned about the report that all the king’s sons are dead! For only Amnon is dead.”

³⁴ Absalom had fled. When the young man who was keeping watch looked up, he saw that many people were coming along the road behind him at the side of the mountain. ³⁵ Jonadab told the king: “Look! The king’s sons have come. It has happened as your servant has said.”

³⁶ Just when he had finished speaking, the king’s sons came in and wept aloud. The king and all his servants also wept very bitterly. ³⁷ However, Absalom had fled and had gone to Talmai, the son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. David mourned for his son every day. ³⁸ After Absalom had fled and had gone to Geshur, he stayed there for three years. ³⁹ The king wore himself out by wanting to go to Absalom after he had been consoled about the death of Amnon.

14

Absalom’s return to Jerusalem and David’s pardon of him

¹ Joab, the son of Zeruiah, knew that the king’s heart longed for Absalom. ² So, Joab sent to Tekoa and brought a wise woman from there. He told her: “Please pretend that you are in mourning and please dress in mourning clothes! Do not anoint yourself with olive-oil but behave like a woman who has been mourning over a dead person for a long time! ³ Go to the king and speak in this way!”

Then Joab put the words in her mouth. ⁴ When the woman of Tekoa spoke to the king, she respectfully fell on her face to the ground. She said, “Help me, O king!”

⁵ The king asked her, “What is your trouble?” She answered: “Ah, I am a widow. My husband is dead. ⁶ I, your maidservant, had two sons, and they

quarrelled with one another in the field. There was no one to separate them, and one struck the other down and killed him. ⁷ Now the whole clan has risen up against your maidservant. They have been saying, 'Give up the man who struck down his brother, that we may put him to death for the life of his brother, whom he has killed! Then we shall destroy the heir as well'. In this way they would put out my live coal, which is left, and would not let my husband have a name or any survivors on the surface of the earth."

⁸ The king told the woman: "Go home! I shall give instructions about you."

⁹ Then the woman of Tekoa told the king, "My master, the king, let me and my father's family be responsible for the wrong, and let the king and his throne be free from guilt!"

¹⁰ The king said: "If anyone says anything against you, bring him to me! He will never hurt you again."

¹¹ Then she said, "Please may you, the king, invoke the LORD, your God, that the avenger of blood may not cause any more ruin and may not destroy my son!"

He said, "As surely as the LORD lives, not one hair of your son will fall to the ground."

¹² Then the woman said, "Please let me, your maidservant, speak a word to my master, the king!"

He replied, "Speak!"

¹³ Then the woman said: "Why then have you planned a thing like this against the people of God? When the king says this, he is like a guilty person. For the king does not bring back the one whom he has banished.

¹⁴ For we shall certainly die. We are like water that flows on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. However, God will not take life away. He will devise means through which a banished person will not be expelled from Him. ¹⁵ Now therefore, I have come to say this to my master the king, because the people have made me afraid. Your maidservant thought, 'I should like to speak to the king. Perhaps the king will do what his servant asks. ¹⁶ For the king will hear and deliver his maidservant from the hand of the man who is trying to exterminate both me and my son from the inheritance that God has given.' ¹⁷ Your maidservant also thought, 'Please may what my master, the king, says bring me rest!' For my master the king is like an angel of God in distinguishing good and evil. May the LORD, your God, be with you!"

¹⁸ Then the king answered the woman, "Please do not hide from me anything that I ask you!"

The woman said, "Please let my master, the king, speak!"

¹⁹ The king asked, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?"

The woman answered: "As surely as you are alive, my master, the king, no one can turn to the right hand or to the left from anything that my master, the king, has said. Yes, your servant Joab himself gave me instruc-

tions. He put all these words in the mouth of your maidservant. ²⁰ Your servant Joab has done this to change this situation. However, my master is as wise as the Angel of God, so that he knows everything on the earth."

²¹ Then the king told Joab: "Look now, I have granted this. Go! Fetch the young man Absalom back!"

²² Joab fell with his face on the ground to honour and thank the king. Joab said: "Today I, your servant, know that you, my master, the king, look kindly on me. For you, O king have done what your servant has wanted."

²³ Then Joab set out, went to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. ²⁴ However, the king said: "He must go off to his own house! He must not see my face!"

So, Absalom was isolated in his own house and did not see the king's face. ²⁵ There was no one in all Israel who was praised as highly for his handsome appearance as Absalom was. There was no blemish in him from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

²⁶ At the end of every year he used to cut his hair because it was heavy on him. When he cut off the hair on his head and weighed it, it was two kilograms and four hundred grams according to the royal weight.

²⁷ Three sons and one daughter were born to Absalom. The daughter's name was Tamar and she was a beautiful woman. ²⁸ Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem without seeing the king's face. ²⁹ Then Absalom sent for Joab, to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. He sent a second time, but Joab refused to come. ³⁰ Then he told his servants: "Look! Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire!"

So, Absalom's servants set the field on fire. ³¹ Then Joab responded, went to Absalom at his house and asked him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?"

³² Absalom answered Joab: "Look! I sent someone to you to tell you to come here, that I might send you to the king, to ask: "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there." Now therefore, let me see the king's face! If I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death!"

³³ Then Joab went to the king and told him this. Then the king summoned Absalom. Absalom came to the king and bowed down respectfully with his face on the ground before the king, and the king kissed him.

15

The rebellion of Absalom

¹ After this, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and fifty men to run ahead of him.

² Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the road leading to the city-gate. When any man had a dispute to come before the king for a decision, Absalom would call out to him to ask, "From which city are you?"

He would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel."

³ Absalom would tell him, "See, your claims are good and right, but the king has not appointed anyone to hear you."

⁴ Then Absalom used to say: "I wish someone would appoint me a judge in the land! Then every man with a dispute or a case would come to me, and I would give him justice."

⁵ Whenever a man approached to bow down before him, Absalom used to reach out his hand, take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ This is what Absalom did to all the Israelites who came to the king to have him try their cases. So, Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. ⁷ At the end of four [Hebrew: forty] years Absalom asked the king: "Please let me go to Hebron, that I may fulfil my vow, which I have made to the LORD! ⁸ For I, your servant, made a vow while I was living at Geshur in Aram. I said, 'If the LORD indeed brings me back to Jerusalem, then I shall offer worship to the LORD.'"

⁹ The king told him, "Go in peace!"

So, he left and went to Hebron. ¹⁰ However, Absalom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, to say, "When you hear the sound of the trumpet, then you shall say, 'Absalom has become king at Hebron!'"

¹¹ Two hundred men from Jerusalem, who were invited guests, went with Absalom but went along innocently, without knowing anything. ¹² While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, to come from his city, Giloh. The conspiracy grew stronger, and the number of people with Absalom kept on increasing.

David's flight from Jerusalem

¹³ A messenger came and told David, "The men of Israel are keenly supporting Absalom."

¹⁴ Then David told all his officials who were with him at Jerusalem: "Get up and let us flee! Otherwise we shall have no way to escape from Absalom. Leave quickly, that he may not suddenly overtake us, scatter calamity down on us and put the city to the sword!"

¹⁵ The king's officials told the king, "Yes, we, your servants, are ready to do whatever our master, the king, decides."

¹⁶ The king went out, with his entire household following him. However, the king left ten concubines behind to take care of the palace. ¹⁷ When the king set out, with all the people following him, they stopped at the last house. ¹⁸ All his servants were going past him. All the Cherethites, all the Pelethites and all the six hundred Gittites, who had followed him from Gath, were going past in front of the king. ¹⁹ Then the king told Ittai from Gath: "Why should you also come with us? Go back and stay with the king! For you are a foreigner and also an exile from your homeland. ²⁰ You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you

wander about with us, when I do not know where I am going? Go back and take your countrymen with you! May mercy and truth be with you!"

²¹ However, Ittai answered the king: "As surely as the LORD lives and as my master, the king, lives, I, your servant, shall certainly be wherever my master, the king, is, whether it means life or death."

²² David told Ittai, "Come then, pass along!"

So, Ittai the Gittite passed along, with all his men and all his family, who were with him. ²³ All the people of the country were weeping aloud while all the people were going past. The king was crossing the brook Kidron and all the people were going through along on the road to the wilderness. ²⁴ Zadok was there too, together with all the Levites, carrying the Ark of the Covenant of God. They set down the Ark of God, and Abiathar offered sacrifices until the people had finished passing through from the city. ²⁵ Then the king told Zadok: "Take the Ark of God back into the city! If the LORD regards me kindly, He will bring me back and let me see it and His dwelling place again. ²⁶ However, if He says, 'I do not delight in you,' I am ready. He will treat me as seems good to Him."

²⁷ The king also asked Zadok, the priest: "Are you not a seer? Go back to the city in peace, with your two sons, your son, Ahimaaz, and Jonathan, the son of Abiathar! ²⁸ Look! I shall be waiting at the fords in the wilderness until word comes from you people to inform me."

²⁹ So, Zadok and Abiathar took the Ark of God back to Jerusalem and stayed there. ³⁰ David was going up the slope of the Mount of Olives. He was weeping as he went up, with his head covered and walking barefoot. All the people who were with him also covered their heads and kept on weeping as they went up. ³¹ Someone told David, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom."

David said, "LORD, please make the advice that Ahithophel gives foolish!"

Hushai's service to David as a spy

³² While David was coming to the summit, where people used to worship God, Hushai, the Archite, suddenly appeared to meet him with his garment torn and with soil on his head. ³³ However, David told him: "If you pass along with me, you will be a burden to me. ³⁴ Nevertheless, if you return to the city and tell Absalom, 'I shall be your servant, O king. I have been your father's servant in time past but now I shall be your servant,' then you will help me by frustrating what Ahithophel advises. ³⁵ Will not Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, be with you there? You shall tell Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, whatever you hear from the king's palace! ³⁶ Look! Their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son, are with them there. You people shall use them to send to me everything you hear!"

³⁷ So, David's friend Hushai entered the city while

Absalom was coming into Jerusalem.

16

Ziba's desire to advance his own interests

¹ When David had proceeded a little past the summit, Ziba, the servant of Mephi-Bosheth, met him. He had a pair of donkeys saddled, loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred cakes of raisins, a hundred pieces of summer fruit and a skin of wine. ² The king asked Ziba, "Why have you brought these?"

Ziba answered: "The donkeys are for the king's family to ride on, the bread and the summer fruit are for the young men to eat and the wine is for those to drink who become exhausted in the wilderness."

³ Then the king asked, "Where is your master's grandson?"

Ziba told the king: "Indeed, he is staying in Jerusalem. For he has said, 'Today the family of Israel will give my grandfather's kingdom back to me.'"

⁴ Then the king told Ziba, "Look! All that belonged to Mephi-Bosheth is now yours."

Ziba said: "I have humbly bowed before you. May you continue to regard me kindly, my master, the king!"

Shimei's cursing of David

⁵ When King David came to Bahurim, he saw a man belonging to the same clan as Saul's family coming out. His name was Shimei, the son of Gera, and he was cursing while he was coming out. ⁶ He threw stones at David and at all the officials of King David, although all the people and all the fighting men were on David's right and left. ⁷ Shimei said as he was cursing: "Come out, come out, you bloodthirsty man, you scoundrel!" ⁸ The LORD has repaid you for all the deaths you caused in the family of Saul, whom you have succeeded as king. The LORD has also handed the kingdom over to your son Absalom. Look! You are in trouble of your own making, because you are a bloodthirsty man!"

⁹ Then Abishai the son of Zeruah asked the king: "Why should this dead dog curse my master, the king? Please let me go across and take off his head!"

¹⁰ However, the king said: "What do you sons of Zeruah and I have in common? Let him curse like this! For the LORD has told him, 'Curse David!' Who, then, may ask, 'Why have you done this?'"

¹¹ David told Abishai and all his officials: "Look! My son, who has come from my own body, is trying to take my life. How much more now may this Benjamite do it? Leave him alone and let him curse! For the LORD has told him to do it. ¹² It may be that the LORD will look at the wrong done to me and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing today."

¹³ David and his men walked along the road, while Shimei kept walking along the hillside parallel to him. As Shimei kept walking along, he kept on cursing and throwing stones at David from the other side and

flinging dust at him. ¹⁴ When the king and all the people who were with him reached a place where they were exhausted, David rested there.

The advice given to Absalom by Ahithophel

¹⁵ When Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came to Jerusalem, Ahithophel accompanied him.

¹⁶ When Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

¹⁷ Absalom asked Hushai: "Is this your faithful love to your friend? Why have you not gone with your friend?"

¹⁸ Hushai told Absalom: "No! For I shall support the one whom the LORD, this people, and all the men of Israel have chosen, and I shall remain with him.

¹⁹ Besides, whom should I serve? Should I not serve before his son? I shall serve before you as I have been serving before your father."

²⁰ Then Absalom asked Ahithophel: "Give your advice! What shall we do?"

²¹ Ahithophel told Absalom: "Have relations with your father's concubines, whom he has left to take care of the palace! Then all Israel will hear that you have become odious to your father, and all who are with you will support you more."

²² They pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof. Absalom had relations with his father's concubines while all Israel could watch. ²³ In those days the advice that Ahithophel gave was like the advice that follows an inquiry of God's Word. That was how both David and Absalom regarded all of Ahithophel's advice.

17

The frustration of Ahithophel's advice by Hushai

¹ Ahithophel told Absalom: "Please let me choose twelve thousand men, that I may set out tonight in pursuit of David, ² and that I may attack him while he is weary and discouraged and throw him into a panic! Then all the people who are with him will flee, and I shall strike down only the king. ³ Then I shall bring all the people back to you. The death of the man whom you want will mean the return of all, and all the people will have peace."

⁴ Absalom and all the elders of Israel thought that the advice was good. ⁵ However, Absalom said, "Please call Hushai, the Archite, also and let us hear what he also has to say!"

The Advice of Hushai

⁶ When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom told him: "This is what Ahithophel has advised. Shall we do what he says? If not, give your advice!"

⁷ Hushai replied to Absalom: "This time the advice that Ahithophel has given is not good." ⁸ Hushai said: "You yourself know that your father and his men are fighters and as fierce as a bear robbed of her cubs in the open country. Besides, your father is expert in war. He will not spend the night with the people.

⁹ Look! Even now he has hidden away in one of the

pits or in some other place. When he makes the first attack on the people, whoever hears about it will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the soldiers who are following Absalom.' ¹⁰ Then even the bravest soldier, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will melt with fear. For all Israel knows that your father is a fighter and that those who are with him are brave men. ¹¹ Rather, I am advising that all Israel from Dan to Beer-Sheba should be fully gathered to you, as numerous as the sand on the seashore, and that you should go to the battle in person. ¹² Then we shall attack him in some place where he is to be found. We shall fall on him as the dew falls on the ground, and not even one will be left alive of him and of all the men who are with him. ¹³ If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we shall pull it away into the valley, until not even a pebble can be found there."

¹⁴ Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The advice that Hushai the Archite has given is better than the advice of Ahithophel."

For the LORD had ordered that the good advice of Ahithophel should be frustrated, that the LORD might bring calamity on Absalom.

Hushai's warning to David to escape

¹⁵ Then Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, the priests: "Ahithophel has advised Absalom and the elders of Israel to do such and such, but I myself have advised them to do so and so. ¹⁶ Now therefore, send a message immediately and tell David, 'Do not spend tonight at the fords in the wilderness! Indeed, you must by all means cross over, that the king and all the people who are with him may not be swallowed up!'"

¹⁷ Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-Rogel. A servant girl was to go and tell them, and they were to go and tell King David. For they dared not be seen entering the city. ¹⁸ However, a young man saw them and told Absalom. So, both of them left quickly and went to the house of a man at Bahurim. He had a well in his courtyard, and they climbed down into it. ¹⁹ His wife took a covering and spread it out over the opening of the well and poured grain out over it, so that nothing could be known about it. ²⁰ When Absalom's officials came to the woman at the house, they asked, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?"

The woman told them, "They have gone across the pond of water."

When they had searched without finding them, they went back to Jerusalem. ²¹ After they had gone, the men climbed up out of the well and went to inform King David. They told David: "Set out and go across the water immediately! For Ahithophel has given such and such advice against you people."

²² So, David and all the people with him set out and crossed the Jordan. By daybreak there was no one left who had not crossed the Jordan. ²³ When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and went home to his own city. He gave

instructions to his family and then hanged himself. When he died, he was buried in his father's tomb.

David's stay at Mahanaim

²⁴ Then David went to Mahanaim. Absalom and all the men of Israel with him also crossed the Jordan. ²⁵ Absalom had appointed Amasa to take Joab's place at the head of the army. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra, an Israelite, who had married Abigail, the daughter of Nahash, and sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. ²⁶ The Israelites and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead. ²⁷ When David arrived at Mahanaim, Shobi, the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites and Machir, the son of Ammiel from Lo-Debar and Barzillai, the Gileadite from Rogelim ²⁸ brought beds, bowls, earthen vessels, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, broad beans, lentils and parched grain. ²⁹ They also brought honey, curds, sheep and cheese from cows' milk for David and the people with him to eat. For they thought, "The people are hungry, tired and thirsty in the wilderness."

18

The defeat of Absalom's army

¹ David mustered the army that was with him and appointed commanders of thousands and of hundreds over them. ² David sent out the army, one third under the command of Joab, one third under the command of Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the command of Ittai, the Gittite. The king told the soldiers, "I myself shall certainly also go out with you."

³ However, the soldiers said: "You shall not come out! For if we flee, they will not care about us. If half of us die, they will not care about us. For now you are worth ten thousand of us. For now it would be better that you should give us support from the city."

⁴ The king told them, "I shall do whatever you think is best."

So, the king stood beside the gate, while all the army marched out by hundreds and by thousands. ⁵ The king had ordered Joab, Abishai and Ittai: "Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake!"

All the soldiers had heard him give all the commanders this order about Absalom. ⁶ Then the soldiers went out into the open country against Israel and the battle took place in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷ The army of Israel was defeated there by David's servants and there was a great slaughter there that day, of twenty thousand men. ⁸ The fighting there spread out over the whole country, and that day the forest devoured more people than the sword devoured. ⁹ Absalom happened to get in front of some of David's servants. Absalom was riding on his mule, and, when the mule went under the tangled branches of a large tree, Absalom's head was caught in the tree. So, he was suspended between the sky and the earth when the mule that was under him ran away. ¹⁰ A certain man saw it and told Joab, "Look! I saw Absalom hanging in a big tree."

11 Joab asked the man who had told him this: “Look! When you saw him, why did you not strike him to the ground right there? I personally would have given you a hundred and twenty grams of silver and a belt.”

12 However, the man told Joab: “Even if I felt in my hand the weight of twelve kilograms of silver, I would not reach out my hand against the king’s son. For we personally heard the king when he commanded you, Abishai and Ittai, ‘See to it that no one harms the young man Absalom!’” 13 If I had done it, I would have put my own life at risk. Nothing can be hidden from the king. Then you yourself would have stood aloof from me.”

14 Joab said, “I shall not stand waiting like this with you.”

The death of Absalom

He took three spears in his hand and thrust them into Absalom’s heart while he was still alive in the middle of the tree. 15 Then ten young men, who were carrying Joab’s armour, surrounded Absalom, struck him and killed him. 16 Then Joab blew the trumpet, and the soldiers returned from pursuing Israel, because Joab had restrained them. 17 They took Absalom, threw him into a large pit in the forest and piled a very large heap of stones over him. Meanwhile, all the Israelites had fled to their tents. 18 During his lifetime Absalom had taken a pillar and erected it in the King’s Valley as a monument to himself. For he said, “I have no son to carry on the memory of my name.” He named the monument after himself, and it is called “Absalom’s Pillar” to this day.

The report of Absalom’s death to David and David’s grief

19 Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, asked, “Please let me run and take the news to the king that the LORD has obtained justice for him from the power of his enemies!”

20 However, Joab told him: “You are not the one to carry the news today. You may carry the news another day. You shall not carry any news today, because the king’s son is dead!”

21 However, Joab told the Cushite, “Go, tell the king what you have seen!”

The Cushite bowed down before Joab and ran off.

22 Then Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok, asked Joab again, “Whatever happens, please let me also run after the Cushite!”

Joab replied: “Why should you run, my son? You do not have a message that will bring you a reward.”

23 He said, whatever happens, I should like to run.”

So, Joab told him, “Run!”

Then Ahimaaz ran along the floor of the Jordan valley and outran the Cushite. 24 David was sitting between the two gates, and the watchman had gone up to the roof of the gate beside the wall. When he looked out, he saw a man running alone. 25 The watchman called out and told the king. The king said, “If he is alone, he has good news to tell.”

The man kept coming closer. 26 When the watchman

saw another man running, the watchman called out to the gatekeeper, “There is another man running alone!” The king said, “He also is bringing good news.”

27 The watchman said, “I can see that the first one is running like Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok.”

The king said, “He is a good man and coming with good news.”

28 Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, “All is well!”

He bowed before the king with his face to the earth and said, “Blessed be the LORD, your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hands against my master, the king!”

29 The king asked, “Is the young man Absalom safe?” Ahimaaz answered: “When Joab was sending the king’s servant and me, your servant, I saw a great commotion but do not know what it meant.”

30 The king said, “Stand aside and wait here!”

He stepped aside and stood there. 31 Just then, the Cushite arrived. The Cushite said: “My master, the king, receives good news! For the LORD has obtained justice for you today from the hands of all who have rebelled against you.”

32 The king asked the Cushite, “Is the young man Absalom safe?”

The Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my master, the king and all who have risen up against you to harm you be like that young man!”

33 The king trembled with grief, went up to the room above the gate and wept. He said, as he went: “My son Absalom!^{*97} My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died instead of you! O Absalom, my son, my son!”

19

Joab’s rebuke to David

1 Joab was told, “Look! The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom.”

2 So, the victory that day was turned into mourning for the whole army. For that day the soldiers heard: “The king is grieving for his son.”

3 The soldiers stole into the city that day like men stealing in who are ashamed because they have fled from battle. 4 The king covered his face and cried out loudly: “My son Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!”

5 Then Joab went to the king at the house and said: “You have today made the faces of all your servants ashamed. Today they have saved your life and the lives of your sons and your daughters and the lives of your wives and your concubines. 6 For you love those who hate you and hate those who love you. Indeed, you have shown clearly today that commanders and servants are nothing to you, because today I know that you would be pleased if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today. 7 Now therefore, get up, go out and encourage your servants! For I swear by the

⁹⁷ Absalom means, “Father is peace.”

LORD, that, if you do not go out, no one will stay with you tonight. Then this will be worse for you than all the trouble that has come on you from your youth until now.”

⁸ Then the king got up and took his seat in the gateway. When the people told all the soldiers, “Look! The king is sitting in the gateway,” all the soldiers came before the king.

Meanwhile, all the Israelites had fled to their homes.

David's return to Jerusalem

⁹ Throughout the tribes of Israel, the people were all arguing with each other. They were saying: “The king delivered us from the hands of our enemies. He is the one who rescued us from the hands of the Philistines. Nevertheless, now he has fled from the country because of Absalom. ¹⁰ However, Absalom, whom we anointed to rule over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore, why are you not doing anything about bringing the king back?”

¹¹ King David sent this message to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests: “Ask the elders of Judah, ‘Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his palace, when what all the Israelites are saying has reached the king at his quarters? ¹² You are my relatives. You are my bone and my flesh. Why then should you be the last to bring the king back?’ ¹³ Ask Amasa also, ‘Are you not my bone and my flesh? May God treat me harshly and even worse if you are not the commander of my army from now on instead of Joab!’”

¹⁴ Amasa persuaded all the men of Judah to act as one man, and they sent a message to the king: “Come back with all your servants!”

¹⁵ Then the king returned and came as far as the Jordan, and the men of Judah went to Gilgal to meet the king and to escort the king across the Jordan.

¹⁶ Shimei, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim, came down quickly with the men of Judah to meet King David. ¹⁷ A thousand men from Benjamin were with him. Ziba, the steward of Saul’s household, also rushed down to the Jordan with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants to meet the king. ¹⁸ They went across the ford to escort the king’s household across and to do whatever the king wanted.

The mercy shown to Shimei by David

When Shimei, the son of Gera, had gone across the Jordan, he fell before the king. ¹⁹ He told the king: “May my master not hold me guilty or remember how I, your servant, did wrong on the day when my master, the king, left Jerusalem! May the king not resent it! ²⁰ For I, your servant, know that I have sinned. You see today that I have come down here as the first of all the family of Joseph to meet my master, the king.”

²¹ Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, answered: “Should not Shimei be put to death for this? For he cursed the one whom the LORD anointed.”

²² However, David replied: “What do you and I have in common, sons of Zeruiah, that you should become

adversaries to me today? Should anyone be put to death in Israel today? For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?”

²³ Then the king told Shimei, “You will not die,” and the king promised him that with an oath.

David's meeting with Mephi-Bosheth

²⁴ Mephi-Bosheth, the grandson of Saul, also went down to meet the king. He had not taken care of his feet, trimmed his moustache or washed his clothes from the day when the king left until the day when he returned safely. ²⁵ When he came to Jerusalem to meet the king, the king asked him, “Why did you not come with me, Mephi-Bosheth?”

²⁶ He answered: “My master, the king, my servant deceived me. For I, your servant, told him, ‘I should like to have the donkey saddled for me, that I may ride on it and go with the king.’ For your servant is lame.

²⁷ He has slandered me, your servant, to my master, the king. However, my master, the king, is like the angel of God. Therefore, do what you think is right!

²⁸ For, although all my father’s family deserved death from my master, the king, you set me, your servant among those who eat at your table. What right do I still have, then, to make any more appeals to the king?”

²⁹ The king told him: “Why should you say anything more? I have decreed that you and Ziba shall divide the land.”

³⁰ Mephi-Bosheth told the king, “Let him even take it all, now that my master, the king, has come home safely!”

David's kindness to Barzillai

³¹ Barzillai the Gileadite had also come down from Rogelim and went on with the king to the Jordan, to send him on his way at the Jordan. ³² Barzillai was a very old man of eighty years. He had provided the king with food while he was staying at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man. ³³ The king told Barzillai: “You yourself, come across with me! I shall provide for you while you are with me in Jerusalem.”

³⁴ However, Barzillai replied to the king: “How many more years do I have to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? ³⁵ I am now eighty years old. Can I discern what is pleasant and what is not? Can I, your servant, taste what I eat or drink? Can I still hear the voices of singing men and singing women? Why, therefore, should I, your servant, be an added burden to my master, the king? ³⁶ I, your servant, shall go a little way across the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me in such a way? ³⁷ Please let your servant go back, that I may die in my own city near the grave of my father and my mother! However, here is your servant Chimham. Let him go across with my master the king, and do for him whatever you think is right!”

³⁸ The king answered: “Let Chimham come across with me! Then I shall do for him what you think is right. I shall also do for you whatever you desire from

me.”

³⁹ Then all the people crossed over the Jordan. The king also went across. The king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and Barzillai went back to his own home.

⁴⁰ The king went along to Gilgal and Chimham went along with him. All the soldiers of Judah and half of the army of Israel escorted the king. ⁴¹ Then all the men of Israel kept coming to the king and asked the king: “Why have our relatives, the men of Judah, stolen you away and escorted the king and his household across the Jordan, together with all his men?”

⁴² All the men of Judah answered the men of Israel: “Because the king is our close relative. Why, therefore, are you angry about this? Have we ever eaten at the king’s expense? Or have we completely snatched him away?”

⁴³ The men of Israel answered the men of Judah: “We have ten shares in the king. So, we also have a greater claim on David than you do. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak about bringing our king back?”

However, the men of Judah spoke more harshly than the men of Israel did.

20

Sheba’s rebellion against David

¹ A scoundrel named Sheba happened to be there. He was the son of Bichri, a Benjaminite. He blew the trumpet and said: “We have no share in David. We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Every man to his tents, O Israel!”

² So, all the men of Israel deserted David and followed Sheba, the son of Bichri. However, the men of Judah loyally followed their king from the Jordan to Jerusalem. ³ When David came to his palace at Jerusalem, the king took the ten concubines whom he had left to take care of the palace and put them in a house under guard. He provided for them but had no relations with them. So, they were kept in confinement, living like widows until the day of their death.

⁴ Then the king told Amasa, “Summon the men of Judah to come to me in three days and be present here yourself!”

⁵ Amasa went to summon Judah but took longer than the time the king had set for him. ⁶ David told Abishai: “Now Sheba, the son of Bichri, will do us more harm than Absalom. Take your master’s servants and pursue him, to prevent him from finding fortified cities for himself and escaping from us!”

⁷ So, Joab’s men, the Cherethites, the Pelethites and all the mighty warriors went out under the command of Abishai. They left from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba, the son of Bichri. ⁸ When they were at the large rock at Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Joab was wearing his military garment, and there was a belt fastened over it at his waist with a sword in its sheath. As he went forward the sword fell out. ⁹ Joab asked Amasa, “Are you well, my brother?”

Then Joab took hold of Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. ¹⁰ However, Amasa was not on his guard against the sword that was in Joab’s other hand. Joab struck him with it in the stomach and made his intestines pour out on the ground without striking a second blow, and Amasa died. Then Joab and Abishai, his brother, pursued Sheba, the son of Bichri.

¹¹ One of Joab’s young men stood beside Amasa and said, “Whoever supports Joab and whoever is on David’s side should follow Joab!”

¹² Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the middle of the highway. When the man saw that all the soldiers came to a halt, he removed Amasa from the highway into a field and threw a garment over him, because he had seen that everyone who came up to Amasa stopped. ¹³ After he had removed Amasa from the highway, all the men went past and followed Joab in pursuit of Sheba, the son of Bichri. ¹⁴ Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel of Beth-Maacah and through the entire region of the Berites. When they had assembled, they also followed Sheba. ¹⁵ The others came and besieged Sheba in Abel of Beth-Maacah. When they built a siege mound against the city, it stood against the outer wall. Then the whole army that was with Joab kept battering the wall to knock it down. ¹⁶ Then a wise woman called out from the city: “Listen! Listen! Please tell Joab, ‘Come closer, that I may speak to you!’”

¹⁷ When he came closer to her, the woman asked, “Are you Joab?”

He answered, “I am.”

Then she told him, “Listen to what your maidservant has to say!”

He answered, “I am listening.”

¹⁸ Then she said: “There was a saying in former times, ‘People should certainly ask for advice at Abel!’ In that way they settled matters. ¹⁹ I belong to those who are peaceful and faithful in Israel. You are trying to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why will you swallow up the inheritance of the LORD?”

²⁰ Joab answered: “Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy! ²¹ That is not true. However, a man of the hill-country of Ephraim, called Sheba, the son of Bichri, has rebelled against the king, against David. Hand over this one man! Then I shall withdraw from the city.”

The woman told Joab: “Watch! His head will be thrown to you over the wall!”

²² Then the woman went to all the people with her wise advice. They cut off the head of Sheba, the son of Bichri, and threw it out to Joab. He blew the trumpet and all his men dispersed from the city and returned to their homes. Joab also returned to the king at Jerusalem.

The officials of David’s kingdom

²³ Joab was in command of the whole army of Israel and Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was in command of the Cherethites and the Pelethites. ²⁴ Adoram was in

charge of the compulsory labour and Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was the recorder. ²⁵ Sheva was the secretary and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests. ²⁶ Ira, the Jairite, was also David's chief minister.

21

Redress for the Gibeonites after Saul's cruel treatment of them

¹ There was a famine for three successive years in the time of David. David asked the LORD about it. The LORD said: "It is on account of Saul and his family, which is guilty of murder. For Saul put Gibeonites to death."

² The king summoned the Gibeonites and spoke to them. The Gibeonites had not belonged to the people of Israel but were some of the survivors of the Amorites. Although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul had tried to annihilate them in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah. ³ David asked the Gibeonites: "What shall I do for you? How shall I make atonement, that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD?"

⁴ The Gibeonites told him: "We have no right to demand silver or gold from Saul or his family. We have no right, either, to put anyone in Israel to death." He asked, "What do you say that I should do for you?"

⁵ They told the king: "About the man who destroyed us and plotted against us, so that we have been wiped out and prevented from having a firm place anywhere in the territory of Israel, ⁶ let seven of his male descendants be given to us, that we may expose them with broken limbs before the LORD at Gibeah of Saul, the one whom the LORD had chosen!"

The king said, "I shall hand them over."

⁷ However, the king spared Mephi-Bosheth, the son of Jonathan and the grandson of Saul, because of the oath sworn by the LORD that was between David and Jonathan, the son of Saul. ⁸ The king took the two sons of Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, whom she had borne to Saul, Armoni and Mephi-Bosheth and the five sons of Merab^{*98}, the daughter of Saul, whom she had borne to Adriel, the son of Barzillai, the Meholahite. ⁹ He handed them over to the Gibeonites, and they exposed them with broken limbs on the mountain before the LORD. All seven of them fell together. They were put to death during the first days of harvest, when the barley harvest was beginning. ¹⁰ Then Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth and spread it out for herself on a rock, from the beginning of harvest until rain poured down on the bodies from the sky. She did not allow the birds of the sky to come down on them by day or the wild animals by night.

¹¹ When David was told what Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had been doing, ¹² David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the citizens of Jabesh-Gilead, who

had stolen them from the public square of Beth-Shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, at the time when the Philistines had struck Saul down on Gilboa.

¹³ When he had brought up the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan from there, they gathered the bones of the others, who had been exposed with broken limbs.

¹⁴ Then they buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan in the tomb of Saul's father Kish at Zela in the land of Benjamin. They did all that the king had commanded. After that God answered prayer on behalf of the land.

The renewed war between the Philistines and Israel and exploits of David's men — 1 Chronicles 20:4-8

¹⁵ Once again there was war between the Philistines and Israel. When David went down together with his servants and they fought against the Philistines, David became exhausted. ¹⁶ Ishbi-Benob, who was one of the descendants of Rapha, whose bronze spear weighed three kilograms and six hundred grams and who was armed with a new sword, tried to kill David.

¹⁷ However, Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, came to help him, attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men declared to him with an oath: "You shall no longer come out with us to battle! You shall not put out the lamp of Israel!"

¹⁸ After this, there was another battle against the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbecai, the Hushathite, struck down Saph, who was another of the descendants of Rapha. ¹⁹ When there was another battle against the Philistines at Gob, Elhanan, the son of Jaare-Oregim from Bethlehem, struck down Goliath from Gath. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam. ²⁰ When there was another battle at Gath, there was a quarrelsome man, who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number. He also was descended from Rapha. ²¹ When he insulted Israel, Jonathan, the son of Shimea, David's brother, struck him down. ²² These four were descendants of Rapha in Gath and fell at the hands of David and his servants.

22

David's psalm of thanksgiving — compare Psalm 18:1-50

¹ David sang the Words of this song to the LORD after the LORD had rescued him from the hands of all his enemies, especially from the hand of Saul.

² He said:

"The LORD is my Rock, my Stronghold and my Deliverer.

³ "He is the God who is my Rock. **I try to find refuge in Him.** He is my Shield and the Horn of my salvation. He is my Stronghold and my Place of refuge. He is my Saviour. You kept saving me from violence.

⁴ "He should be praised! I used to call to the LORD and kept being saved from my enemies.

⁵ "For the waves of death had surrounded me. The torrents of wickedness were terrifying me.

⁶ "The cords of the grave had surrounded me. The

⁹⁸ Here the Hebrew reads "Michal."

snare of death had confronted me.

7 "I was calling on the LORD in my distress and I was calling to my God. Then He heard my voice from His Temple and my cry for help reached His ears.

8 "Then the earth rose, fell noisily and quaked. The foundations of the heavens were trembling and shook violently because He was angry.

9 "Smoke went up in His nostrils, and **a devouring fire was coming out of His mouth**. Glowing coals blazed up from it.

10 "He spread out the heavens and came down, with heavy cloud under His feet.

11 "He rode on a cherub, flew and appeared on the wings of the wind.

12 "He set darkness around Him, a mass of water and rain-clouds as His canopy.

13 "Out of the brightness in front of Him coals of fire blazed out.

14 "The LORD was causing thunder from the sky and the Most High was uttering His voice.

15 "He shot arrows and scattered them. There was lightning, and He caused confusion.

16 "Then the deepest channels of the sea became visible. The foundations of the world were being laid bare, because of the rebuke of the LORD, because of the blast of the breath from His nostrils.

17 "He used to reach down from high above. He used to take hold of me. He used to pull me out of many waters.

18 "He used to rescue me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me. For they were too strong for me.

19 "They were confronting me on the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my Support.

20 "He brought me out into a spacious place. He kept delivering me, because He had taken pleasure in me.

21 "The LORD kept treating me well according to my righteousness. According to the cleanness of my hands He kept compensating me.

22 "For I have been keeping the Ways of the LORD and have not wickedly departed from my God.

23 "For all His Decisions used to be before me. I was not turning aside from His Statutes.

24 "I had been blameless before Him and had kept myself from my guilt.

25 "The LORD has paid me back according to my righteousness, as He regards me as clean.

26 "**With a merciful man You were showing Yourself merciful**. With a blameless warrior You were showing Yourself blameless.

27 "With a pure man You were showing Yourself pure but with a devious man You were showing Yourself shrewd.

28 "You were saving a poor people but Your eyes were on haughty people. You were bringing them down.

29 "Indeed, You were my Lamp, O LORD, and the LORD was turning my darkness into light.

30 "Indeed, with You I could run against a troop. With my God I could jump over a wall.

31 "As for God, His way is perfect. The Word of the LORD is refined. He is a Shield to all those who try to find refuge in Him.

32 "For who is God except the LORD? Who is a rock except our God?

33 "He is the God, who is my strong Fortress, and has faithfully set my way free.

34 "He used to make my feet like the feet of a deer and make me stand firmly on my high places.

35 "He used to train my hands for battle, so that my arms could bend a bow of bronze.

36 "You have given me the shield of Your salvation, and Your answer was making me great.

37 "You were making my path wide beneath me, and my ankles did not twist.

38 "I kept pursuing my enemies. I exterminated them and did not turn back until I had finished them off.

39 "I destroyed them and wounded them, so that they were not getting up. They fell under my feet.

40 "You armed me strongly for battle. You were making those who were rising up against me bow down beneath me.

41 "Moreover, as for my enemies, You had given to me their backs. As for those who used to hate me, I have also silenced them.

42 "They kept looking, but there was no one to save them. They kept looking to the LORD, but He did not answer them.

43 "I was grinding them fine, like dust of the earth. I was crushing them. I was stamping them down like mud in the streets.

44 "You have delivered me from disputes with my people. You kept protecting me as the head over nations. A people whom I had not known were serving me.

45 "Foreigners used to feign submission to me. As soon as their ears heard about me, they used to become obedient to me.

46 "Foreigners were withering and falling and came trembling out of their fortresses.

47 "The LORD lives. Blessed be my Rock! Let God, who is the Rock of my salvation, be exalted!

48 "It was God who was giving redress to me and who was subjugating nations under me.

49 "He was delivering me from my enemies. You were lifting me up above those who were rising up against me. You kept rescuing me from a man of violent deeds.

50 "**That is why I shall give thanks to You, O LORD, among the nations and why I shall make music to praise Your name**.

51 "He is the Giver of great deliverance to His king and the One who shows mercy to the one whom He has anointed, to David and to his Descendant for ever."

23

The last words of David

¹ These are the last Words of David.

“Here is the Declaration made by David, the son of Jesse, the Declaration by the man who has been raised to a high position, whom the God of Jacob has anointed and who is the sweet singer of the psalms of Israel:

² “The Spirit of the LORD has been speaking through me. His Word has been on my tongue.

³ “The God of Israel has told me. The Rock of Israel has spoken: ‘He who rules over human beings should be righteous, ruling by the fear of God!’

⁴ “He is like the light of the morning when the sun rises on a cloudless morning, when, because of the brightness after the rain, the grass comes up out of the ground.’

⁵ “For is not my family like that with God? For He has made an everlasting Covenant with me. It is arranged and secured in every part. For will He not cause all my welfare and everything I desire to sprout up?

⁶ “However, wicked people are like thorns that are all thrown aside, because the hand cannot grasp them.

⁷ “A man who touches them must be equipped with iron or the shaft of a spear. They must certainly be burnt with a fire where they lie.”

A list of David's heroes — 1 Chronicles 11:10-47

⁸ These are the names of the mighty men whom David had: There was Josheb-Basshebeth, a Tahchemonite. He was the chief of the captains. He took pleasure in using his spear against eight hundred men, whom he killed at one time. ⁹ Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite was next to him among the three mighty men. He was with David when they ridiculed the Philistines who had gathered there for battle and the men of Israel withdrew. ¹⁰ He rose and struck down the Philistines until his hand grew tired and his hand clung to his sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day, and the soldiers came back behind Eleazar but only to strip the dead. ¹¹ Shammah, the son of Agee, the Hararite, was next to him. The Philistines had gathered in a military camp where there was a plot of ground with a full crop of lentils, and the soldiers had fled from the Philistines. ¹² However, when he took his stand in the middle of the plot, secured the position and struck down the Philistines, the LORD brought about a great victory. ¹³ Three of the thirty leading men went down to David at the cave of Adullam at harvest time, when an armed company of Philistines was camping in the Valley of Rephaim.

¹⁴ While David was in the fortification, a sentry-post of the Philistines was at Bethlehem. ¹⁵ David felt a craving and said, “I wish that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem, which is beside the gate!”

¹⁶ Then the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines and drew water out of the well near

the gate of Bethlehem. When they carried it back to David, he refused to drink it and poured it out to the LORD. ¹⁷ He said: “Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Shall I drink the blood of the men who have risked their lives to go there?”

He refused to drink it. The three mighty men did these things.

¹⁸ Abishai, the brother of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was the chief of another three. When he was brandishing his spear against three hundred men, he killed them, and so he was famous among these three.

¹⁹ Was he not more renowned than the other three were? Although he became their commander, he was not included among the other three. ²⁰ Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was the son of a brave man from Kabzeel, who had performed great exploits. He struck down two Moabite warriors. He also went down into a pit on a snowy day and killed a lion. ²¹ He also struck down a formidable Egyptian. Although the Egyptian had a spear in his hand, Benaiah went down against him with a staff, snatched the spear from the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear.

²² Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, did these things and was as famous as the three mighty men were. ²³ He was honoured more highly than the thirty were but was not included among the three. David put him in charge of his bodyguard. ²⁴ Asahel, the brother of Joab, was one of the thirty. Elhanan, the son of Dodo of Bethlehem, was also. ²⁵ So were Shammah the Harodite, Erika the Harodite, ²⁶ Helez, the Paltite, Ira, the son of Ikkesh from Tekoa, ²⁷ Abiezer from Anathoth, Mebunnai, the Hushathite, ²⁸ Zalmon, the Ahohite, Maharai from Netophah, ²⁹ Heleb, the son of Baanah, from Netophah, Ittai, the son of Ribai from Gibeah belonging to the people of Benjamin, ³⁰ Benaiah from Pirathon, Hiddai from the ravines of Gaash, ³¹ Abi-Albon from Arba, Azmaveth the Barhumite, ³² Eliahba from Shaalbon, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan, ³³ Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam, the son of Sharar the Hararite, ³⁴ Eliphelet, the son of Ahasbai, whose father came from Maacah, Eliam the son of Ahithophel from Gilo, ³⁵ Hezrai from Carmel, Paarai from Arba, ³⁶ Igal, the son of Nathan from Zobah, Bani from Gad, ³⁷ Zelek, the Ammonite, Naharai from Beeroth, who was the armour-bearer of Joab, the son of Zeruiah, ³⁸ Ira, the Ithrite, Gareb, the Ithrite, ³⁹ and Uriah, the Hittite. These were thirty-seven in all.

24

David's census of Israel and Judah — 1 Chronicles 21:1-6

¹ The anger of the LORD burned against Israel again and He incited David against them, by saying, “Go and count Israel and Judah!”

² The king told Joab, the commander of the army, who was with him: “Please go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beer-Sheba and count the people,

that I may know how many people there are!”

³ However, Joab told the king: “May the LORD, your God, increase the people a hundred times as many as they are while the eyes of my master the king still sees them! Nevertheless, why does my master the king desire to do this?”

⁴ However, the king’s order overruled Joab and the commanders of the army. Joab and the commanders of the army left the presence of the king to count the people of Israel. ⁵ They went across the Jordan, camped at Aroer, south of the city that is in the middle of the valley and then went to Gad and on to Jazer.

⁶ Then they went to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim-Hodshi. Then they went to Dan-Jaan and around toward Sidon. ⁷ They went to the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went on to Beer-Sheba in the Negev of Judah.

⁸ When they had gone through the whole country, they came to Jerusalem after nine months and twenty days. ⁹ When Joab reported to the king the total of the people who had been counted, there were in Israel eight hundred thousand able-bodied men who could draw a sword, and there were five hundred thousand men in Judah.

Judgment on David for his sin in arranging the census — 1 Chronicles 21:7-17

¹⁰ However, David’s conscience troubled him after he had numbered the people. David told the LORD: “I have sinned greatly in what I have done. However, now, O LORD, please take away the guilt of Your servant! For I have been behaving very foolishly.”

¹¹ When David got up in the morning, the Word of the LORD had come to the prophet Gad, David’s seer:

¹² “Go and tell David, ‘This is what the LORD has said: “I am laying three options before you. Choose one of them for Me to carry out against you!””

¹³ When Gad went to David and told him about it, he asked: “Should seven years of famine come on you in your country? Or should you flee before your enemies for three months while they pursue you? Or should there be a plague in your country for three days? Now, consider and decide which answer I should take back to the One who has sent me!”

¹⁴ Then David told Gad: “I am in great trouble. Please let us fall into the hands of the LORD! For He is very merciful. However, let me not fall into the hands of human beings!”

¹⁵ So, the LORD sent a plague on Israel from the morning until the designated time, and seven thousand

men died from Dan to Beer-Sheba. ¹⁶ However, when the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD relented from the calamity. He told the angel who was working destruction among the people: “It is enough! Now drop your hand!”

The angel of the LORD was at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. ¹⁷ When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD: “Look! I am the one. I have sinned. I myself have done wrong. However, what have these sheep done? Please let your hand be against me and against my father’s family!”

The building of an altar to God at the threshing floor of Araunah — 1 Chronicles 21:18-27

¹⁸ That day Gad came to David and told him, “Go up and set up an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite!”

¹⁹ According to what Gad had said, David went up, as the LORD had commanded him. ²⁰ When Araunah looked down, he saw the king and his officials coming toward him. Araunah went out and respectfully bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

²¹ Araunah asked, “Why has my master, the king, come to his servant?”

David answered, “To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped.”

²² Araunah told David: “Let my master, the king, take whatever he thinks is right and offer it up! Look! There are the oxen for the burnt offering and the threshing sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. ²³ All this, O king, Araunah has given to the king.”

Araunah also said to the king, “May the LORD, your God, be favourable to you!”

²⁴ However, the king told Araunah: “No! Rather, I shall certainly buy it from you at a price. I shall not offer burnt offerings to the LORD, my God, that have cost me nothing.”

So, David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for six hundred grams of silver. ²⁵ David built an altar to the LORD there and offered burnt offerings and peace-offerings. Then the LORD was moved by prayers for the country, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

1 KINGS

1

The appointment of Abishag to look after King David in his old age

¹ King David was old and advanced in years. Although people covered him with clothes, he could not get warm.

² Therefore, his officials told him: "Let people search for a young virgin for my master, the king, that she may wait on the king and be his attendant! Let her lie in your arms, that my master the king may get warm!"

³ So, they searched for a beautiful young woman throughout all the territory of Israel found Abishag from Shunem and brought her to the king. ⁴ The young woman was very beautiful. She attended to the king and served him, but the king had no intimate relations with her.

Adonijah's plot to succeed David as king

⁵ Adonijah, the son of Haggith, was ambitious and said, "I myself shall be the king."

He provided himself with chariots and horsemen and fifty men to run ahead of him. ⁶ His father had never at any time criticised him by asking, "Why have you been behaving like this?" He was also a very handsome man. His mother had given birth to him after Absalom. ⁷ He conferred with Joab, the son of Zeruah and with Abiathar, the priest, and they gave Adonijah their support. ⁸ However, Zadok, the priest, Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, Nathan, the prophet, Shimei, Rei and David's mighty men did not join Adonijah. ⁹ Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen and fattened cattle at the Stone of Zohemoth, which is near En-Rogel. He invited all his brothers, the king's sons and all the men of Judah who were royal officials.

¹⁰ However, he did not invite Nathan, the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men or his brother Solomon.

Nathan's warning to David and his help for Solomon to become king

¹¹ Then Nathan asked Bathsheba, Solomon's mother: "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king without the knowledge of our master David? ¹² Now therefore, come, please let me advise you, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon! ¹³ Go in at once to King David and ask him, 'Have you not, my master, the king, sworn to your maidservant, 'Your son Solomon will certainly be king after me and he will sit on my throne'? Why then has Adonijah become king?"

¹⁴ Look! While you are still there talking to the king, I also shall come in after you and confirm what you have said."

¹⁵ Bathsheba went to the king in his bedroom. The king was very old and Abishag from Shunem was waiting on the king. ¹⁶ Bathsheba bowed down respectfully to the king, and the king asked, "What do you want?"

¹⁷ She told him: "My master, you swore to me, your maidservant, by the LORD, your God, 'Your son Solomon will be king after me and he will sit on my

throne.' ¹⁸ However, now, you see, Adonijah has become king without the knowledge of my master, the king. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed great numbers of oxen, fattened cattle and sheep and has invited all the king's sons, Abiathar, the priest, and Joab, the commander of the army, but has not invited your servant Solomon. ²⁰ Now therefore, my master, the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who should succeed you, my master, the king, on your throne. ²¹ Otherwise when my master, the king, goes to rest with his fathers, my son Solomon and I will be treated as traitors."

²² While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. ²³ People told the king, "Nathan the prophet is here."

When he came in before the king, he bowed before the king with his face to the ground. ²⁴ Nathan said: "My master, the king, have you said, 'Adonijah will reign after me and he will be sitting on my throne'? ²⁵ For today he has gone down and sacrificed great numbers of cattle, fattened calves and sheep. He has also invited all the king's sons, the commanders of the army and Abiathar the priest. Look! They are eating and drinking with him and have been saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!' ²⁶ However, he has not invited me, your servant, or Zadok, the priest or Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, or your servant Solomon. ²⁷ Is this something that my master, the king, has done without telling me, your servant, who should sit on my master the king's throne after him?"

David's crowning of Solomon as king — 1 Chronicles 29:22-25

²⁸ Then King David answered, "Call Bathsheba in to me!"

So, she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. ²⁹ Then the king swore an oath: "As surely as the LORD lives, who has redeemed my soul out of every distress, ³⁰ I shall surely carry out today what I have sworn to you by the LORD, the God of Israel, when I promised: 'Your son Solomon will be king after me and he will succeed me on my throne.'"

³¹ Then Bathsheba respectfully bowed down to the king with her face to the ground and said, "May my master, King David, live for ever!"

³² Then King David said, "Call to me Zadok, the priest, Nathan, the prophet, and Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada!"

So, they came in before the king. ³³ The king told them: "Take with you the officials of your master, mount my son Solomon on my own mule and take him down to Gihon! ³⁴ Let the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan anoint him there as king over Israel! Then blow the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' ³⁵ Then follow him up here, and he shall come and sit on my throne! He shall succeed me as king! I have appointed him to be the ruler over Israel and Judah."

³⁶ Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, answered the king: “Amen! May the LORD, the God of my master, the king, so declare it! ³⁷ May the LORD be with Solomon as He has been with my master, the king, and may He make his throne greater than the throne of my master, King David!”

³⁸ Then the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan and Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down, mounted Solomon on King David’s mule and took him to Gihon. ³⁹ Zadok, the priest, took the horn of olive-oil from the Tabernacle and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!”

⁴⁰ All the people went up after him, playing flutes and rejoicing greatly, so that the ground shook with the sound.

The failure of Adonijah’s plot

⁴¹ When Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it, they stopped eating. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he asked, “Why is the city in a noisy uproar?”

⁴² While he was still speaking, Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, the priest, arrived. Adonijah said: “Come in! For you are a worthy man and must be bringing good news.”

⁴³ Jonathan answered Adonijah: “On the contrary! Our master, King David, has made Solomon king.

⁴⁴ The king has sent the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites and the Pelethites with him, and they have mounted him on the king’s mule. ⁴⁵ The priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan have anointed him as king at Gihon. They have joyfully come up from there, so that the city is in an uproar. That is the noise that you have heard. ⁴⁶ Solomon has also taken his seat on the royal throne. ⁴⁷ Moreover, the king’s officials have also gone to congratulate our master, King David, saying, ‘May God make the name of Solomon more famous than yours and may He make his throne greater than your throne!’ Then the king bowed in worship on his bed. ⁴⁸ The king also said: ‘Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has today granted someone to sit on my throne and has let me see it myself!’”

⁴⁹ Then all the guests of Adonijah got up trembling and left, and each one went his own way. ⁵⁰ Because Adonijah was afraid of Solomon, he got up and left and took hold of the horns of the altar. ⁵¹ Then Solomon was told: “Look! Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon and has actually taken hold of the horns of the altar. He is saying, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword!’”

⁵² Solomon said: “If he shows that he is worthy, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground. However, if wickedness is found in him, he must die!”

⁵³ King Solomon sent men, and they brought him down from the altar. When he came he bowed respect-

fully to King Solomon, and Solomon told him, “Go to your house!”

2

David’s final instructions to Solomon

¹ When the time approached for David to die, he gave instructions to his son Solomon. ² He said: “I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong and show yourself a man! ³ Observe what the LORD, your God, requires by walking in His Ways and keeping His Statutes, His Commandments, His Decisions and His Testimonies, as they are written in the Law of Moses, that you may be successful in everything that you do and everywhere you turn, ⁴ that the LORD may fulfil His promise, which He has promised to me, ‘If your descendants pay close attention to their Way, so that they walk before Me faithfully with all their hearts and with all their souls, you will never fail to have a descendant on the throne of Israel!’ ⁵ Moreover, you also know what Joab, the son of Zeruiah, did to me, how he treated the two commanders of the armies of Israel, Abner, the son of Ner, and Amasa, the son of Jether. He killed them, shedding their blood in peacetime as if in battle. He put the blood of war on the belt around his waist and on the sandals on his feet. ⁶ Therefore, act according to your wisdom, that his grey head may not go down to the grave in peace!

⁷ However, treat the sons of Barzillai from Gilead with faithful love! Let them be among those who eat at your table! For they stood beside me when I fled from your brother Absalom. ⁸ Look! You also have with you Shimei, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim. He pronounced against me a pernicious curse on the day when I went to Mahanaim. Nevertheless, when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD, ‘I shall not put you to death with the sword.’ ⁹ Now therefore, do not consider him innocent! For you are a wise man. You will know what you ought to do to him, that you may bring his grey head down to the grave in blood.”

The death of David — 1 Chronicles 3:4, 1 Chronicles 29:26-28

¹⁰ Then **David went to rest with his fathers** and was buried in the City of David. ¹¹ David had been king of Israel for forty years. He had been king for seven years in Hebron and for thirty-three years in Jerusalem.

Solomon’s assertion of authority over Adonijah

¹² Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his kingdom became secure. ¹³ However, Adonijah the son of Haggith, came to Solomon’s mother Bathsheba. She asked, “Do you come peacefully?” He answered, “Peacefully.”

¹⁴ Then he said, “I have something to say to you.” She said, “Say it!”

¹⁵ He said: “You know that the kingdom was mine and that all Israel fully expected me to reign. However, the kingdom has turned around and become my brother’s. For it has come to him from the LORD.

¹⁶ Now therefore, I have one request to make of you. Do not refuse me!”

She told him, “Say it!”

¹⁷ He said: “Please ask King Solomon to give me Abishag from Shunem as my wife! He will not refuse you.”

¹⁸ Bathsheba said, “Very well! I shall speak to the king for you.”

¹⁹ When Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah, the king stood up to meet her and respectfully bowed down to her. When he sat on his throne he had a throne placed for the king’s mother, and she sat at his right hand. ²⁰ Then she said: “I have one small request to make of you. Do not refuse me!”

The king told her: “Make your request, my mother! For I shall not refuse you.”

²¹ She said, “Let Abishag from Shunem be given to your brother Adonijah as his wife!”

²² King Solomon answered his mother: “Why are you requesting Abishag from Shunem for Adonijah? Request the kingdom also for him! For he is my elder brother. Request it also for him, for the priest Abiathar and for Joab, the son of Zeruiah!”

²³ Then King Solomon swore by the LORD: “May God deal severely with me and more than that if Adonijah’s request does not cost him his life! ²⁴ Now therefore, as surely as the LORD lives, who has established me, who has placed me on the throne of David my father, and who has made a house for me, as He has promised, Adonijah will be put to death today.”

²⁵ King Solomon sent a message through Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, and he struck Adonijah down, so that he died. ²⁶ The king also told the priest Abiathar: “Go to your own estate at Anathoth! For you deserve to die. However, I shall not put you to death at this time, because you carried the Ark of the Lord GOD before my father David and because you suffered all my father’s hardships together with him.”

²⁷ So, Solomon removed Abiathar from being a priest to the LORD; and so the Word of the LORD, which He had spoken about the house of Eli at Shiloh, was fulfilled.

The death of Joab

²⁸ When the news reached Joab, for, although Joab had not supported Absalom, he had supported Adonijah, Joab fled to the Tabernacle of the LORD and took hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹ When King Solomon was told, “Joab has fled to the Tabernacle of the LORD, and look! He is there beside the altar,” Solomon sent Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, telling him, “Go, strike him down!”

³⁰ When Benaiah entered the Tabernacle of the LORD, he told Joab, “This is what the king has said, ‘Come out!’”

However, Joab answered, “No! I shall die here.”

Then Benaiah brought word back to the king: “This is what Joab has said, and this is what he has answered

me.”

³¹ The king answered him: “Do as he has said! Strike him down and bury him! Then you will take away from me and from my father’s family the innocent blood that Joab has shed. ³² The LORD will bring his blood back on his own head, because, without the knowledge of my father David, he attacked and killed with the sword two men who were more righteous and better than he was, Abner, the son of Ner, the commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa, the son of Jether, the commander of the army of Judah. ³³ Their spilt blood will return on the head of Joab and on the heads of his descendants for ever. However, there will be peace from the LORD for ever for David, for his descendants, for his family and for his throne.”

³⁴ Then Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, went up, struck Joab down and put him to death. He was buried in his own house in the wilderness. ³⁵ The king appointed Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, over the army instead of Joab. The king also put the priest Zadok in the place of Abiathar.

The death of Shimei

³⁶ Then the king sent men to summon Shimei and told him: “Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and live there! However, you shall not leave there to go anywhere else! ³⁷ Know for certain that, on the day when you go out and go across the Kidron Valley, you will certainly die! ³⁸ Shimei answered the king: “What you say is good, I, your servant shall do as my master, the king has said.”

So, Shimei lived in Jerusalem for a long time.

³⁹ However, after three years, two of Shimei’s slaves ran away to Achish, the son of Maacah, the king of Gath. When people told Shimei: “Look! Your slaves are in Gath,” ⁴⁰ Shimei arose, saddled a donkey and went to Achish at Gath to look for his servants. Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath.

⁴¹ When Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had returned, ⁴² the king sent men to summon Shimei. He asked him: “Did I not make you swear by the LORD, and did I not warn you, ‘Know for certain that, on the day you go out and go anywhere else, you will certainly die’? You replied to me, ‘What you say is good. I have heard it.’ ⁴³ Why then have you not kept your oath to the LORD or obeyed the Command that I gave you?”

⁴⁴ The king also told Shimei: “You know in your own heart all the wrong that you did to my father David. The LORD will bring your wrong back on your own head. ⁴⁵ However, King Solomon will be blessed, and the throne of David will be established before the LORD for ever.”

⁴⁶ Then the king gave a command to Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and struck him down, so that he died. The kingdom was established in Solomon’s hands.

1 Kings

The marriage of Solomon to Pharaoh's daughter — 2 Chronicles 1:1

¹ Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. He married Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his own palace, the Temple of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem.

Solomon's request to God for wisdom — 2 Chronicles 1:2-13

² The people, however, used to sacrifice on the high places, because until that time no Temple had been built for the name of the LORD. ³ Solomon loved the LORD and lived according to the prescriptions of his father David, except that he used to offer sacrifices and burn offerings on the high places. ⁴ The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices there, for that was the most important high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night. God said: "Ask Me! What shall I give you?"

⁶ Solomon answered: "You have shown great kindness to Your servant, my father David, while he lived in Your presence in truth, in righteousness and with an upright heart toward You. You have continued to show him this great kindness and have given him a son to sit on his throne, as is so today. ⁷ Now, O LORD, my God, You have made me, Your servant, king instead of my father David, although I am only a little lad and do not know how to carry out my duties. ⁸ I, Your servant, am among Your people, whom You have chosen, a numerous people, too many to count or record. ⁹ Therefore, give me, Your servant, a mind that listens, that I may judge Your people and distinguish between good and evil! For who can judge this great people of Yours?"

¹⁰ This request, which Solomon had made, pleased the LORD. ¹¹ God replied to him: "Because you have asked for this, have not requested a long life for yourself, have not requested riches for yourself and have not requested the lives of your enemies but have requested understanding for yourself, to discern what is right, ¹² look! I have done as you have asked. See! I have given you a wise and understanding mind, so that there has been no one like you before you and no one will arise like you after you."

¹³ Moreover, I have also given you what you have not asked for, both riches and honour, so that no other king will have been like you all your life. ¹⁴ If you also live according to My Ways and keep My Prescriptions and My Commandments as your father David has lived, then I shall give you a long life."

¹⁵ When Solomon woke up, he realised that it had been a dream. He went to Jerusalem, stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace-offerings. He also made a feast for all his officials.

Solomon's wise ruling in a dispute

¹⁶ Then two prostitutes came along to the king and stood before him. ¹⁷ The one woman said: "With your permission, this woman and I are living in the same

house. I gave birth to a child while she was at the house with me. ¹⁸ On the third day after I had my baby, this woman also had a baby. We were alone. There was no one else with us in the house. Only the two of us were in the house. ¹⁹ This woman's son died during the night, because she lay on him. ²⁰ She got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me, while I, your servant, was sleeping, laid him in her bosom and laid her dead son in my bosom. ²¹ When I got up in the morning to feed my child, I saw that he was dead. However, when I looked at him closely in the morning light, I saw that he was not the child to whom I had given birth."

²² However, the other woman said: "No! The living child is my son, and the dead child is your son." The first kept saying: "No! The dead child is your son, and the living child is my son."

They spoke like this before the king. ²³ Then the king said: "The one is saying, 'This is my son, which is alive, and your son is the dead one,' and the other is saying, 'No! Rather, your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'"

²⁴ Then the king said, "Bring me a sword!"

People brought a sword before the king. ²⁵ Then the king said, "Divide the living child in two and give half to the one and half to the other!"

²⁶ Then, because the compassion of the woman whose son was alive was stirred for her son, she told the king, "With your permission, give her the living child and by no means kill him!"

However, the other kept saying: "He should be neither mine nor yours. Divide him!"

²⁷ Then the king answered: "Give the living child to the first woman! By no means put him to death! She is his mother."

²⁸ All Israel heard about the decision that the king had made. They respected the king, because they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to decide what was right.

4

Solomon's officials and governors — 2 Chronicles 9:26

¹ King Solomon was the king over all Israel. ² These were his chief officials: Azariah, the son of Zadok, was the priest. ³ Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, were the secretaries. Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was the recorder. ⁴ Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was in command of the army. Zadok and Abiathar were the priests. ⁵ Azariah, the son of Nathan, was over the officers. Zabud, the son of Nathan, was a priest and personal adviser to the king. ⁶ Ahishar was in charge of the palace. Adoniram, the son of Abda, was in charge of the forced labour. ⁷ Solomon had twelve governors over all Israel, who were to provide food for the king and his palace. Each man had to provide supplies for one month in the year. ⁸ These were their names: Ben-Hur was in the hill-country of

Ephraim. ⁹ Ben-Deker was in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-Shemesh and Elon-Beth-Hanan. ¹⁰ Ben-Hesed was in Arubboth. He had Socoh and all the land of Hopher. ¹¹ Ben-Abinadab had all the hilly country around Dor. He had married Taphath, the daughter of Solomon. ¹² Baana, the son of Ahilud, was in Taanach, Megiddo and all Beth-Shean, which is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, from Beth-Shean to Abel-Meholah, as far as the other side of Jokneam. ¹³ Ben-Geber was in Ramoth-Gilead. He had the villages of Jair, the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead. He also had the district of Argob, which is in Bashan, sixty large walled cities with bronze gate-bars. ¹⁴ Ahinadab, the son of Iddo, was in Mahanaim. ¹⁵ Ahimaaz was in Naphtali. He also had married a daughter of Solomon, namely, Basemath. ¹⁶ Baana, the son of Hushai, was in Asher and Bealoth. ¹⁷ Jehoshaphat, the son of Paruah, was in Issachar. ¹⁸ Shimei, the son of Ela, was in Benjamin. ¹⁹ Geber, the son of Uri, was in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon, the king of the Amorites and of Og, the king of Bashan. He was the only governor over that district.

²⁰ Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They used to eat and drink and they were happy. ²¹ Solomon was the ruler over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. They used to pay taxes and were Solomon's subjects all his life.

Solomon's daily provisions

²² Solomon's daily provisions were five tonnes of fine flour and ten tonnes of flour, ²³ ten stall-fed cattle, twenty pasture-fed cattle, a hundred sheep and goats, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks and fattened fowl. ²⁴ Indeed, he was ruling over the entire region west of the Euphrates from Tiphseh to Gaza, over all the kings west of the Euphrates. He had peace around him on every side. ²⁵ Judah and Israel, from Dan even to Beer-Sheba, lived in safety, everyone under his own vine and under his fig tree, while Solomon was alive. ²⁶ Solomon also had forty thousand stalls for his chariot horses and twelve thousand horsemen. ²⁷ Each of those governors in his month supplied provisions for King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table. They did not omit anything. ²⁸ Each of them, according to his stipulated quota, also used to bring barley and straw to the place where it was required for the horses and draught horses.

Solomon's wisdom

²⁹ God gave Solomon wisdom, very great insight and a breadth of understanding like the sand on the seashore. ³⁰ Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East and greater than all the wisdom of the Egyptians. ³¹ He was wiser than all other human beings were, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite was and wiser than Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol, were. He was famous in all the surrounding nations. ³² He also spoke three thousand

proverbs, and his songs numbered one thousand and five. ³³ He spoke about trees, from the cedars in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He also spoke about animals, birds, reptiles and fish. ³⁴ People came from all nations, to hear the wisdom of Solomon and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard about his wisdom.

5

The supply of wood and stone for the Temple — 2 Chronicles 2:1-13, 15-18

¹ Hiram, the king of Tyre, sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that people had anointed him king to succeed his father. For Hiram had always had an affectionate regard for David. ² Solomon sent this message to Hiram, ³ "You know that my father David could not build a Temple for the name of the LORD, his God, because of the wars that his enemies all around were fighting against him, until the LORD put them under his feet. ⁴ However, the LORD, my God, has now given me rest on every side. There is no one opposing me, and no calamity has occurred. ⁵ I intend, therefore, to build a Temple for the name of the LORD, my God, as the LORD told my father David, when He promised, 'Your son, whom I shall set on your throne to succeed you, will build the Temple for My name.' ⁶ Now therefore, give orders for people to cut cedars in Lebanon for me! My servants will join your servants, and I shall pay you whatever wages you set for your servants. For you yourself know that there is no one among us who is as skilled in felling timber as the men of Sidon."

⁷ When Hiram heard Solomon's message, he was very pleased and said, "Blessed be the LORD today, who has given David a wise son to rule over this great people!"

⁸ Hiram sent a message to Solomon: "I have heard the message that you have sent to me. I shall do all you want in providing the cedar and juniper logs. ⁹ My servants will bring them from Lebanon down to the sea, and I shall make them into rafts to go by sea to the place that you specify to me. I shall break the rafts up there, and you may take them away. You will also meet my wishes if you provide food for my household."

¹⁰ So, Hiram kept supplying Solomon with all the cedar and juniper logs that he wanted. ¹¹ Solomon also gave Hiram three thousand, three hundred and seventy tonnes of wheat as food for his household and seven kilolitres of beaten olive-oil. Solomon continued to provide this to Hiram every year. ¹² The LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty. ¹³ King Solomon imposed compulsory labour on all the Israelites. This forced labour numbered thirty thousand men. ¹⁴ He sent them to Lebanon in shifts of ten thousand each month. They used to spend one month in Lebanon and two months

at home. Adoniram was in charge of the compulsory labour. ¹⁵ Solomon also had seventy thousand men who carried loads and eighty thousand men who quarried stones in the hill-country, ¹⁶ besides Solomon's three thousand, three hundred chief foremen, who were in charge of the work. They supervised the people who were doing the work. ¹⁷ At the king's command they quarried out large blocks of valuable stone to provide a foundation of dressed stone for the Temple. ¹⁸ Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men of Gebal cut and prepared the timber and the stone to build the Temple.

6

The building of the Temple in seven years — 2 Chronicles 3:1-14

¹ In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of **Solomon's** reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to **build the Temple of the LORD**. ² The Temple that King Solomon built for the LORD was thirty metres long, ten metres wide and fifteen metres high. ³ The vestibule in front of the nave of the Temple was ten metres long, equal to the width of the Temple, and extended for five metres from the front of the Temple. ⁴ He also made closed slatted windows for the Temple. ⁵ He also built a flat surface against the wall of the Temple, running around the walls of the Temple, both the nave and the inner sanctuary. He also made side rooms all around. ⁶ The lowest part of the flat surface was two and a half metres wide. The middle part was three metres wide and the third part was three-and-a-half metres wide. For he placed ledges on the wall around the outside of the Temple that nothing might be fastened into the walls of the Temple. ⁷ When the house was being built, it was done with stone completely prepared at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any other iron tool was heard in the Temple while it was being built. ⁸ The entrance for the middle side-room was on the south side of the Temple. People used to go up by a stairway to the middle side-room and from the middle side-room to the third. ⁹ When he had built the Temple and finished it, he made the ceiling of the Temple with rafters and cedar planks. ¹⁰ He built the flat surface alongside the whole Temple, two-and-a-half metres high. It was fastened to the Temple with cedar beams. ¹¹ Then the Word of the LORD came to Solomon, ¹² "Concerning this house that you are building, if you live according to My Statutes and My Decisions, keep all My Commandments and walk in them, I shall fulfil My promise to you, which I made to your father David. ¹³ I shall dwell among the Israelites and shall not forsake My people Israel."

¹⁴ When Solomon had built the Temple and finished it ¹⁵ he lined the inside walls of the Temple with cedar boards. He panelled the inside with wood, from the floor of the Temple to the beams of the ceiling. He

covered the floor of the Temple with juniper planks. ¹⁶ He built ten metres at the rear of the Temple with cedar boards from the floor to the ceiling and built this on the inside of the Temple as an inner room, as the Most Holy Place. ¹⁷ The main sanctuary in front of this room was twenty metres long. ¹⁸ The cedar inside the Temple was carved with gourds and open flowers. All was cedar-wood. No stone could be seen. ¹⁹ He prepared the inner sanctuary inside the Temple to put the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD there. ²⁰ The interior of the inner sanctuary was ten metres long, ten metres wide and ten metres high. He overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid the cedar altar. ²¹ Solomon overlaid the inside of the Temple with pure gold. He also put golden chains across the front of the inner sanctuary and overlaid it with gold. ²² He overlaid the whole Temple with gold, until the entire Temple was finished. He also overlaid with gold the altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary.

The furnishings of the Temple — 2 Chronicles 4:1-10, 19-22, 2 Chronicles 5:1

²³ In the inner sanctuary he also made two cherubim of olive-wood, each five metres high. ²⁴ One wing of the first cherub was two and a half metres long, and the other wing of the cherub was two and a half metres. It was five metres from one wing tip to the other wing tip. ²⁵ The other cherub also measured five metres. The two cherubim were identical in size and shape. ²⁶ One cherub was five metres high, and so was the other cherub. ²⁷ He placed the cherubim in the innermost part of the Temple. The wings of the cherubim were spread out so that a wing of one touched the one wall, and a wing of the other cherub was touching the other wall. Their other wings were touching each other in the middle of the room. ²⁸ He also overlaid the cherubim with gold. ²⁹ On the walls all around the Temple, in both the inner and outer rooms, he carved figures of cherubim, palm-trees and open flowers. ³⁰ He also overlaid the floors of both the inner and outer rooms of the Temple with gold. ³¹ For the entrance to the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive-wood. The projecting columns that formed the doorposts were five-sided. ³² The two doors were also of olive-wood, and he made carvings of angels, palm-trees and open flowers on them. He covered them with gold and pressed the gold down on the angels and the palm-trees. ³³ In the same way he made four-sided doorposts of olive-wood for the entrance to the Temple. ³⁴ He also made two doors of juniper wood. The two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding. ³⁵ He carved cherubim, palm-trees and open flowers on them and overlaid them with gold, applied evenly over the carved work. ³⁶ He built the inner court with three courses of hewn stone and one course of trimmed cedar beams. ³⁷ The foundation of the Temple of the LORD had been laid in the fourth year, in the month

of Ziv.³⁸ In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the Temple was finished in all its details and according to all its specifications. He had spent seven years in building it.

7

The building of Solomon's palace in thirteen years

¹ After Solomon had been building his own palace for thirteen years, he completed his entire palace. ² He built the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. It was fifty metres long, twenty-five metres wide and fifteen metres high. It had four rows of cedar pillars, with trimmed cedar beams on the pillars. ³ It was roofed with cedar above its forty-five supporting beams, which rested on the pillars. There were fifteen beams in each row. ⁴ There were three levels of slatted windows, and windows were opposite each other on three levels. ⁵ All the entrances with their doorposts had square frames, and windows were opposite each other in sets of three. ⁶ He also made the Hall of Pillars. It was twenty-five metres long and fifteen metres wide. There was a porch in front of it. In front of that there were pillars and an overhanging roof. ⁷ He also built the Throne Hall, the Hall of Justice, where he would decide cases. It was panelled with cedar from the floor to the ceiling. ⁸ His own palace, where he would live, had another court behind the Hall and was built in a similar way. Solomon was also making a palace like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married. ⁹ All these were made of high-grade stone, cut to size and trimmed with saws on the inner and outer faces, from the foundation to the top course and from the outside to the great court. ¹⁰ The foundation was laid with large high-quality stone, some stones measuring five metres and some four metres. ¹¹ Above the foundation there were high-quality stones that had been cut to size and cedar-wood. ¹² The great courtyard had three courses of dressed stone all around and a course of trimmed cedar beams. It was like the inner court of the Temple of the LORD and the porch of the Temple.

The work in bronze by Hiram of Tyre to furnish the Temple — 2 Chronicles 2:13-17, 3:15-5:1

¹³ King Solomon sent someone to fetch Hiram from Tyre. ¹⁴ His mother was a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre. He was a craftsman in bronze and was endowed with the wisdom, understanding and skill to make any kind of bronze work. He came to King Solomon and did all his work.

The two pillars at the porch of the Temple

¹⁵ He cast two bronze pillars. The first pillar was nine metres high, and a line measured the circumference of the second pillar at six metres. ¹⁶ He also made two capitals of cast bronze to set on the tops of the pillars. Each of the two capitals was two-and-a-half metres high. ¹⁷ He also made a lattice network in chain-like decoration for the capitals that were on the tops of the

pillars. There were seven rows on each of the two capitals. ¹⁸ There were two rows of pomegranates all around the one capital above the network, and he made them for the other capital in the same way. ¹⁹ The capitals that were on the tops of the pillars in the porch were ornamented with lotus flowers and were two metres high. ²⁰ The capitals were on the two pillars and above the rounded projection, which was beside the network and next to it. There were two hundred pomegranates in rows all around, and so with the other capital. ²¹ He erected the pillars at the porch of the Temple. He erected the pillar on the right and named it "Jachin,"⁹⁹ and erected the pillar on the left and named it "Boaz."¹⁰⁰ ²² The tops of the pillars were ornamented with lotus flowers. So, the work on the pillars was completed.

The bronze pool for the Temple — 2 Chronicles 4:2-5

²³ Then he made the pool with cast metal. It was five metres from rim to rim. It was circular, two-and-a-half metres high. It took a line of fifteen metres to measure its circumference. ²⁴ Carved ornaments encircled it below the rim, ten to every half a metre and they surrounded the whole pool. The carved ornaments were in two rows, cast in one piece with the pool. ²⁵ It was standing on twelve bulls, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east. The pool was set on top of them and their hind quarters were all towards the middle. ²⁶ It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, like a lotus flower. It held ninety thousand litres.

The wheeled stands

²⁷ He also made the ten movable stands of bronze. Each stand was two metres long, two metres wide and one-and-a-half metres high. ²⁸ This is how the stands were made: They had side-panels, and the side-panels were between crosspieces. ²⁹ On the side-panels that were between the crosspieces there were lions, bulls and cherubim. On the crosspieces, both above and below the lions and bulls, there were garlands of bevelled work. ³⁰ Moreover, each stand had four bronze wheels and bronze axles. Each had four legs with flanges on them to hold a washbasin. The supports were made of cast metal with garlands at the side of each. ³¹ Each had an opening inside at the top for its circular frame, a half a metre deep. The opening was round, and the structure of the stand was sixty-seven centimetres high. At its opening there were also engravings. Its side-panels were square, not round. ³² The four wheels were underneath the side-panels. The axles of the wheels were attached to the stand. Each wheel was sixty-seven centimetres high. ³³ The wheels were made like chariot wheels. Their axles, their rims, their spokes and their hubs were all of cast metal. ³⁴ Each stand had four handles, one on each corner. The handles were of one piece with the stands.

⁹⁹ Jachin means, "He establishes."

¹⁰⁰ Boaz means, "In Him is strength."

³⁵ On the top of the stand there was a round band twenty-five centimetres high. Its stays and its side-panels on the top of the stand were of one piece with it. ³⁶ He carved cherubim, lions and palm-trees on the surfaces of its stays and on its side-panels, wherever there was a blank space, with garlands all around. ³⁷ This is the way he made the ten stands. All of them were cast in the same way and were identical in size and shape.

The bronze basins — 2 Chronicles 4:6, 10

³⁸ He also made ten bronze basins. Each basin held nine hundred litres. Each basin measured two metres. There was one basin on each of the ten stands. ³⁹ He set five stands on the right side of the Temple and five on the left side of the Temple. He set the pool on the right side of the Temple, toward the south-east.

Other materials for the Temple — 2 Chronicles 4:11-5:1

⁴⁰ Hiram also made the basins, the fire-shovels and the bowls used for pouring. So, Hiram finished doing all the work that he did for King Solomon for the Temple of the LORD: ⁴¹ the two pillars, the two bowl-shaped capitals that were on top of the pillars, the two lattice networks to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals that were on the tops of the pillars, ⁴² the four hundred pomegranates for the two lattice networks, two rows of pomegranates for each lattice network, to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals that were on the pillars, ⁴³ the ten stands, the ten basins on the stands, ⁴⁴ the one pool, the twelve bulls underneath the pool, ⁴⁵ the basins, the fire-shovels and the bowls used for pouring. All these vessels that Hiram made for King Solomon for the Temple of the LORD were of polished bronze. ⁴⁶ The king had them cast in the Jordan valley, in the foundry between Succoth and Zarethan. ⁴⁷ Solomon left all the articles unweighted, because there was so very much. The weight of the bronze could not be determined.

⁴⁸ Solomon also made all the furnishings for the Temple of the LORD: the golden altar, the golden table that held the bread of the Presence, ⁴⁹ the lampstands of pure gold (five on the right side and five on the left side in front of the inner sanctuary), the flowers, the lamps, the golden wick-snuffers, ⁵⁰ the pure-gold bowls, wick-trimmers, bowls used for pouring, basins and fire pans. He also made the golden linings for the doors of the innermost part of the Temple, the Most Holy Place, and for the doors of the main hall of the Temple. ⁵¹ When all the work that King Solomon did on the Temple of the LORD had been finished, Solomon brought in the things that his father David had dedicated, the silver and the gold and the furnishings and placed them in the treasuries of the Temple of the LORD.

8

The bringing up of the Ark of the Covenant — 2 Chronicles 5:2-6:11

¹ Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the leaders of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite fam-

ilies, before King Solomon at Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from the City of David, which is Zion. ² All the men of Israel came together to King Solomon at the festival in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. ³ When all the elders of Israel had come, the priests took up the Ark. ⁴ They brought up the Ark of the LORD, the Tent of Meeting, and all the holy furnishings that were in the tent. The priests and the Levites brought them up. ⁵ King Solomon and the whole congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him and were with him in front of the Ark, were sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted. ⁶ Then the priests brought **the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD** to its place **in** the inner sanctuary of **the Temple**, the Most Holy Place, and put it underneath the wings of the cherubim. ⁷ For the cherubim were spreading out their wings over the place of the Ark, so that the cherubim overshadowed the Ark and its poles. ⁸ The poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen from the Holy Place before the inner sanctuary. However, they could not be seen from outside. They have been there to this day. ⁹ There was nothing in the Ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had put there at Horeb, where the LORD had made a Covenant with the Israelites after they had come out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ When the priests had come out of the Holy Place, **the cloud filled the Temple of the LORD**. ¹¹ The priests could not stand to minister because of **the cloud**, because **the glory of the LORD had filled the Temple of the LORD**.

¹² Then Solomon said: "The LORD has said that He dwells in thick darkness. ¹³ I have certainly built for You a magnificent Temple, a place for You to live in for ever."

Solomon's address to the people at the dedication of the Temple — 2 Chronicles 6:3-11

¹⁴ Then the king turned around and blessed the whole congregation of Israel while the whole congregation of Israel was standing there. ¹⁵ He said: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel! He made a promise with His own mouth to my father David and with His hand He has fulfilled it. He said: ¹⁶ 'Since the day when I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen any city in any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a Temple where My name might be. However, I chose David to be over My people Israel.' ¹⁷ My father David wished to build a Temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸ However, the LORD told my father David, 'Because you desired to build a Temple for My name, you did well in desiring to do it. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, you shall not build the Temple! Rather, your son, who will come from your body, will build the Temple for My name.' ²⁰ The LORD has fulfilled His promise, which He has made. For I have succeeded my father David and have occupied the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and I have

built the Temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ²¹ I have provided a place there for the Ark, which contains the Covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple — 2 Chronicles 6:12-42

²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel and spread his hands toward heaven. ²³ He said: “O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth below. You keep Your Covenant and show faithful love to Your servants, who walk before You with all their hearts. ²⁴ You have kept Your promise to Your servant, my father David. You promised it with Your mouth and carried it out with Your hand, as is so today. ²⁵ Now, O LORD, God of Israel, keep Your promise to Your servant, my father David, when You said to him, ‘You will not fail to have a man sitting before Me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons pay close attention to their ways, so that they walk before Me as You have been walking before Me!’ ²⁶ Now therefore, O God of Israel, please let the promise that You have made to Your servant, David, my father, be confirmed! ²⁷ Nevertheless, will God really dwell on the earth? Look! The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this Temple, which I have built! ²⁸ Yet give attention to the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD, my God, and hear the cry and the prayer that Your servant is praying before You today! ²⁹ May Your eyes be open toward this Temple night and day, toward the place about which You have said, ‘My name will be there,’ that You may hear the prayer that Your servant is making toward this place! ³⁰ Hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray toward this place! May You Yourself hear in heaven, Your dwelling place, and, when You hear, forgive!

³¹ “If a man sins against his neighbour and binds himself with a curse, to place himself under an imprecation and comes and swears his oath before Your altar in this Temple, ³² then may You Yourself hear in heaven, act and judge Your servants, condemning the guilty person by bringing his conduct on his own head, and justifying the righteous person by establishing his innocence!

³³ “When Your people Israel are defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against You and when they turn back to You, confess Your name, pray and plead with You in this Temple, ³⁴ then may You Yourself hear in heaven, forgive the sin of Your people Israel and bring them back to the land that You have given to their fathers!

³⁵ “When the sky is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You and when they pray towards this place, confess Your name and turn away from their sin, because You have made them

suffer, ³⁶ then may You Yourself hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, when You teach them the good way in which they should walk and when You give rain on Your land, which You have given to Your people for an inheritance!

³⁷ “When there is famine in the land or a plague, when there is scorching or mildew or locusts or stripping locusts, when their enemy besieges them in the land at their gates or whatever plague or sickness there may be, ³⁸ whenever any human being of all Your people Israel makes any prayer or any supplication, when each one’s conscience distresses him and he spreads out his hands toward this Temple, ³⁹ then may You Yourself hear in heaven, Your dwelling place, forgive and act! May You allot to each one as all his ways deserve! For You know his heart. For You, You only, know the hearts of all the descendants of Adam. ⁴⁰ Do this, that they may fear You for all their lives on the land that You have given to our fathers!

⁴¹ “Likewise, when a foreigner, who does not belong to Your people Israel, comes from a distant country for Your name’s sake ⁴² (for people will hear about Your great name, Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm) — when he comes and prays towards this Temple, ⁴³ then may You Yourself hear in heaven, Your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks from You, that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as Your own people Israel do, and that they may know that this Temple, which I have built, bears Your name!

⁴⁴ “When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way You send them and they pray to You, O LORD, facing towards the city that You have chosen and the Temple that I have built for Your name, ⁴⁵ then may You hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication and do for them what is right!

⁴⁶ “When they sin against You — for there is no one who does not sin — and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they are taken away as captives to the land of the enemy, far away or near, ⁴⁷ and when they come back to themselves in the land where they have been taken as captives, repent, plead with You in the land of their captors and say, ‘We have sinned, done wrong and acted wickedly,’ ⁴⁸ and when they turn back to You with all their hearts and with all their souls in the land of their enemies, who have taken them away as captives, and pray to You towards their land, which You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen and the Temple that I have built for Your name, ⁴⁹ then may You hear their prayer and their plea in heaven, Your dwelling place, and do for them what is right! ⁵⁰ Then forgive Your people for the sins that they have committed against You and all their rebellious acts that they have

committed against You! Cause those who have captured them to be compassionate on them, that they may treat them mercifully! ⁵¹ For they are Your people and Your inheritance, which You have brought out of Egypt, from inside that iron smelter. ⁵² May Your eyes be open to the supplication of Your servant and to the supplication of Your people Israel, so that You listen to them whenever they call to You! ⁵³ For You Yourself have singled them out of all the peoples of the earth to be Your own inheritance, as You promised through Your servant Moses when You, O Lord GOD, brought our fathers out of Egypt.”

Solomon's blessing of the people — 2 Chronicles 6:40-42

⁵⁴ When Solomon had finished making all this prayer and supplication to the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven. ⁵⁵ He stood up and blessed the whole congregation of Israel, saying loudly, ⁵⁶ “Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, exactly as He has promised! Not one of all the good promises that He made through His servant Moses has failed to come true. ⁵⁷ May the LORD, our God, be with us, as He has been with our fathers! May He not leave us or forsake us, ⁵⁸ that He may turn our hearts to Himself, that we may walk in all His Ways and keep His Commandments, His Prescriptions and His Decisions, which He has ordered our fathers to keep! ⁵⁹ May these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD, our God, day and night, so that He gives justice to His servant and His people Israel, as each day may require, ⁶⁰ that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God and that there is no other! ⁶¹ May your hearts therefore be fully loyal to the LORD, our God, that you may walk by His Prescriptions and keep His Commandments, as you do today!”

The dedication of the Temple with sacrifices — 2 Chronicles 7:4-11

⁶² Then the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices in the presence of the LORD. ⁶³ Solomon offered, as peace-offerings that he made to the LORD, twenty-two thousand cattle and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So, the king and all the Israelites dedicated the Temple of the LORD. ⁶⁴ On that day the king consecrated the middle part of the court that was in front of the Temple of the LORD. For there he had prepared the burnt offerings, the grain-offerings and the fat pieces of the peace-offerings, because the bronze altar, which was before the LORD, was too small to hold the burnt offerings, the grain-offerings and the fat pieces of the peace-offerings. ⁶⁵ Solomon observed the feast at that time together with all Israel. It was a vast assembly of people from Lebo-Hamath to the Brook of Egypt. They had come before the LORD, our God, for seven days and for seven days more, fourteen days in all. ⁶⁶ On the eighth day he dismissed the people. They blessed the king and went to their tents, joyful and glad in heart for all

the goodness that the LORD had shown to His servant David and to His people Israel.

9

God's assurance that He had heard His people's prayers — 2 Chronicles 7:11-22

¹ When Solomon had finished building the Temple of the LORD, the king's palace and everything else that Solomon desired to build and took pleasure in doing, ² the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³ The LORD told him: “I have heard your prayer and your supplication, which you have made before Me. I have consecrated this Temple, which you have built to put My name there for ever. My eyes and My heart will always be there. ⁴ As for you, if you walk before Me blamelessly and uprightly as your father David has done, if you do exactly as I have commanded you, and, if you keep My Prescriptions and My Decisions, ⁵ I shall establish your royal throne over Israel for ever, as I promised your father David, when I said, ‘You will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’ ⁶ However, if you or your children indeed turn away and do not follow Me and do not keep My Commandments and My Statutes, which I have set before you, and, if you go and serve other gods and worship them, ⁷ I shall cut off Israel from the land that I have given them and cast out of My sight the Temple that I have consecrated for My name, and Israel will become a standard warning and an object of ridicule among all peoples. ⁸ Although this Temple is very eminent, everyone going past it will be astonished and hiss. They will ask, ‘Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this Temple?’ ⁹ Then people will answer, ‘Because they abandoned the LORD, their God, who had brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have clung to other gods, worshipped them and served them. That is why the LORD has brought this entire calamity on them.’”

Solomon's gift of cities in Galilee to Hiram of Tyre — 2 Chronicles 8:1-18

¹⁰ At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon had built the two buildings, the Temple of the LORD and the royal palace, ¹¹ because Hiram, the king of Tyre, had supplied Solomon with as much cedar and juniper timber and gold as he desired, King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. ¹² However, when Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, he was not pleased with them. ¹³ He asked: “What kind of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?” So, they have been called “The Land of Cabul”^{*101} to this day. ¹⁴ Hiram had sent to the king three thousand, six hundred kilograms of gold.

Solomon's use of forced labour to complete his building projects — 2 Chronicles 8:3-16

¹⁵ This is the account of the forced labour that King Solomon conscripted to build the Temple of the

¹⁰¹ Cabul means either “like nothing” or “fettered.”

LORD, his own palace, the supporting terrace, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer. ¹⁶ Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had gone up and captured Gezer, burnt it down, killed the Canaanites who had been living in the city and had given it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife. ¹⁷ Solomon rebuilt Gezer and built Lower Beth-Horon, ¹⁸ Baalath and Tadmor in the wilderness, inside the country, ¹⁹ as well as all the storage-cities that Solomon had, the cities for his chariots, the cities for his horses and whatever else Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon and in all the rest of the land over which he reigned. ²⁰ All the people who were left from the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who did not belong to the Israelites, ²¹ that is, their descendants, who were left in the land after them, whom the Israelites could not devote to destruction, these Solomon conscripted for forced labour, to be slaves and so they are to this day. ²² However, Solomon did not make slaves of any of the Israelites. For they were the soldiers, his officials, his commanders, his captains, his chariot-commanders and his horsemen. ²³ The chief officers who were in charge of Solomon's work numbered five hundred and fifty men. They supervised the people who were doing the work. ²⁴ Not until after Pharaoh's daughter had gone up from the City of David to her own house, which Solomon had built for her, did he construct the supporting terrace. ²⁵ Three times a year Solomon used to offer up burnt offerings and peace-offerings on the altar that he had built for the LORD. He also burnt incense with the altar that was before the LORD. So, he used to restore the completeness of the Temple. ²⁶ King Solomon also built a fleet of ships at Ezion-Geber, which is near Eloth^{*102}, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. ²⁷ Hiram sent with the fleet his servants, who were seamen and familiar with the sea, together with the servants of Solomon. ²⁸ They went to Ophir and brought twelve thousand, six hundred kilograms of gold from there and delivered it to King Solomon.

10

The visit of the Queen of Sheba to Jerusalem — 2 Chronicles 9:1-12

¹ When the queen of Sheba heard how famous Solomon was because of the name of the Lord, she came to test him with difficult questions. ² She arrived at Jerusalem with a very great company, with camels carrying perfumes, very much gold and precious stones. When she **came to Solomon**, she told him all that she had on her mind. ³ Solomon answered all her questions. Nothing was too difficult for the king to explain to her. ⁴ When the queen of Sheba had seen **all the wisdom of Solomon**, the palace that he had built, ⁵ the food on his table, how his officials were seated and how his servants waited at the table, their

clothing, his cup-bearers and his burnt offerings, which he used to offer at the Temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed. ⁶ She told the king: "The report that I have heard in my own land about your words and of your **wisdom** is true. ⁷ However, I did not believe the reports until I **came** and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, I was not told half of it. In **wisdom** and prosperity you have exceeded the report that I heard. ⁸ How advantageous for your men! How advantageous for your officials, who continually stand in your presence and **listen to your wisdom!** ⁹ May the LORD, your God, also be blessed, who takes pleasure in you and has placed you on the throne of Israel! Because of the eternal love of the LORD for Israel, He has made you king, that you may carry out what is just and right."

¹⁰ Then she gave the king three thousand, six hundred kilograms of gold, a very large quantity of perfumes and precious stones. Never again was such a large quantity of perfumes brought in as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. ¹¹ Besides that, the fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought a very great quantity of almug wood and precious stones from Ophir. ¹² The king used the almug wood to make supports for the Temple of the LORD and for the king's palace and to make lyres and harps for the singers. Almug wood like it has never been brought in or been seen to this day. ¹³ King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired and asked for, besides what Solomon had given her in his royal generosity. Then she left and returned with her officials to her own country.

Solomon's splendour — 2 Chronicles 1:14-17, 9:13-25, 27-28

¹⁴ The gold that came to Solomon in one year weighed nineteen thousand, nine hundred and eighty kilograms. ¹⁵ This was in addition to the revenue from the traders, from the business of the merchants, from all the Arabian kings and from the governors of the land. ¹⁶ King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold. He used seven kilograms of gold to cover each shield. ¹⁷ He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold. He used one-and-a-half kilograms of gold to cover each shield. The king placed them in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. ¹⁸ The king also made a large throne of ivory and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁹ There were six steps going up to the throne, and the top of the throne was round at the back. There were armrests on each side of the seat, and two lions were standing alongside the armrests. ²⁰ Twelve lions were also standing there on each side of the six steps. Nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. ²¹ All King Solomon's drinking vessels were golden and all the vessels of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver. Silver was not regarded as valuable at the time of Solomon. ²² Indeed, the king had ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. The

¹⁰² Compare 2 Kings 14:22 (Elath).

ships of Tarshish used to come once every three years carrying gold, silver, ivory, apes and baboons. ²³ King Solomon was greater than all the other kings of the earth were in wealth and in wisdom. ²⁴ The whole world wanted to have an audience with Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his mind. ²⁵ Each of them brought his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, fragrant substances, perfumes, horses and mules. This continued year after year. ²⁶ Solomon accumulated chariots and horsemen. He had one thousand, four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses. He placed them in the chariot cities as well as with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁷ The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem and cedars as plentiful as the sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. ²⁸ Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Cilicia. The king's traders purchased them in Cilicia at the market price. ²⁹ A chariot could be imported from Egypt for seven kilograms and two hundred grams of silver and a horse for one kilogram and eight hundred grams. In this way these men also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

11

Solomon's wives and their idolatry

¹ King Solomon loved many foreign women besides the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. ² They were from the nations about whom the LORD had told the Israelites: "You shall not marry them, and they shall not marry you! They will certainly turn your hearts away to follow their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. ³ He had seven hundred wives who were princesses and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. ⁴ When Solomon grew old, his wives turned away his heart to follow other gods, and his heart was not fully loyal to the LORD, his God, as the heart of his father David had been. ⁵ Solomon followed Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians and Milcom, the detestable idol of the Ammonites. ⁶ So, Solomon did what the LORD regarded as evil and did not follow the LORD completely, as his father David had done. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain east of Jerusalem and for Molech, the detestable idol of the Ammonites. ⁸ He also did for all his other foreign wives, who used to burn incense and sacrifice to their gods.

The pronouncement of God's judgment on Solomon

⁹ So, the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. ¹⁰ Although He had commanded Solomon about this, that he should not follow other gods, he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. ¹¹ Therefore, the LORD told Solomon: "Because this has been your practice and you have not been keeping My Covenant and My

Statutes, which I have commanded you, I shall certainly tear the kingdom away from you and shall give it to one of your officials. ¹² Nevertheless, I shall not do it during your lifetime for the sake of your father David but shall tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³ Yet I shall not tear away the whole kingdom but shall give one tribe to your son, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."

Solomon's enemy Hadad

¹⁴ The LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad, the Edomite. He was a descendant of the king in Edom. ¹⁵ For when David was in Edom, Joab, the commander of the army, had gone up to bury the dead and had struck down every male in Edom. ¹⁶ For Joab and all Israel had remained there for six months, until Joab had cut down every male in Edom. ¹⁷ However, Hadad had fled to Egypt, together with some of his father's Edomite officials, while Hadad was still a little boy. ¹⁸ They had set out from Midian, had gone to Paran, had taken some men with them from Paran and had gone to Egypt, to Pharaoh, king of Egypt. He had given him a house, had allocated an allowance of food for him and had given him some land. ¹⁹ Hadad had become a special favourite of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh had given him his own wife's sister to marry, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. ²⁰ The sister of Tahpenes had borne him Genubath, his son, whom Tahpenes had weaned in Pharaoh's palace. Genubath had been in Pharaoh's palace with Pharaoh's own children. ²¹ However, when Hadad had heard in Egypt that David had gone to rest with his fathers and that Joab, the commander of the army, had died, Hadad asked Pharaoh, "Let me leave, that I may return to my own country!"

²² However, Pharaoh had asked him, "What have you been lacking with me that now you should want to go back to your own country?"

Hadad had replied, "Nothing, but you must indeed let me leave!"

Solomon's enemy Rezon

²³ God also raised up Rezon, the son of Eliada, as an adversary to Solomon. He had fled from his master Hadadezer, the king of Zobah. ²⁴ He had gathered men around him and had become leader of a raiding party after David had killed the men of Zobah. They had gone to Damascus, had been living there and had taken control in Damascus. ²⁵ He became an adversary of Israel while Solomon was alive and added to the trouble that Hadad caused. He detested Israel and was the king of Aram.

Jeroboam's rebellion against Solomon

²⁶ Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, was an Ephraimite from Zeredah. His mother, whose name was Zeruah, was a widow. He had been one of Solomon's officials but he also rebelled against the king. ²⁷ This is the account of how he rebelled against the king. Solomon had built the supporting terraces and had closed up the

gap in the wall of the city of his father David.²⁸ Jeroboam was a very capable man and, when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, he put him in charge of all the compulsory labour from the tribe of Joseph.²⁹ At that time, when Jeroboam had left Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh found him on the road. Ahijah was wearing a new cloak. While the two of them were alone in the open country,³⁰ Ahijah took hold of the new garment that he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces.³¹ He told Jeroboam: "Take ten pieces for yourself! For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said, 'Look! I am going to tear the kingdom away from Solomon and give you ten tribes.'³² Nevertheless, he will have the one tribe, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.³³ I shall do this because they have forsaken Me and have been worshipping Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh, the god of Moab and Milcom, the god of the Ammonites. They have also not been walking in My Ways, doing what I regard as right or keeping My Statutes and My Decisions, as Solomon's father David has done.³⁴ Nevertheless, I shall not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand but shall make him ruler for all his life, for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose, and who kept My Commandments and My Statutes.³⁵ However, I shall take the kingdom out of his son's hand and shall give ten tribes to you.³⁶ I shall give his son one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put My name.³⁷ However, I shall take you; you will reign over all that your heart desires and be king over Israel.³⁸ If you listen to all that I shall command you, walk in My Ways and do what I consider right by keeping My Statutes and My Decisions, as My servant David has done, I shall be with you, build you a family-line that is as sure as the one I have built for David and give Israel to you.³⁹ I shall humble the descendants of David because of this but not for ever."

The death of Solomon — 2 Chronicles 9:29-31

⁴¹ As for the rest of what Solomon said and all that he did and his wisdom, have they not been recorded in the History of Solomon?⁴² Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years.⁴³ Solomon went to rest with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David. His son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

12

The accession of Rehoboam and the rebellion of Israel against him — 2 Chronicles 10:1-19

¹ Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king.² Jeroboam, the

son of Nebat, had fled to Egypt from King Solomon. Jeroboam heard about it and came back from Egypt.³ People sent a messenger to invite him back, and Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam:⁴ "Your father put a heavy yoke on us. Now, however, you yourself, make the hard labour and the heavy yoke that your father imposed on us lighter! Then we shall serve you."

⁵ Rehoboam answered, them: "Go away until the day after tomorrow and then come back to me!"

So, the people went away.⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted the old men, who had been standing before his father Solomon while he was still alive. He asked: "How do you advise me to reply to these people?"

⁷ They replied to him: "If you are a servant to these people today, serve them and speak favourable words to them when you answer them, they will always be your servants."

⁸ However, he rejected the advice that the old men had given him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were standing in his presence.

⁹ He asked them: "What do you advise, that we may reply to these people, who have told me, 'Make the yoke that your father put on us lighter'?"

¹⁰ The young men who had grown up with him told him: "You must speak in this way to these people, who have told you: 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you should make it lighter for us!' You should tell them this: 'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist!¹¹ Now therefore, my father laid a heavy yoke on you. I shall add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I shall discipline you with scorpions.'"

¹² So, Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had said, "Come back to me the day after tomorrow!"

¹³ The king answered the people harshly. He rejected the advice that the old men had given him.¹⁴ He spoke to them as the young men had advised him: "My father made your yoke heavy, but I shall add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I shall discipline you with scorpions."

¹⁵ The king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs that the LORD had brought about, that He might fulfil His Word, which the LORD had spoken through Ahijah from Shiloh to Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.¹⁶ When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king: "What claim do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David!"

So, Israel went to their tents.¹⁷ However, Rehoboam reigned over the Israelites who were living in the cities of Judah.¹⁸ When King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of the compulsory labour, all Israel stoned him to death. However, King Rehoboam managed to get into his chariot to escape to Jerusalem.

¹⁹ Israel has been in rebellion against the family of David to this day.

The establishment of idolatry in Israel by King Jeroboam — 2 Chronicles 11:1-17

²⁰ When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent messengers, invited him to their meeting and made him king over all Israel. Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the family of David. ²¹ When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled the whole family of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand selected fighting men, to fight against the family of Israel, to regain the kingdom for Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. ²² However, the Word of God came to Shemaiah, the man of God. It said: ²³ “Tell Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the king of Judah, and the whole family of Judah and Benjamin and the rest of the people: ²⁴ ‘This is what the LORD has said: “You shall not go up or fight against your relatives, the people of Israel! Every man, return to your own home! For this is My doing.””

So, they listened to the Word of the LORD. They turned back and left, as the LORD had told them.

Jeroboam's arrangement for golden calves to be worshipped at Bethel and Dan

²⁵ Then Jeroboam rebuilt Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim and lived there. Then he left from there and fortified Penuel. ²⁶ Jeroboam thought to himself: “Now the kingdom may revert to the family of David.

²⁷ If these people go up to prepare sacrifices in the Temple of the LORD at Jerusalem, these people will again give their allegiance to their master, Rehoboam, the king of Judah. Then they will kill me and return to Rehoboam, the king of Judah.”

²⁸ The king received advice and made two golden calves. He told the people: “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.”

²⁹ He set up the one in Bethel and put the other one in Dan. ³⁰ Then this thing became a sin. The people walked ahead of the one of them as far as Dan.

³¹ Jeroboam also made temples on high places and appointed priests from all kinds of people, who did not belong to the Levites. ³² Jeroboam appointed a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the festival that was held in Judah and offered sacrifices on the altar. He did this at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he made. He also located at Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made. ³³ He offered sacrifices on the altar that he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he had concocted at his own whim. He instituted a festival for the Israelites and went up to the altar to make offerings.

13

The prophecy of the man of God from Judah against the idolatry of Jeroboam

¹ A man of God came by the Word of the LORD from Judah to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing beside the

altar to burn a sacrifice. ² The man cried out against the altar by the Word of the LORD: “O altar, altar, this is what the LORD has said: ‘Indeed, a son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. He will sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who are burning sacrifices on you, and human bones will be burned on you.’”

³ The man of God gave a sign the same day. He said: “This is the sign that the LORD has declared: ‘Look! The altar will be torn apart, and the ashes that are on it will be poured out.’”

⁴ When the king heard what the man of God said when he cried out against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand over the altar and said, “Seize him!”

However, his hand, which he had stretched out toward the man, shrivelled up, so that he could not pull it back. ⁵ The altar was also split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the Word of the LORD.

⁶ Then the king asked the man of God: “Please plead with the LORD, your God, to be in a gentle mood and pray for me, that I may use my arm again!”

The man of God interceded with the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him and became as it had been before. ⁷ Then the king asked the man of God, “Come home with me and refresh yourself! I shall also give you a present.”

⁸ However, the man of God answered the king: “If you were to give me half your palace, I would not go in with you. I shall not eat any bread or drink any water in this place. ⁹ For this is what I have been commanded by the Word of the LORD, ‘You shall not eat any bread or drink any water or come back by the road on which you have gone!’”

¹⁰ So, he left by another way and did not go back by the road on which he had come to Bethel.

The disobedience of a prophet

¹¹ An old prophet was living at Bethel. When his sons came and reported to him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel, they also reported to their father the Words that he had spoken to the king.

¹² Their father asked them, “Which road has he taken?”

His sons had seen which road the man of God who had come from Judah had taken. ¹³ He told his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me!”

When they saddled the donkey for him, he rode off on it. ¹⁴ When he went after the man of God he found him sitting under a large tree. He asked him, “Are you the man of God who has come from Judah?”

He replied, “Yes, I am.”

¹⁵ Then the prophet told him, “Come home with me and eat some food!”

¹⁶ The man of God said: “I dare not go back with you or go in with you and I shall not eat any food or drink any water with you in this place. ¹⁷ For the Message

came to me by the Word of the LORD, ‘You shall not eat any bread or drink any water there or come back by taking the road on which you have gone!’”

¹⁸ The prophet answered him: “I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the Word of the LORD: ‘Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat some bread and drink some water!’”

He was telling him a lie. ¹⁹ He went back with him, ate some bread at his house and drank some water. ²⁰ While they were sitting at the table, the Word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back. ²¹ He cried out to the man of God who had come from Judah: “This is what the LORD has said: ‘Because you have rebelled against the Word of the LORD and have not kept the Command that the LORD, your God, has given you, ²² but have come back, eaten some bread and drunk some water at the place about which He told you, “Do not eat any bread and do not drink any water!” your body will not come to the tomb of your fathers.’”

²³ After he had finished eating some bread and drinking, he saddled the donkey for the prophet whom he had brought back. ²⁴ When he had left, a lion met him on the road and killed him. His body was thrown down on the road and the donkey was standing beside it. The lion also was standing beside the body. ²⁵ Some men who were going past saw the body thrown down on the road and the lion standing beside the body. They came and reported it in the city where the old prophet was living. ²⁶ When the prophet who had brought him back from the road heard about it, he said: “It is the man of God, who rebelled against the Word of the LORD! The LORD has delivered him to the lion. It has torn him in pieces and killed him, according to the Word of the LORD, which had spoken to him.”

²⁷ Then he told his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me!” So, they saddled it. ²⁸ When he had left, he found his body thrown down on the road and the donkey and the lion standing beside the body. The lion had not eaten the body or mauled the donkey. ²⁹ The old prophet took up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey and brought him back to his own city, to mourn for him and bury him. ³⁰ Then he laid the body in his own grave. They mourned over him, saying, “Alas, my brother!”

³¹ After he had buried him, he told his sons: “When I die, you shall bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried! Lay my bones beside his bones! ³² For the Message that he has proclaimed by the Word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel and against all the shrines on the high places that are in the cities of Samaria will certainly come true.”

³³ After this happened Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way but again appointed priests for the high places from all kinds of people. He ordained anyone who wanted to become one of the priests for the high plac-

es. ³⁴ Because he had done this, it became the sin of the family of Jeroboam, with the result that it obliterated and destroyed it from the surface of the earth.

14

The illness and death of Jeroboam's son Abijah

¹ At that time Abijah, the son of Jeroboam, became ill.

² Jeroboam told his wife: “Please do something! Disguise yourself, that people may not recognise you as the wife of Jeroboam! Then go to Shiloh! You see, Ahijah the prophet is there. He is the one who told me that I would be the king over this people. ³ Take ten loaves, some small cakes and a jar of honey with you. and go to him! He will tell you what will happen to the boy.”

⁴ Jeroboam's wife did this. She set out, went to Shiloh and entered the house of Ahijah. Ahijah could not see. For his eyes had a fixed stare because he was old.

⁵ The LORD had told Ahijah: “Look! The wife of Jeroboam is coming to ask you about her son. For he is ill. You shall give her such and such an answer! When she comes in she will pretend to be someone else.”

⁶ When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the doorway, he said: “Come in, wife of Jeroboam! Why are you pretending to be someone else? I have been sent to you with bad news. ⁷ Go, tell Jeroboam, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: “Because I raised you up from among the people, made you a leader over My people Israel, ⁸ tore the kingdom away from the family of David and gave it to you, and yet you have not been like My servant David, who kept My Commandments and followed Me with all his heart, doing only what I consider right, ⁹ but you have done more evil than all who have been before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods and metal images, provoking Me to anger, and have thrown Me behind your back, ¹⁰ therefore look! I shall bring calamity on the family of Jeroboam, I shall cut off every male from Jeroboam, both slave and free in Israel and sweep away the family of Jeroboam, as someone sweeps away dung pellets until they are all gone! ¹¹ The dogs will eat anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, and the birds of the sky will eat anyone who dies in the open country.’” For the LORD has spoken. ¹² You yourself should start out and go home. When your feet enter the city, the boy will die. ¹³ All Israel will mourn for him and bury him. For he is the only one belonging to Jeroboam who will be buried, because he is the only one in the family of Jeroboam in whom the LORD, the God of Israel, has found anything good. ¹⁴ Moreover, the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off the family of Jeroboam. This is the day! What? Yes, it will happen now. ¹⁵ The LORD will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water and root Israel up, out of this good land, which He has given to their fathers and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have pro-

voked the LORD to anger by making their Asherah posts. ¹⁶ He will give Israel up, because of the sins that Jeroboam has been committing and the ones that he has been causing Israel to commit.”

¹⁷ Then Jeroboam’s wife got up, left and went to Tirzah. When she came to the threshold of the palace, the boy died. ¹⁸ All Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the Word of the Lord, which He had spoken through His servant, the prophet Ahijah.

The death of Jeroboam

¹⁹ As for the rest of the records about Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, indeed, they have been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel. ²⁰ Jeroboam had reigned for twenty-two years. He went to rest with his fathers, and his son Nadab succeeded him as king.

The reign of Rehoboam as king of Judah – 2 Chronicles 11:5-12:16

²¹ Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, was king in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign and reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to put His name. His mother’s name was Naamah, who was an Ammonite. ²² Judah did what the LORD regarded as evil and they stirred up His jealous anger more with their sins, which they had been committing, than anything that their fathers had done. ²³ They built high places, sacred stones and Asherah posts for themselves on every high hill and under every leafy tree. ²⁴ There were even male cult-prostitutes in the land. They engaged in all the same detestable practices as the nations that the LORD had driven out before the Israelites.

The removal of the treasures from the Temple in Jerusalem by King Shishak of Egypt – 2 Chronicles 12:2, 9-11, 15-16

²⁵ In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak, the king of Egypt, attacked Jerusalem. ²⁶ He took away the treasures of the Temple of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s palace. He took away everything. He also took away all the golden shields that Solomon had made. ²⁷ So, King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them and committed them to the hands of the officers of the bodyguard, who used to protect the entrance to the king’s palace. ²⁸ Whenever the king went to the Temple of the LORD, the bodyguard used to carry them and then they used to take them back to the guardroom. ²⁹ As for the rest of the acts of Rehoboam and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah?

³⁰ There was constant warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ³¹ Rehoboam went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. His mother’s name was Naamah, who was an Ammonite. His son Abijam succeeded him as king.

15

The reign of Abijam as king of Judah - 2 Chronicles 13:1-2, 13:22-14:1

¹ In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, Abijam began to reign over Judah. ² He

reigned in Jerusalem for three years. His mother’s name was Maacah, the daughter of Abishalom. ³ He committed all the sins his father had done before him. His heart was not fully loyal to the LORD, his God, as the heart of his forefather David had been. ⁴ Nevertheless, for David’s sake the LORD, his God, gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by maintaining Jerusalem. ⁵ For David had done what the LORD regarded as right and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite. ⁶ There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam throughout Abijam’s lifetime. ⁷ As for the rest of the acts of Abijam and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? There was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. ⁸ Abijam went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. His son Asa succeeded him as king.

The reign of Asa as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 14: 2-3, 15:16-19

⁹ In the twentieth year of Jeroboam, the king of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah. ¹⁰ He reigned for forty-one years in Jerusalem. His grandmother’s name was Maacah, the daughter of Abishalom. ¹¹ Asa did what the LORD regarded as right, like his ancestor David. ¹² He expelled the male cult-prostitutes from the land and kept on removing all the idols that his fathers had been making. ¹³ He even deposed his grandmother Maacah from being the queen mother because she had made a disgraceful image for an Asherah-pole. Asa cut down her disgraceful image and burned it at the Brook Kidron. ¹⁴ Although the high places were not removed, Asa’s heart was nevertheless fully loyal to the LORD all his life. ¹⁵ He brought the silver, gold and vessels that his father and he had consecrated into the Temple of the LORD.

The war of Asa of Judah, in alliance with Aram, against Baasha of Israel — 2 Chronicles 15:19, 16:1-6, 11-14, 17:1

¹⁶ There was war between Asa and Baasha, the king of Israel, throughout their lives. ¹⁷ Baasha, the king of Israel, invaded Judah and fortified Ramah, to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa, the king of Judah. ¹⁸ Then Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasures of the Temple of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s palace. King Asa entrusted it to his officials and sent them to Ben-Hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, the king of Aram, who was living in Damascus. He said: ¹⁹ “There is a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. Look! I have sent you a present of silver and gold. Come! Cancel your treaty with Baasha, the king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me!”

²⁰ Ben-Hadad consented to King Asa’s request and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. He conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maacah and all Chinneroth, in addition to all the land of Naphtali. ²¹ When Baasha heard about it, he stopped forti-

fyng Ramah and remained at Tirzah. ²² Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah, exempting no one. They carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been fortifying it and King Asa used them to fortify Geba in Benjamin and Mizpah. ²³ As for the rest of all the acts of Asa, all his mighty deeds and all that he did and the cities that he fortified, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? However, in his old age his feet became diseased. ²⁴ Asa went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David, his forefather, and his son Jehoshaphat succeeded him as king.

The reign of Nadab as king of Israel

²⁵ Nadab, the son of Jeroboam, began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa, the king of Judah, and reigned over Israel for two years. ²⁶ He did what the LORD considered evil and walked in the way of his father and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit. ²⁷ Baasha, the son of Ahijah, of the family of Issachar, conspired against him. Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were besieging Gibbethon.

The elimination of Jeroboam's family by Baasha

²⁸ Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa, the king of Judah, and succeeded him as king. ²⁹ When he became king, he killed all the rest of the family of Jeroboam. He did not leave any of the family of Jeroboam who breathed and destroyed them all, according to the Word of the LORD, which He had spoken through his servant Ahijah from Shiloh. ³⁰ This was because of the sins that Jeroboam had committed and the sins that he had caused Israel to commit, through which he had provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger. ³¹ As for the rest of the acts of Nadab and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ³² There was war between Asa and Baasha, the king of Israel, all their lives.

The reign of Baasha as king of Israel

³³ In the third year of Asa, the king of Judah, Baasha, the son of Ahijah, began to reign over all Israel at Tirzah and reigned for twenty-four years. ³⁴ He did what the LORD considered evil and walked in the ways of Jeroboam and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit.

16

The condemnation of King Baasha by God

¹ Then the Word of the LORD came to Jehu, the son of Hanani, against Baasha: ² "I lifted you up out of the dust and made you a leader over My people Israel. However, because you have been walking in the ways of Jeroboam and have been causing My people Israel to sin, so that they are provoking Me to anger by their sins, ³ indeed, I shall set a fire after Baasha and his family. I shall make your family like the family of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. ⁴ Dogs will eat anyone who belongs to Baasha and dies in the city, and birds

of the sky will eat anyone who belongs to him and dies in the country."

⁵ As for the rest of the acts of Baasha, what he did and his mighty acts, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ⁶ Baasha went to rest with his fathers and was buried at Tirzah, and his son Elah succeeded him as king. ⁷ The Word of the LORD also came through the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani, against Baasha and his family, both because of everything that the LORD regarded as evil that he had been doing, by provoking Him to anger through what he was doing, so that he was like the family of Jeroboam, and because he had destroyed it.

The reign of Elah as king of Israel

⁸ In the twenty-sixth year of Asa, the king of Judah, Elah, the son of Baasha, began to reign over Israel in Tirzah and reigned for two years. ⁹ However, his servant Zimri, who had command of half his chariots, conspired against him. Elah was at Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the home of Arza, who was in charge of the palace at Tirzah. ¹⁰ Zimri came in, struck him down and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa, the king of Judah. Then Zimri succeeded him as king. ¹¹ When he began to reign, as soon as he was seated on his throne, he struck down the whole family of Baasha. He did not spare one male of his relatives or his friends. ¹² So, Zimri destroyed all the family of Baasha, according to the Word of the LORD, which He had spoken about Baasha through the prophet Jehu, ¹³ because of all the sins of Baasha and the sins of his son Elah, which they had committed and which they had caused Israel to commit, by provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their worthless idols. ¹⁴ As for the rest of the acts of Elah and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

The seven-day reign of Zimri in Israel

¹⁵ In the twenty-seventh year of Asa, the king of Judah, Zimri reigned for seven days in Tirzah. The soldiers were camping near Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. ¹⁶ When the soldiers who were in the camp heard that Zimri had conspired against the king and had also killed him, all Israel on the same day made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel in the camp. ¹⁷ Then Omri together with all Israel withdrew from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah. ¹⁸ When Zimri saw that the city had been captured, he went into the citadel of the king's palace and set the king's palace on fire over himself and so he died, ¹⁹ because of his sins, which he committed, doing what the LORD regarded as evil and walking in the ways of Jeroboam and because of his sin, which he had committed and which he had caused Israel to commit. ²⁰ As for the rest of the acts of Zimri and the conspiracy that he made, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

The reign of Omri as king of Israel

²¹ Then the people of Israel were divided into two

factions. Half of the people supported Tibni, the son of Ginath, wishing to make him king, and the other half supported Omri. ²² However, the people who followed Omri proved stronger than the people who followed Tibni, the son of Ginath. When Tibni died, Omri became king. ²³ In the thirty-first year of Asa, the king of Judah, Omri began to reign over Israel and reigned for twelve years. He reigned in Tirzah for six years.

The choice of Samaria as the new capital of Israel

²⁴ He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for seventy kilograms of silver. He fortified the hill and named the city that he built “Samaria,” after the name of Shemer, who had been the owner of the hill.

²⁵ Omri did what the LORD regarded as evil and did more evil than all who had been before him. ²⁶ He walked in all the ways of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger by their worthless idols. ²⁷ As for the rest of the acts that Omri did and the mighty deeds that he performed, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ²⁸ Omri went to rest with his fathers and was buried in Samaria, and his son Ahab succeeded him as king.

The reign of Ahab as king of Israel

²⁹ In the thirty-eighth year of Asa, the king of Judah, Ahab, the son of Omri, began to reign over Israel, and Ahab, the son of Omri, reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty-two years. ³⁰ Ahab, the son of Omri did what the LORD regarded as evil. He was worse than all who had been before him.

The marriage of Ahab to Jezebel, a worshipper of Baal

³¹ It was too trivial a thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. He also married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, the king of the people of Sidon, and proceeded to serve Baal and worship him.

³² He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. ³³ Ahab also made an Asherah-pole. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel had done who had been before him.

The rebuilding of Jericho — Joshua 6:26

³⁴ In Ahab’s time Hiel from Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundation wall at the cost of Abiram, his first-born, and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, according to the Word of the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua, the son of Nun.

17

The prediction of a drought and the preservation of Elijah by crows at the Cherith Ravine

¹ Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, told Ahab: “As surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I have been standing, there will be no dew or rain these coming years, unless I say so.”

² Then the Word of the LORD came to Elijah: ³ “Go away from here, turn to the east and hide beside the Cherith Ravine, which is east of the Jordan! ⁴ You

shall drink from the stream, and I have commanded the crows to feed you there.”

⁵ He went and did as the LORD had told him. He went and lived in the Cherith Ravine, which is east of the Jordan. ⁶ The crows used to bring him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he used to drink from the stream.

The stay of Elijah with a widow at Zarephath

⁷ However, finally the stream dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. ⁸ Then the Word of the LORD came to Elijah, saying: ⁹ “Move away! Go to **Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon**, and stay there! See! I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.”

¹⁰ He left and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the city, he saw a widow gathering sticks. He called to her and said: “Please fetch me a little water in a container that I may have a drink!”

¹¹ When she went to get it, he called out to her: “Please fetch me a small piece of bread in your hand!”

¹² She replied: “As surely as the LORD, your God, lives, I have no supplies at all, except a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive-oil in a jug. As you see, I am also gathering a couple of sticks, that I may go and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and then die.”

¹³ Elijah told her: “Do not be afraid! Go and do as you have said! However, make me a little cake from it first and bring it out to me! After that you may make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴ For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: ‘The jar of flour will not be used up, and the jug of olive-oil will not run dry until the day when the LORD sends rain on the land.’”

¹⁵ She went and did as Elijah had told her, and Elijah and the woman and her family had food for many days. ¹⁶ The jar of flour was not used up, and the jug of olive-oil did not run dry, according to the Word of the LORD, which He had promised through Elijah.

The raising of the widow’s son from death

¹⁷ After this, the son of the woman, who was the owner of the house, became ill. His illness became very serious, so that he finally stopped breathing. ¹⁸ Then the woman asked Elijah: “**What do you have against me, O man of God? Have you come to me to remind me of my sin and to cause the death of my son?**”

¹⁹ Elijah told her, “Give me your son!”

He took him from her arms and carried him up to the upper room, where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ Then he cried to the LORD: “O LORD, my God, have You even brought calamity on the widow with whom I am staying as a foreigner, by causing her son to die?”

²¹ Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and called out to the LORD: “O LORD, my God, please let this child’s soul return into him!”

²² Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child came back into him, and he revived.

²³ Elijah took the boy, carried him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother. Elijah said: "Look! Your son is alive."

²⁴ The woman told Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the Word of the LORD in your mouth is true."

18

Elijah's instructions to Obadiah to take a message to Ahab

¹ After a long time, in the third year, the Word of the LORD came to Elijah: "Go, present yourself to Ahab! Then I shall send rain over the ground."

² So, Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. The famine was severe in Samaria. ³ Ahab had summoned Obadiah, who was in charge of his palace. Obadiah was a devout worshipper of the LORD. ⁴ When Jezebel was killing the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets, had hidden them in two caves with fifty in each and had supplied them with bread and water. ⁵ Ahab had told Obadiah: "Go through the land to all the springs and all the streams! Perhaps we may find some grass to keep the horses and mules alive, that we may not lose any of the animals."

⁶ So, they divided the country to go through it. Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went the other way by himself. ⁷ When Obadiah was on the road, Elijah suddenly met him. Obadiah recognised him, fell on his face and asked, "Are you really here, my master, Elijah?"

⁸ He answered him: "Yes, I am. Go; tell your master, 'Look! Elijah is here!'"

⁹ Obadiah asked: "How have I sinned, that you should hand your servant over to Ahab, for me to be put to death? ¹⁰ As surely as the LORD, your God, lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to search for you. Whenever any kingdom or nation said that you were not there, he used to make them swear an oath that they could not find you. ¹¹ Now, however, you say, 'Go, tell your master, "Look! Elijah is here!"' ¹² When I leave you, the Spirit of the LORD will carry you away I know not where. So, if I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. Yet I, your servant, have feared the LORD since I was young. ¹³ Has it not been reported to my master what I did when Jezebel was killing the prophets of the LORD? I hid a hundred of the prophets of the LORD, fifty in each cave and supplied them with food and water. ¹⁴ Yet now you say, 'Go, tell your master, "Look! Elijah is here!"' He will kill me!"

¹⁵ Elijah said, "As surely as the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I shall certainly present myself to him today."

¹⁶ So, Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab came to meet Elijah.

The meeting of Elijah with Ahab

¹⁷ When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab asked him, "Are you

here, you disturber of Israel?"

¹⁸ Elijah answered: "I have not been disturbing Israel. Rather, you and your father's family have been, because you people have abandoned the Commandments of the LORD and have been following the Baals. ¹⁹ Now therefore, send men and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, together with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table!"

Elijah's proof of God's superiority to Baal at Mount Carmel

²⁰ Ahab sent messages to all the Israelites and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. ²¹ Elijah approached all the people and asked: "How long will you keep limping around between the two crutches? If the LORD is God, follow Him. However, if Baal is, follow him."

However, the people did not answer him at all.

²² Then Elijah told the people: "I myself am the only one of the prophets of the LORD left, but there are four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. ²³ People should give us two bulls! Let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood but not set fire to it! I myself shall prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood but not set fire to it. ²⁴ Then you shall call on the name of your god! I myself shall call on the name of the LORD. The God who answers by fire will be God."

All the people answered, "What you say is good."

²⁵ Then Elijah told the prophets of Baal: "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first! For there are many of you. Then call on the name of your god, without lighting any fire!"

²⁶ They took the bull that had been given them, prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon. They kept saying, "Baal, answer us!"

However, there was no sound and no one answered. They danced with limping steps beside the altar that they had made. ²⁷ At noon Elijah mocked them. He said: "Shout louder! For he is a god. For he is thinking deeply or he is excreting or he is on a journey. Perhaps he is sleeping and must wake up."

²⁸ So, they shouted louder and slashed themselves, as they usually did, with swords and long spears, until blood gushed out on them. ²⁹ In the afternoon they raved on until the time for the evening sacrifice. However, there was no sound. No one answered and no one paid attention. ³⁰ Then Elijah told all the people, "Come closer to me!"

All the people went closer to him. He repaired the altar of the LORD, which had been broken down.

³¹ Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the Word of the LORD had come, "Your name shall be Israel." ³² With the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD. He also made a trench around the altar, large enough to hold fourteen litres of grain. ³³ He arranged the wood, cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. ³⁴ Then

he said, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood!" Then he said, "Do it a second time!" and they did it a second time. Then he said, "Do it a third time!" and they did it a third time. ³⁵ The water ran down around the altar, and he even filled the trench with water.

³⁶ When it was time to offer the evening sacrifice, the prophet Elijah approached. He said: "LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that You are God in Israel, that I am Your servant and that I have done all these things at Your Word! ³⁷ Answer me, LORD! Answer me, that these people may know that You, LORD, are God and that You Yourself have turned their hearts back again!"

³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones and the dust and licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹ When all the people saw it, they fell face-down and said: "The LORD is God! The LORD is God!"

⁴⁰ Elijah told them: "Seize the prophets of Baal! None of them must escape!"

When they had seized them, Elijah brought them down to the Kishon Brook and slaughtered them there.

The end of the drought

⁴¹ Then Elijah told Ahab: "Go up! Eat and drink! For there is the sound of a heavy rain."

⁴² Ahab went up to eat and to drink.

Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. He bowed down on the ground and put his face between his knees. ⁴³ He told his servant: "Please go up! Look towards the sea!"

When he had gone up and looked, he said, "There is nothing."

Elijah said, "Go back!" seven times. ⁴⁴ The seventh time the servant said: "Look! A little cloud like a man's hand is coming up from the sea."

Elijah said: "Go up! Tell Ahab, 'Hitch your chariot and go down, that the rain may not delay you!'"

⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, wind arose and there was a heavy rain. Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. ⁴⁶ The hand of the LORD came on Elijah. He tucked his cloak around his waist and ran ahead of Ahab as far as the entrance to Jezreel.

19

The flight of Elijah to Horeb

¹ Ahab told Jezebel everything that Elijah had done and especially that he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah saying, "May the gods deal severely with me and even worse than that if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like the life of one of them!"

³ When he was aware of this, Elijah set out and fled for his life. He came to Beer-Sheba, which belongs to Judah and left his servant there. ⁴ Elijah himself went into the wilderness a day's journey. He came and sat down under a broom tree and asked that he might die.

He said: "It is enough now, LORD. Take away my life! For I am no better than my fathers."

⁵ He lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Then suddenly an angel was there, touching him. He told him: "Get up and eat!"

⁶ When Elijah looked, there, near his head, was a bread-cake on hot stones and a jar of water. So, he ate and drank and lay down again. ⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him. He said: "Get up and eat! Otherwise your journey will be too much for you."

⁸ Elijah got up and ate and drank. Then, on the energy from that food, he travelled for forty days and forty nights, as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.

Elijah's complaint to God at Mount Horeb

⁹ Elijah went into a cave and spent the night there. He heard the Word of the LORD coming to him. He asked him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁰ Elijah answered: "I have been extremely jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the Israelites have abandoned Your Covenant. **They have torn down Your altars and they have killed Your prophets with the sword. I am the only one left and they have been trying to take my life!**"

¹¹ He said: "Come out and stand on the mountain before the LORD!"

Suddenly, as the LORD was passing by, a fierce, strong wind was tearing mountains and shattering rocks ahead of the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. ¹² After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. Then, after the fire there was the sound of a quiet whisper. ¹³ When Elijah heard that, he wrapped his cloak over his face, went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. He heard a voice asking him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁴ Elijah answered: "I have been extremely jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the Israelites have abandoned Your Covenant. **They have torn down Your altars and they have killed Your prophets with the sword. I am the only one left and they have been trying to take my life!**"

¹⁵ The LORD told him: "Go and make your way back to the wilderness of Damascus! When you arrive there, you shall anoint Hazael as king of Aram!

¹⁶ You shall also anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi, as king over Israel and Elisha, the son of Shaphat from Abel-Meholah, to succeed you as prophet! ¹⁷ Jehu will put to death anyone who escapes from the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death anyone who escapes from the sword of Jehu. ¹⁸ However, **I shall keep seven thousand men in Israel as a remnant, none of whom have knelt before Baal** and none of whose mouths have kissed him."

The call of Elisha as Elijah's successor

¹⁹ Elijah went from there and found Elisha, the son of Shaphat. He was ploughing behind twelve yoked pairs

of oxen. He himself was with the twelfth pair. As Elijah went past him, he threw his cloak on him. ²⁰ So, Elisha left the oxen and ran after Elijah. He said, "Please let me kiss my father and mother and then let me follow you!"

Elijah told him: "Go back again! For what have I done to you?"

²¹ Elisha stopped following him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen, slaughtered them and used the yokes of the oxen to cook their meat. He gave it to the people, and they ate it. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his attendant.

20

The defeat of King Ben-Hadad of Aram by Ahab

¹ Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, mustered his entire army. Thirty-two kings with their horses and chariots accompanied him. He went up, besieged Samaria and fought against it. ² He sent messengers into the city to Ahab, the king of Israel, to tell him: "This is what Ben-Hadad has said: ³ 'Your silver and your gold belong to me, and your wives and the finest of your children also belong to me.'"

⁴ The king of Israel answered: "As you say, my master, the king. I and all I have are yours."

⁵ The messengers came back and said, "This is what Ben-Hadad has said: 'I sent to you, saying, "You must deliver to me your silver, your gold, your wives and your children!" ⁶ Nevertheless, I shall send my servants to you about this time tomorrow, and they will search through your house and the houses of your officials, lay their hands on whatever is precious to you and bring it away.'"

⁷ Then the king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land and said: "Please recognise and see that this man is trying to ruin us! For when he sent to me for my wives, my children, my silver and my gold, I did not refuse him."

⁸ All the elders and all the people told him, "Do not listen or consent!"

⁹ So, he told the messengers of Ben-Hadad: "Tell my master, the king, 'I, your servant, shall do all that you demanded of me the first time. However, I cannot meet this demand.'"

The messengers left to take back his reply. ¹⁰ Ben-Hadad sent this message to Ahab: "May the gods treat me like this and worse than this if enough dust remains in Samaria for all the soldiers who are following me to take a handful!"

¹¹ The king of Israel answered, "Tell him, 'One who straps on his armour should not boast like one who takes it off!'"

¹² When Ben-Hadad heard this message as he was drinking with the kings in their shelters, he ordered his officials, "Attack!" So, they attacked the city.

Another defeat of Ben-Hadad by Ahab

¹³ Just then, a prophet approached Ahab, the king of Israel, and said: "This is what the LORD has said:

'Have you seen all this vast army? Look! I am giving it into your hands today, that you may know that I am the LORD.'"

¹⁴ Ahab asked, "Whom will He use?"

The prophet replied: "This is what the LORD has said: 'I shall use the servants of the provincial governors.'"

Ahab asked, "Who will begin the battle?"

The prophet answered, "You will."

¹⁵ Ahab mustered the servants of the provincial governors, and they numbered two hundred and thirty-two. After them he mustered all the Israelite soldiers. There were seven thousand. ¹⁶ They went out at noon, while Ben-Hadad and the thirty-two kings who were with him and who were helping him were getting drunk in their shelters. ¹⁷ The servants of the provincial governors went out first. Ben-Hadad sent out scouts, who reported to him, "Some men have come out from Samaria!"

¹⁸ He said: "If they have come out for peace, take them alive! If they have come out for war, take them alive!"

¹⁹ These men, the servants of the provincial governors, went out of the city, and then the army that followed them. ²⁰ Each struck down his opponent. Then the Arameans fled, and Israel pursued them. However, Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, escaped on a horse with some horsemen. ²¹ Then the king of Israel went out and struck down the horses and chariots. He also inflicted a great defeat on the Arameans.

The defeat of the Arameans at Aphek

²² Then the prophet approached the king of Israel and told him: "Go! Strengthen your position! Understand and watch what you must do! For in the spring the king of Aram will attack you."

²³ The officials of the king of Aram told him: "Their gods are gods of the hills. That is why they were stronger than we were. However, if we fight against them on level country, we shall certainly be stronger than they will be. ²⁴ This is what you must do. Remove each of the kings from his post and replace them with governors! ²⁵ Then personally enlist an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse and chariot for chariot, and let us fight against them on level country! We shall certainly be stronger than they will be."

He agreed with their advice, and that is what he did.

²⁶ The next spring, Ben-Hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel.

²⁷ When the Israelites were mustered and supplied, they went to meet them. The Israelites camped opposite them like two small flocks of goats, while the Arameans filled the countryside. ²⁸ The man of God approached and told the king of Israel: "This is what the LORD has said: 'Because the Arameans have been saying, "The LORD is a god of hill-country but is not a god of the valleys," therefore I shall give all this large throng into your hands, that you may know that I

am the LORD.”

²⁹ They camped opposite one another for seven days. Then on the seventh day the battle was joined. The Israelites struck down one hundred thousand Aramean foot soldiers in one day. ³⁰ The rest fled into the city of Aphek, where the wall collapsed on twenty-seven-thousand of the men who were left. Ben-Hadad also fled and went from one room to another inside the city. ³¹ His officials told him: “Please look! We have heard that the kings of the family of Israel are merciful. Please let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our necks and go out to the king of Israel! Perhaps he will spare your life.”

³² So, they tied sackcloth around their waists, put ropes around their necks, went to the king of Israel and said, “Your servant Ben-Hadad says, ‘Please let me live!’”

The king replied, “Is he still alive? He is my brother.”

³³ The men took this as a good sign and quickly took how he reacted as a valid assertion. They said, “Ben-Hadad is your brother.”

Then the king said, “Go and fetch him!”

Then Ben-Hadad came out to him, and Ahab made him get up into his chariot. ³⁴ Ben-Hadad told him, “I shall restore the cities that my father took from your father, and you may set up your own market areas in Damascus, as my father set them up in Samaria.”

Ahab replied, “I shall let you go on these terms.”

He made a covenant with him and let him go.

The condemnation of Ahab by a prophet of God

³⁵ A certain man from the group of the prophets told his companion by the Word of the Lord: “Please strike me!”

However, the man refused to strike him. ³⁶ The prophet told him: “Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, look! When you leave me a lion will strike you!”

When the man left him, a lion met him and struck him down. ³⁷ Then the prophet found another man and said, “Please strike me!”

The man struck him hard and bruised him. ³⁸ Then the prophet went and waited on the road for the king. He disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes.

³⁹ When the king was going past, he cried to the king: “Your servant went out into the middle of the battle and suddenly a soldier came over and brought a man to me. He said, ‘Guard this man! If by any means he is missing, you will pay for his life with your own life or else you shall pay thirty-five kilograms of silver!’”

⁴⁰ However, while I, your servant, was busy here and there, the man was gone.”

The king of Israel told him: “That is what the verdict on you is. You yourself have decided it.”

⁴¹ Then the prophet quickly removed the bandage from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognised him as one of the prophets. ⁴² He told the king: “This is what the LORD has said: ‘Because you have released from your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction,

you shall pay for his life with your own life! Your people will pay for his people.’”

⁴³ Then the king of Israel went off to his palace dejected and in a rage, and so he came to Samaria.

21

Ahab's desire to acquire Naboth's vineyard

¹ Later the following happened. Naboth of Jezreel had a vineyard in Jezreel next to the palace of Ahab, the king of Samaria. ² Ahab spoke to Naboth: “Give me your vineyard, that it may become my vegetable garden! For it is nearby, next to my palace. Let me give you a better vineyard instead of it, or, if you prefer, let me pay you whatever it is worth!”

³ However, Naboth told Ahab, “The LORD forbid that I should give you what I have inherited from my fathers!”

⁴ Ahab went home dejected and in a rage, because Naboth in Jezreel had told him, “I shall not give you what I have inherited from my fathers.” So, he lay down on his bed, turned his face away and refused to eat. ⁵ However, his wife Jezebel came to him and asked him, “Why are you so dejected in spirit here, so that you are not eating any food?”

⁶ He told her: “Because I was speaking to Naboth of Jezreel. I asked him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money, or, if you prefer, let me give you another vineyard instead of it!’ However, he replied, ‘I shall not give you my vineyard.’”

⁷ His wife Jezebel told him: “You are now ruling as king over Israel. Get up! Eat food and be cheerful at heart! I shall give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

⁸ So, she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal and sent the letters to the elders and noblemen who were living with Naboth in his city.

⁹ In the letters she wrote: “Announce a fast and have Naboth sit in the chief place among the people!

¹⁰ Have two worthless men sit opposite him and let them testify, ‘You have cursed God and the king!’ Then take him outside and stone him to death!”

¹¹ The men in Naboth's city, the elders and noblemen who were living in his city, acted according to the instructions written in the letters that Jezebel had sent to them. ¹² They announced a fast and had Naboth sit in the chief place among the people. ¹³ The two worthless men came in and sat opposite him. These worthless men testified against Naboth before the people, “Naboth has cursed God and the king.”

Then the people took him outside of the city and stoned him to death. ¹⁴ Then they sent this message to Jezebel: “Naboth has been stoned and is dead.”

¹⁵ When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, Jezebel told Ahab: “Get up! Take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to sell you for money! For Naboth is not alive but dead.”

¹⁶ When he heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab got up

to go down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

God's condemnation of Ahab through Elijah

¹⁷ Then the Word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: ¹⁸ "Get up and go down to meet Ahab, the king of Israel, who lives in Samaria! Look! He is in the vineyard of Naboth and has gone down there to take possession of it. ¹⁹ Tell him, 'This is what the LORD has asked, "Have you committed murder and also seized his property?"' You shall also tell him, 'This is what the LORD has said, "At the place where the dogs have licked up Naboth's blood, the dogs will also lick your own blood.'"

²⁰ Ahab asked Elijah, "Have you found me, my enemy?"

He answered: "I have found you. Because you have sold yourself to do what the LORD considers wrong,

²¹ 'Look! I shall bring calamity on you. I shall burn up everything after you. I shall cut off every male from Ahab, both slave and free, in Israel. ²² I shall make your family like the family of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and like the family of Baasha, the son of Ahijah, because you have provoked Me to anger and because you have caused Israel to sin.' ²³ The LORD has also spoken about Jezebel: 'The dogs will eat Jezebel inside the walled area of Jezreel.' ²⁴ The dogs will eat anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city, and the birds of the sky will eat anyone of his who dies in the open country."

The repentance of Ahab

²⁵ There was absolutely no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what the LORD regarded as evil as his wife incited him. ²⁶ He acted very abominably by going after idols, exactly as the Amorites had been doing, whom the LORD had driven out before the Israelites. ²⁷ When Ahab heard those Words, he tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his body, fasted, lay in sackcloth and went about dejectedly. ²⁸ Then the Word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: ²⁹ "Have you seen that Ahab has been humbling himself before Me? Because he has been humbling himself before Me, I shall not bring this calamity during his lifetime. I shall bring this calamity on his family during the time of his son."

22

The joint-campaign of Israel and Judah against Aram — 2 Chronicles 18:1-3

¹ For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. ² However, in the third year Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went down to the king of Israel. ³ The king of Israel had asked his officials, "Do you know that Ramoth-Gilead belongs to us, and yet we are delaying to take it from the hands of the king of Aram?"

⁴ He asked Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to fight at Ramoth-Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am like you, my people are like your people, and my horses

are like your horses."

The deception of Ahab by false prophets — 2 Chronicles 18:4-27

⁵ Jehoshaphat also told the king of Israel, "Please inquire first what the LORD says!"

⁶ Then the king of Israel gathered about four hundred prophets together and asked them, "Shall I go to fight against Ramoth-Gilead or shall I refrain?"

They said, "Go up, that the Lord may put it in the hands of the king!"

⁷ However, Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there not a prophet of the LORD here any longer, that we may inquire of him?"

⁸ The king of Israel told Jehoshaphat: "There is still one man through whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah, the son of Imlah, but I myself hate him. For he never prophesies anything good about me but only evil."

Jehoshaphat replied, "The king should not say that!"

⁹ Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring Micaiah, the son of Imlah, at once!"

¹⁰ Both the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, were sitting on their thrones, dressed in their robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the city-gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹¹ Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, had made iron horns for himself. He said, "This is what the LORD has said, 'You will gore the Arameans with these until they are destroyed.'"

¹² All the other prophets were prophesying in this way, saying, "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and be successful, that the LORD may put it in the hands of the king!"

¹³ The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah told him: "Please look here! The prophets are in full agreement in predicting success to the king. Please speak like one of them and speak favourably!"

¹⁴ However, Micaiah said, "As surely as the LORD lives, I shall speak what the LORD tells me."

¹⁵ When he had come to the king, the king asked him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-Gilead to fight or shall we refrain?"

He answered him, "Go up and be successful, that the LORD may put it in the hands of the king!"

¹⁶ However, the king asked him, "How many times must I personally make you swear that you will tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"

Micaiah's prediction of failure — 2 Chronicles 18:12-27

¹⁷ Micaiah answered: "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, **like sheep without a shepherd**. The LORD said, 'These people have no masters. Let each return to his home in peace!'"

¹⁸ The king of Israel told Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything good about me but only evil?"

¹⁹ Then Micaiah said: "Therefore, hear the Word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside Him on His right hand and on His left. ²⁰ The LORD asked,

‘Who will deceive Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?’ One said one thing, and another said something else. ²¹ Then a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, ‘I shall deceive him.’ The LORD asked him, ‘By what means?’ ²² He said, ‘I shall go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all His prophets.’ He said, ‘You will deceive him and be successful. Go out and do it!’ ²³ Now therefore, look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The LORD has also decreed calamity for you.”

²⁴ Then Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, went up, hit Micaiah on the cheek and asked, “Which way did the Spirit of the LORD go when he left me here to speak to you?”

²⁵ Micaiah replied: “Look! You will see on the day when you go into an inner room to hide.”

²⁶ Then the king of Israel ordered: “Seize Micaiah and take him back to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, the king’s son! ²⁷ Say, ‘This is what the king has said: “Put this fellow in prison and feed him with scanty rations of bread and water until I return safely!””

²⁸ Micaiah said, “If you really do come back safely, the LORD has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Pay attention to this, all you people!”

The defeat and death of Ahab in battle — 2 Chronicles 18:28-34

²⁹ So, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-Gilead. ³⁰ The king of Israel told Jehoshaphat, “I shall disguise myself when I go into battle, but you should wear your robes!”

So, the king of Israel disguised himself when he went into battle. ³¹ The king of Aram had given orders to the thirty-two captains of his chariots: “Do not fight with anyone, small or great but only with the king of Israel!”

³² When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “Surely this is the king of Israel!”

So, they turned aside to fight against him. Then Jehoshaphat cried out. ³³ When the captains of the chariots saw that he was not the king of Israel, they turned away and stopped pursuing him. ³⁴ However, a certain man drew his bow without aiming and struck the king of Israel between the scales of his body-armour. The king told the driver of his chariot: “Turn around and carry me out of the battlefield! For I have been wounded.”

³⁵ The battle continued that day, while the king was propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans but died in the evening. The blood of the wound had spread into the floor of the chariot. ³⁶ At about sunset a cry went across the line of battle, “Every man to his own city and every man to his own land!”

³⁷ When the king died and was brought to Samaria, people buried him in Samaria. ³⁸ They washed off the chariot beside the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes washed in it, according to the Word of the LORD, which He had spoken. ³⁹ As for the rest of the acts of Ahab and all that he did, the ivory palace that he built and all the cities that he built, have they not been recorded in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ⁴⁰ Ahab went to rest with his fathers, and his son Ahaziah succeeded him as king.

The reign of Jehoshaphat as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 20:31-21:1

⁴¹ Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa, became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab, the king of Israel.

⁴² Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king and reigned for twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. ⁴³ In every way he followed his father Asa without turning aside from it. He did what the LORD regarded as right. Nevertheless, the high places were not removed, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense on the high places.

⁴⁴ Jehoshaphat also lived in peace with the king of Israel. ⁴⁵ As for the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, the great things he had achieved and the wars that he fought, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ⁴⁶ He rid the land of the rest of the male cult-prostitutes who had remained in the days of his father Asa. ⁴⁷ There was no king in Edom, but a deputy was in charge. ⁴⁸ Jehoshaphat had built large, sea-going ships to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go, because the ships were wrecked at Ezion-Geber. ⁴⁹ Then Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, told Jehoshaphat, “Let my servants go with your servants in the ships!”

However, Jehoshaphat refused. ⁵⁰ Jehoshaphat went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David, and Jehoram his son succeeded him as king.

The reign of Ahaziah as king of Israel

⁵¹ Ahaziah, the son of Ahab, became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, and reigned over Israel for two years.

⁵² He did what the LORD regarded as evil and walked in the ways of his father, in the ways of his mother and in the ways of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. ⁵³ Ahaziah served and worshipped Baal and provoked the LORD, the God of Israel to anger, exactly as his father had been doing.

2 KINGS

1

God's judgment through Elijah against Ahaziah, the king of Israel

¹ After Ahab died, Moab rebelled against Israel.

² Ahaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria and injured himself. So, he sent messengers, telling them, "Go! Inquire from Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury!"

³ However, the Angel of the LORD told Elijah, the Tishbite: "Set out! Go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria! Ask them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?' ⁴ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said, 'You will not leave the bed on which you are lying but will certainly die.'"

Then Elijah went. ⁵ When the messengers returned to the king, he asked them, "Why have you returned like this?"

⁶ They told him: "A man came to meet us and told us, 'Go back to the king, who has sent you, and tell him: "This is what the LORD has asked: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending men to consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore, you will not leave the bed on which you are lying but you will certainly die.'"""

⁷ The king asked them, "What did the man look like who came to meet you and told you this?"

⁸ They answered him: "He was wearing a garment of **hair** and had a **leather belt fastened about his waist**."

He said, "That was Elijah, the Tishbite."

⁹ Then the king sent to him an army officer with his company of fifty men. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill. He told him, "Man of God, the king has ordered, 'Come down!'"

¹⁰ However, Elijah answered the officer of fifty men, "If I am a man of God, **let fire come down from heaven and consume** you and your fifty men!"

Then **fire came down from heaven and consumed** him and his fifty men. ¹¹ The king sent to him another officer with his fifty men. He told him: "Man of God, this is what the king has ordered, 'Come down at once!'"

¹² However, Elijah answered them: "If I am a man of God, **let fire come down from heaven and consume** you and your fifty men!"

Then the fire of God **came down from heaven and consumed** him and his fifty men. ¹³ When the king sent a third officer with his fifty men, the third officer of fifty men went up and bowed down on his knees before Elijah. He pleaded with him: "Man of God, please regard my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours as precious! ¹⁴ Look! **Fire has come down from heaven and has consumed** the two other officers with their fifty men. Now, however, regard my life as precious!"

¹⁵ Then the Angel of the LORD told Elijah: "Go down with him! Do not be afraid of him!"

So, Elijah got up and went down with him to the king.

¹⁶ He told the king: "This is what the LORD has said, 'You have sent messengers to consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron. Is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire about His Word? That is why you will not leave the bed on which you are lying but will certainly die.'"

The death of Ahaziah

¹⁷ So, he died, according to the Word of the LORD, which Elijah had spoken. Because Ahaziah had no son, Jehoram succeeded him as king, in the second year of Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. ¹⁸ As for everything else that Ahaziah did, has it not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

2

The ascent of Elijah to heaven

¹ When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ² Elijah told Elisha: "Please stay here! For the LORD has sent me to Bethel."

Elisha answered: "As surely as the LORD lives and as surely as your soul lives, I will not leave you."

So, they went down to Bethel. ³ Some of the disciples of the prophets who were at Bethel approached Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

"Yes, I know it too," Elisha replied, "Keep quiet!"

⁴ Then Elijah told him, "Elisha, please stay here! For the LORD has sent me to Jericho."

However, he replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and as surely as your soul lives, I will not leave you!"

So, they went to Jericho.

⁵ A company of the prophets who were at Jericho approached Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?"

"Yes, I know it too," he replied, "Keep quiet!"

⁶ Then Elijah told him: "Please stay here! For the LORD has sent me to the Jordan."

Elisha answered, "As surely as the LORD lives and as surely as your soul lives, I will not leave you!"

The two of them went on. ⁷ Fifty disciples of the prophets also went and stood, facing these two men at a distance, while they stopped at the Jordan. ⁸ Elijah took his outer garment and rolled it up. He struck the water, and it was divided on the one side and on the other, and the two men went across on dry ground.

⁹ When they had gone across, Elijah told Elisha, "Before I am taken away from you, ask me what I may do for you!"

Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be on me!"

¹⁰ Elijah said: "You have asked for a difficult thing.

Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, let it be so for you! However, if you do not see me, it will not be so.”

¹¹ They continued to talk as they walked along. Suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah **went up to heaven** in a whirlwind.

¹² When Elisha saw this, he cried out: “My father! My father! The chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” Then Elisha did not see him any longer. He took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

The succession of Elisha as prophet after Elijah

¹³ Then he picked up Elijah’s cloak, which had fallen from him, went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴ He took the cloak of Elijah, which had fallen from him, and struck the water. He asked, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah, yes, even He?”

When he struck the water, it divided to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went across. ¹⁵ When the disciples of the prophets who were at Jericho saw him from the opposite side, they said, “Elijah’s spirit has rested on Elisha!”

Then they went to meet him and bowed to the ground in front of him.

¹⁶ They asked him: “Please look here! We, your servants, have fifty strong men. Please let them go and search for your master! It may be that the Spirit of the LORD has caught him up and put him down on one of the mountains or in one of the valleys.”

However, he said, “You shall not send anyone!”

¹⁷ When they implored him until he was ashamed, he said, “Send them!”

They sent fifty men, who searched for Elijah for three days without finding him.

¹⁸ They came back to Elisha while he was staying at Jericho and he told them, “Did I not tell you, ‘Do not go’?”

Miraculous purification of water

¹⁹ The men of the city told Elisha: “Please look! This city is in a good place, as my master can see, but the water is bad, and the land is unproductive.”

²⁰ He said, “Fetch me a new bowl and put salt in it!”

When they brought it to him, ²¹ he went out to the spring, threw salt in it and said: “This is what the LORD has said, ‘I have purified this water. It will not cause death or infertility any longer.’”

²² The water has been made sound to this day, according to the Word that Elisha spoke.

The mocking of Elisha by boys

²³ From there Elisha went up to Bethel. While he was going up along the road, some small boys came out of the city and made fun of him. They told him: “Go up, you bald-head! Go up, you bald-head!”

²⁴ He turned around and, when he saw them, he cursed them in the name of the LORD. Then two she-bears came out of the forest and pulled forty-two of the boys to pieces. ²⁵ From there he went on to Mount Carmel and then came back from there to Samaria.

3

The reign of Jehoram as king of Israel

¹ In the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, Jehoram, the son of Ahab, became king over Israel in Samaria and reigned for twelve years. ² He did what the LORD considered evil but not as his father and mother had done. He got rid of the pillar of Baal that his father had made. ³ Nevertheless, he persisted in the sin that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. He did not turn away from it.

God’s deliverance of the armies of Israel, Judah and Edom during a war against Moab

⁴ Mesha, the king of Moab, was a sheep breeder and used to supply a hundred thousand male lambs and the wool of a hundred thousand rams to the king of Israel.

⁵ However, when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. ⁶ At that time King Jehoram left Samaria and mustered all Israel. ⁷ He sent word to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah: “The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you come with me to fight against Moab?”

He replied: “I shall go. I am like you, my people are like your people, and my horses are like your horses.”

⁸ Then he asked, “By which route shall we go up?”

Jehoram answered, “By the road through the Wilderness of Edom.”

⁹ So, the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. After they had marched on that roundabout route for seven days, the army had no more water for themselves or for the animals that had come with them. ¹⁰ Then the king of Israel said: “How tragic! The LORD has called us three kings here to deliver us into the hands of Moab.”

¹¹ Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no prophet of the LORD here, whom we may use to consult the LORD?”

Then one of the king of Israel’s officials answered: “Elisha, the son of Shaphat, is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.”

¹² Jehoshaphat said, “The Word of the LORD is with him.”

So, the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. ¹³ Elisha asked the king of Israel: “What have you and I in common? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother!”

However, the king of Israel answered him: “No! For it is the LORD who has called us three kings here to deliver them into the hands of Moab.”

¹⁴ Elisha said: “As surely as the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I have been standing, if I did not respect Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, I would certainly not look at you or notice you. ¹⁵ Now therefore, fetch me a harpist!”

While the harpist was playing, the hand of the LORD came on Elisha. ¹⁶ He said: “This is what the LORD has said, ‘Make this dry stream-bed full of ditches!’”

¹⁷ For this is what the LORD has said, ‘You will not see wind or see rain, but that dry stream-bed will be filled with water, that you, your cattle and your other animals may drink.’ ¹⁸ The LORD considers that this will be too simple a matter. He will also deliver Moab into your hands. ¹⁹ You shall also overthrow every fortified city and every major city! You shall also cut down every good tree, fill in all the springs and ruin every good field with stones!”

²⁰ The next morning, about the time when the sacrifice was offered, water suddenly came from the direction of Edom, and the land was filled with water.

²¹ When all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were fit for military service, including older men, were called out and took positions at the border. ²² When they rose early in the morning, the sun was shining on the water, and to the Moabites the water opposite them appeared to be as red as blood. ²³ They said: “This is blood. The kings have certainly been fighting each other and have been striking each another down. Now therefore, Moab, get to the plunder!”

²⁴ However, when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and defeated the Moabites, and the Moabites fled before them. The Israelites continued the slaughter in the land and struck down the Moabites. ²⁵ They demolished the cities, and every man threw a stone on every good piece of land until it was covered. They filled in every spring of water and cut down all the good trees. Finally only Kir-Hareseth was left with its stones in place, but men armed with slings surrounded and attacked it. ²⁶ When the king of Moab saw that the battle was going against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to cut their way through to the king of Edom, but they could not do it. ²⁷ Then he took his eldest son, who would have succeeded him as king, and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall. They were very indignant against the Israelites, who then withdrew from them and returned to their own land.

4

The use of a miraculous supply of olive-oil to provide for a widow — compare 1 Kings 17:14-16

¹ The wife of one of the disciples of the prophets cried out to Elisha: “My husband, your servant, is dead, and you yourself know that he, your servant, feared the LORD. However, the money-lender has come to take away my two children as his slaves.”

² Elisha told her: “What shall I do for you? Tell me! What do you have in your house?”

She said: “Your maidservant has nothing in the house except a small jar of olive-oil.”

³ Then he said: “Go! Borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbours! They should be empty ones and not just a few of them! ⁴ Then go in, shut the door behind you and your sons and pour it into all these vessels! When one is full, put it to one

side.”

⁵ So, she left him and shut the door behind her and her sons. They kept bringing containers to her while she kept pouring. ⁶ When the containers were full, she told her son, “Bring me another container!”

He told her, “There are no more containers left.”

Then the olive-oil stopped flowing. ⁷ She came and told the man of God. He said: “Go, sell the olive-oil and pay your debts! You and your sons can live on what is left.”

The restoration to life of the son of a woman of Shunem — compare 1 Kings 17:17-24

⁸ One day, Elisha went across to Shunem, where a wealthy woman lived. She urged him to eat some food. So, whenever he was going past, he used to turn in there to eat some food. ⁹ She told her husband: “Please consider this! I know that he is a holy man of God, who is regularly going past us. ¹⁰ Please let us make a small enclosed upper room and put a bed, a table, a chair and a lamp there for him, that he may stay there whenever he comes to us!”

¹¹ One day when Elisha came, he went into the upper room and lay down there. ¹² He told his servant Gehazi, “Call this woman of Shunem!”

The servant called her, and she stood before Elisha.

¹³ Elisha told Gehazi: “Please tell her, ‘See, you have gone to all this trouble for us! What should be done for you? Is there a word that could be spoken on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?’” She replied, “I am living among my own people.”

¹⁴ Elisha asked, “What, then, can be done for her?”

Gehazi answered, “Indeed, she has no son, and her husband is old.”

¹⁵ Then Elisha said, “Call her!”

When he had called her, she stood in the doorway.

¹⁶ He said, “About this time next year you will hold a son in your arms.”

She said: “No, my master, man of God! Do not lie to your maidservant!”

¹⁷ However, the woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son at the right time the next year, as Elisha had told her. ¹⁸ The child grew and one day he went out to his father, who was with the reapers. ¹⁹ He said to his father, “My head, my head!”

The father told his servant, “Carry him to his mother!”

²⁰ The servant lifted him up and carried him to his mother. The boy sat on her lap until noon and then he died. ²¹ She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door behind him and went out.

²² Then she called to her husband and said: “Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may quickly go to the man of God and come back again!”

²³ Her husband asked: “Why are you going to him today? It is not the New Moon or the Sabbath.”

She answered, “All is well.”

²⁴ Then she saddled the donkey and told her servant:

“Drive off! On your way! Do not slow down for me unless I tell you!”

²⁵ So, she set out and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel. When the man of God saw her in the distance, he told his servant Gehazi: “Look! There is that woman from Shunem. ²⁶ Please run at once to meet her and ask her, ‘Are you well? Is your husband well? Is the boy well?’”

She answered, “All is well.”

²⁷ When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she took hold of his feet. Gehazi came closer to push her away. However, the man of God said: “Leave her alone! For she is in bitter distress, but the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me why.”

²⁸ Then she said: “Did I ask my master for a son? Did I not say, ‘Do not use false hopes to keep me quiet!’?”

²⁹ Elisha told Gehazi: “Tuck your cloak into your belt, take my staff in your hand and go! When you meet anyone, you shall not greet him and, when anyone greets you, do not reply! Lay my staff on the boy’s face!”

³⁰ Then the boy’s mother said, “As surely as the LORD lives and as surely as your soul lives, I shall not leave you.”

So, he set out and followed her. ³¹ Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the boy’s face, but there was no sound and no response. So, he came back to meet him and told him, “The child has not woken.”

³² When Elisha entered the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed. ³³ He went **in, shut the door behind** the two of them and **prayed** to the LORD.

³⁴ Then he went up and lay on the boy. He put his mouth on the boy’s mouth, his eyes on the boy’s eyes and his hands on the boy’s hands. When he bowed down over him, the boy’s body became warm.

³⁵ Elisha turned away and walked back and forth in the room. Then he went up and bowed down over him. The boy sneezed seven times. When the boy opened his eyes, ³⁶ Elisha summoned Gehazi and said, “Call this woman of Shunem!”

When he called her, she came to him, and he said, “Pick up your son!”

³⁷ She came, fell at his feet and bowed down to the ground. Then she picked up her son and went out.

A miraculous remedy for poisoned food in a pot

³⁸ Elisha came to Gilgal again when there was a famine in the land. While the company of the prophets was sitting in front of him, he told his servant, “Set on the large pot and boil stew for the company of the prophets!”

³⁹ One of them went out into the field to gather mallows and found a wild vine. He gathered wild gourds from it and filled the fold of his cloak. Then he came and sliced them into the pot of stew, although no one knew what they were. ⁴⁰ They poured out some for the men to eat. However, while they were eating some of the stew, they cried out, “There is death in the pot,

man of God!”

They could not eat it. ⁴¹ Elisha said, “Then fetch some flour!”

He threw it into the pot and said, “Pour some out for the people to eat!”

Then there was nothing harmful in the pot.

The feeding of a hundred men by Elisha with a few loaves and some grain — compare Matthew 14:13-21, 15:32-39

⁴² A man came from Baal-Shalishah and brought the man of God twenty loaves of barley bread baked from the first ripe grain, together with some newly ripe ears of grain in their husks. Elisha said, “Give it to the men to eat!”

⁴³ However, his assistant asked, “How shall I serve this before a hundred men?”

Elisha answered: “Give it to the people to eat! For this is what the LORD has said, ‘They will eat it and have some left over.’”

⁴⁴ His assistant set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, according to the Word of the LORD.

5

The healing of Naaman’s infectious skin-disease

¹ Naaman was the commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man with his master and highly respected, because the LORD had used him to give victory to Aram. Although this man was a valiant soldier, he had an infectious skin-disease.

² Raiding parties from Aram had gone out and captured a little girl from the land of Israel, and she worked in the service of Naaman’s wife. ³ She told her mistress: “If only my master were with the prophet in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his infectious skin-disease.”

⁴ Naaman went and told his master, “This is what the girl who came from the land of Israel has said.”

⁵ The king of Aram replied, “By all means, go! I shall send a letter to the king of Israel.”

When Naaman left, he took with him three hundred and fifty kilograms of silver, seventy-two kilograms of gold and ten sets of clothing. ⁶ Then he took the letter to the king of Israel, which read: “Now be advised, when this letter comes to you, that I have sent my servant Naaman to you, that you may cure him of his infectious skin-disease!”

⁷ When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes. He asked: “Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending someone to me to cure him of his infectious skin-disease? For you must please understand and be aware that he is certainly trying to pick a quarrel with me!”

⁸ When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent someone to the king to ask: “Why have you torn your clothes? Please let the man come to me, that he may know that there is a prophet in Israel!”

⁹ Naaman went with his horses and chariot and

stopped at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to tell him: "Go! Wash yourself in the Jordan seven times, that your flesh may be restored and that you may become clean!"

¹¹ However, Naaman became angry and went away. He said: "Indeed, I thought that Elisha would certainly have come out to me, stood, called on the name of the LORD, his God, waved his hand over the place and healed the infectious skin-disease. ¹² Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel are? Should I not wash in them and become clean?"

So, he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³ However, Naaman's servants went up to him and spoke to him: "My father, if the prophet had asked you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he has told you, 'Wash and become clean!'"

¹⁴ So, Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him to do, and his flesh was restored like that of a little child, and he **became clean**.

The greed of Gehazi and his punishment

¹⁵ Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said: "Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. Now therefore, please accept a gift from your servant!"

¹⁶ However, Elisha answered, "As surely as the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I shall not accept anything."

Although Naaman strongly urged him to accept it, he refused. ¹⁷ Then Naaman said: "If not, please let me, your servant, be given as much soil as a pair of mules can carry! For from now on your servant will not make a burnt offering or other sacrifice to any other god than the LORD. ¹⁸ However, may the LORD pardon your servant for this one thing, when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there while he is leaning on my arm, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon! May the LORD please pardon me, your servant, for this, when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon!"

¹⁹ Elisha told him, "Go in peace!"

However, when Naaman had gone a short distance away from him, ²⁰ Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, the man of God, thought: "Look! My master has been too easy on this Aramean, Naaman, by not accepting from him what he brought. As surely as the LORD lives, I shall run after him and get something from him."

²¹ So, Gehazi hurried after Naaman. When Naaman saw him running behind him, he got down from his chariot to meet him and asked, "Is everything all right?"

²² Gehazi answered: "Everything is all right. My master has sent me to say, 'Look! Just now two young men belonging to the company of the prophets have come to me from the hill-country of Ephraim. Please,

give them thirty-five kilograms of silver and two sets of clothing!"

²³ Naaman said: "Go on! Take seventy kilograms!"

He strongly urged him and tied up seventy kilograms of silver in two bags, with two sets of clothing. He handed them to two of his servants, and they carried them in front of Gehazi. ²⁴ When he came to the stronghold, he took them from their hands and stored them away in the house. Then he dismissed the men, and they left. ²⁵ When he went in and stood before his master, Elisha asked him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?"

He answered, "Your servant did not go anywhere."

²⁶ However, Elisha asked him: "Did not my heart go with you when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to acquire money and acquire clothes, olive-orchards, vineyards, sheep and herds, menservants and maidservants? ²⁷ The skin-disease of Naaman will cling to you and to your descendants for ever."

Gehazi went out from Elisha's presence with an infectious skin-disease, as white as snow.

6

The miracle of the floating axe-head

¹ The company of the prophets told Elisha: "Please consider this! The place where we are living together with you is too small for us. ² Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let each of us get a log from there, that we may make ourselves another place to live!"

He answered, "Go!"

³ Then one of them asked, "Please agree to come with your servants!"

Elisha answered, "I shall come."

⁴ So, he went with them. When they came to the Jordan, they began to cut down trees. ⁵ However, as one man was felling a tree, his axe head fell into the water. He cried out: "Ah, my master! It was borrowed."

⁶ Then the man of God asked, "Where did it fall?"

When he had shown Elisha the place, Elisha cut off a stick, threw it in there and made the iron float.

⁷ He said, "Lift it out!"

He reached out his hand and took it.

The trapping of blinded Arameans in Samaria by Elisha

⁸ Once the king of Aram was fighting against Israel. After he conferred with his officials, he said, "My camp will be at such and such a place."

⁹ However, the man of God sent a Message to the king of Israel: "Beware that you do not go past this place! For the Arameans are marching down there."

¹⁰ The king of Israel sent some men to the place about which the man of God had told him. Thus he used to warn the king to be on his guard there. He did this repeatedly. ¹¹ This annoyed the king of Aram. He summoned his officials and asked them, "Will you not tell me which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?"

¹² One of his officials replied: "No one, O king, my

master. However, Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, will tell the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom.”

¹³ The king said, “Go and see where he is, that I may send men and capture him!”

He was told: “Look! He is in Dothan.”

¹⁴ So, he sent horses, chariots and a large force there. They came by night and surrounded the city. ¹⁵ When the assistant of the man of God got up early in the morning and went out, he saw that an army with horses and chariots was surrounding the city. Elisha’s servant asked him: “Oh, my master! What shall we do?”

¹⁶ Elisha answered: “Do not be afraid! For there are more with us than there are with them.”

¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed, “LORD, please open his eyes that he may see!”

Then the LORD opened the young man’s eyes. When he looked, he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. ¹⁸ When the Arameans came down against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD: “Please strike these soldiers with dazzling light!”

Then God struck them with dazzling light, as Elisha had asked. ¹⁹ Elisha told them: “This is not the road, and this is not the city. Follow me, that I may lead you to the man for whom you are searching.”

Then he led them to Samaria. ²⁰ When they had entered Samaria, Elisha said, “LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see!”

Then the LORD opened their eyes so that they could see. They saw that they were in the middle of Samaria. ²¹ When the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha: “My father, shall I strike them down? Shall I strike them down?”

²² He answered: “You shall not strike them down! Do you strike down those whom you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set food and water before them that they may eat and drink and that they may then go to their master!”

²³ So, he prepared a great banquet for them. When they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. Then raiding parties from Aram stopped coming into the land of Israel.

The famine in Samaria during a siege

²⁴ After this, Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, gathered his entire army, went up and besieged Samaria.

²⁵ There was a severe famine in Samaria. Indeed, they besieged it for so long that a donkey’s head was sold for nine hundred and sixty grams of silver and two hundred and seventy millilitres of dove’s dung cost sixty grams of silver. ²⁶ While the king of Israel was going past along the wall, a woman cried out to him: “Help me, O king, my master!”

²⁷ He replied: “If the LORD will not help you, from where shall I get help for you? From the threshing floor or from the wine-press?”

²⁸ The king asked her, “What is your trouble?”

She answered: “This woman told me, ‘Donate your son, that we may eat him today and eat my son tomorrow!’ ²⁹ So, we boiled my son and ate him. The next day I told her, ‘Donate your son, that we may eat him!’ However, she has hidden her son.”

³⁰ When the king heard what the woman had said, he tore his clothes. While he was going past along the wall the people saw that he actually had sackcloth underneath on his body. ³¹ He said: “May God deal severely with me and do even worse, if the head of Elisha, the son of Shaphat, remains on him today!”

³² While Elisha was sitting in his house, the elders were sitting with him. The king had dispatched a man ahead of him. Before the messenger came to Elisha, Elisha asked the elders: “Have you not seen that this son of a murderer has sent someone to take off my head? Look! When the messenger comes, shut the door and use the door to hold him back! Is not the sound of his master’s feet behind him?”

³³ While Elisha was still speaking to them, there was the messenger coming down to him. The messenger said: “Look here! The LORD has sent this calamity. Why should I stand waiting before the LORD any longer?”

7

¹ However, Elisha said: “Listen to the Word of the LORD! This is what the LORD has said: “At about this time tomorrow seven litres of fine wheat flour will be sold at the city-gate of Samaria for twelve grams of silver and fourteen litres of barley for twelve grams of silver.”

² Then the assisting officer on whose arm the king was leaning asked the man of God: “Look! If the LORD were to make windows in heaven, could this happen?”

However, Elisha answered, “Indeed, you will see it with your own eyes but not eat any of it!”

The lifting of the siege of Samaria

³ There were four men at the entrance to the city-gate who had an infectious skin-disease. They asked one another: “Why are we sitting here until we die? ⁴ If we say, ‘Let us enter the city!’ the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. If we keep sitting here, we shall also die. Now therefore, come! Let us surrender to the camp of the Arameans! If they spare our lives we shall live and, if they kill us, we shall die.”

⁵ So, they set off at twilight to go to the camp of the Arameans. However, when they reached the edge of the camp of the Arameans, they saw that there was no one there. ⁶ The Lord had caused the army of the Arameans to hear the noise of chariots, horses and a large army, so that they said to one another, “Look! The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites against us and the kings of Egypt to attack us!”

⁷ So, they got up and fled at twilight. They abandoned their tents, their horses and their donkeys. They left

the camp as it was and fled for their lives. ⁸ When these men with skin-diseases reached the edge of the camp, they went into a tent, ate and drank, took silver, gold and clothing out of it and went and hid them. Then they came back, entered another tent, took some things out of it and went and hid them. ⁹ Then they said to one another: "We are not doing what is right. This day is a day of good news, and we are not telling anyone about it. If we wait until the morning light, we shall be punished. Now therefore, come! Let us go and report this to the royal palace!"

¹⁰ So, they went, called to the gatekeepers of the city and told them: "We went to the camp of the Arameans and look! There was no one there, not a sound of anyone. There were only the horses tied up, the donkeys tied up and the tents as they had been."

¹¹ Then the gatekeepers shouted the news, and it was reported inside the king's palace. ¹² So, the king got up in the night and told his officials: "Let me just tell you what the Arameans have done to us! They know that we are hungry. They have left the camp to hide in the open country. They are thinking, 'When they come out of the city, we shall capture them alive and get into the city.'"

¹³ One of his officials answered: "Then, please, let some men take five of the remaining horses that are left here! Look! They will be no worse at all than the entire multitude of the Israelites who are left here. Look! They will be no worse at all than the entire multitude of Israel that has already perished. Let us send them that we may find out!"

¹⁴ So, they selected two chariots with their horses, and the king sent them after the army of the Arameans. He told the men, "Go and look!"

¹⁵ They followed them as far as the Jordan and saw that the entire road was littered with garments and equipment that the Arameans had discarded as they hurried away. The messengers returned and reported this to the king. ¹⁶ Then the people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So, seven litres of fine wheat flour were sold for twelve grams of silver and fourteen litres of barley cost twelve grams of silver, according to the Word of the LORD. ¹⁷ The king had appointed the assisting officer on whose arm he used to lean to be in charge of the city-gate. The people trampled on him in the gateway, so that he died, as the man of God had spoken. He had foretold it when the king had come down to him. ¹⁸ It happened as the man of God had told the king: "At about this time tomorrow fourteen litres of barley will be sold for twelve grams of silver and seven litres of fine wheat flour will cost twelve grams of silver at the city-gate of Samaria."

¹⁹ The assisting officer had answered the man of God: "Look! If the LORD were to make windows in heaven, could this happen?" Elisha had replied, "Indeed, you will see it with your own eyes but not eat any of it!"

²⁰ That is what happened to him. The people trampled him to death in the gateway.

8

The restoration of the woman of Shunem's land

¹ Elisha had told the woman whose son he had restored to life: "Take action, leave with your family and live as a foreigner wherever you can! For the LORD has called for a famine, and, besides, it is coming on the land for seven years."

² The woman proceeded to do as the man of God had said. She and her family went and lived as foreigners in the land of the Philistines for seven years. ³ When, at the end of the seven years, the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, she went off to appeal to the king for her house and her farm. ⁴ The king was talking with Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, and was saying, "Please tell me about all the great things that Elisha has done!"

⁵ While Gehazi was telling the king about Elisha's restoration of the life of the dead boy, there was the woman whose son he had restored to life appealing to the king for her house and her land. Gehazi said, "O king, my master, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life."

⁶ When the king asked the woman, she told him. So, the king appointed a court-official for her and told him, "Restore all that used to belong to her, together with all the income from the farm from the day when she left the land until now!"

Elisha's prophecy to Hazael and the murder of Ben-Hadad by Hazael

⁷ When Elisha came to Damascus, Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, was ill. He was told, "The man of God has come as far as here!"

⁸ The king told Hazael: "Take a gift with you, go to meet the man of God and inquire of the LORD through him! Ask, 'Shall I recover from this illness?'"

⁹ Hazael went to meet him and took with him, as a gift, forty camel-loads of all kinds of goods of Damascus. When he came and stood before him, he said: "Your son, Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, has sent me to you, to ask, 'Shall I recover from this illness?'"

¹⁰ Elisha told him: "Go! Tell him, 'You will certainly recover!' However, the LORD has revealed to me that he will certainly die."

¹¹ He stared at him with a fixed gaze until Hazael was embarrassed and then the man of God wept. ¹² Hazael asked, "My master, why are you weeping?"

He answered: "Because I know the harm that you will do to the Israelites. You will set on fire their fortresses, you will kill their young men with the sword, you will smash to pieces their little children and rip open their pregnant women."

¹³ Hazael asked: "Rather, what am I, your servant? Am I a dog, that I should do this horrible thing?"

Elisha answered, "The LORD has revealed to me that you will be king over Aram."

¹⁴ Then Hazael left Elisha and returned to his master. When Ben-Hadad asked him, “What has Elisha told you?” he answered, “He has told me that you will certainly recover.”

¹⁵ However, on the next day Hazael took a blanket, dipped it in water and spread it over the king’s face, so that he died. Then Hazael succeeded him as king.

The reign of Joram as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 21:2-11, 21:16-22:1

¹⁶ In the fifth year of Jehoram,^{*103} the son of Ahab, the king of Israel, when Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah, Joram, the son of Jehoshaphat, began to reign as the king of Judah. ¹⁷ He was thirty-two years old when he became king and reigned in Jerusalem for eight years. ¹⁸ He lived in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the family of Ahab had done. For he had married the daughter of Ahab. He did what the LORD considered evil. ¹⁹ However, the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of His servant David, since He had promised to give a lasting lamp to David and to his descendants for ever. ²⁰ In the time of Jehoram, Edom rebelled against the rule of Judah and appointed their own king. ²¹ Then Joram went across to Zair with all his chariots. When the Edomites were surrounding him and his chariot-commanders, he rose up by night and struck them down. Then his army fled to their tents. ²² So, Edom has been in revolt against the control of Judah to this day. At that time Libnah also rebelled. ²³ As for the other events of Joram’s reign and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ²⁴ Joram went to rest with his ancestors and was buried with his fathers in the City of David, and his son Ahaziah succeeded him as king.

The reign of Ahaziah as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 22:2-6

²⁵ In the twelfth year of Jehoram, the son of Ahab, the king of Israel, Ahaziah, the son of Joram, the king of Judah, began to reign. ²⁶ Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for one year. His mother’s name was Athaliah. She was a granddaughter of Omri, the king of Israel. ²⁷ He also lived in the ways of the family of Ahab and did what the LORD considered evil, as the family of Ahab had done. Indeed, he was related by marriage to the family of Ahab. ²⁸ He went with Joram, the son of Ahab, to fight against Hazael, the king of Aram, at Ramoth-Gilead, and the Arameans wounded Joram. ²⁹ King Joram returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramoth when he was fighting against Hazael, the king of Aram. Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, the king of Judah, went down to see Joram, the son of Ahab, in Jezreel, because he was ill.

9

The anointing of Jehu as the king of Israel

¹ Then the prophet Elisha called a man from the com-

pany of the prophets and told him: “Tuck your cloak up into your belt! Take this flask of olive-oil in your hand and go to Ramoth-Gilead! ² When you arrive, look for Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi, there! Go in! Get him to stand up and leave his fellow-Israelites and take him to an inner room! ³ Then take the flask of olive-oil, pour it on his head and say, ‘This is what the LORD has said, “I have anointed you king over Israel!’” Then open the door and run away! You shall not delay!”

⁴ The young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth-Gilead. ⁵ When he arrived, he saw that the army officers were sitting together. He said, “I have a word for you, commander.”

Jehu asked, “For which one out of us all?”

He replied, “For you, commander.”

⁶ He got up and went inside the house. Then the prophet poured the olive-oil on his head and told him: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: ‘I have anointed you king over Israel, the people of the LORD. ⁷ You shall strike down the family of your master Ahab, that I may **take revenge** on Jezebel for **murdering My servants**, the prophets, and for **murdering all the other servants of the LORD!** ⁸ For the whole family of Ahab will perish, and I shall cut off from Ahab every male in Israel both slave and free. ⁹ I shall make the family of Ahab like the family of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and like the family of Baasha, the son of Ahijah. ¹⁰ Dogs will eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel, and no one will bury her.’”

Then he opened the door and ran away. ¹¹ When Jehu came out to the other officials of his master, they asked him: “Is everything well? Why has this crazy fellow come to you?”

He answered them: “You know the man and his babble!”

¹² They said: “That is not true! Please tell us!”

He replied: “He spoke to me along these lines: ‘This is what the LORD has said, “I have anointed you king over Israel.’””

¹³ Then each one quickly took his garment and put it under him on the bare steps. They blew trumpets and proclaimed, “Jehu has become king.”

The killing of King Joram of Israel by Jehu

¹⁴ So, Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, formed a conspiracy against Jehoram. Jehoram and all Israel had been defending Ramoth-Gilead against Hazael, the king of Aram. ¹⁵ However, King Joram had returned to recover in Jezreel from the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him while he was fighting against Hazael, the king of Aram. Jehu said, “If this is what you want, no one should escape from the city to go and tell the news in Jezreel!”

¹⁶ Then Jehu got into his chariot and rode to Jezreel. For Joram was in bed there, and Ahaziah, the king of Judah, had come down to visit Joram. ¹⁷ The watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel and, when

¹⁰³ The spelling varies between “Joram” and “Jehoram.”

he saw Jehu's large crowd approaching, he called out, "I see a large crowd."

Jehoram said: "Get a chariot driver, send him to meet them and ask, 'Is everything peaceful?'"

¹⁸ So, a horseman went to meet him and said: "This is what the king has asked, 'Is everything peaceful?'"

Jehu replied: "What do you have to do with peace? Turn around and follow me!"

Then the watchman reported, "The messenger has reached them but is not coming back."

¹⁹ Then the king sent out a second horseman. When he reached them, he said: "This is what the king has asked, 'Is it in peace?'"

Jehu answered: "What do you have to do with peace? Turn around and follow me!"

²⁰ The watchman reported: "He has reached them but is not coming back. The driving is like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi, for he is driving like a madman."

²¹ Jehoram ordered, "Hitch up the chariot!"

When someone had hitched up his chariot, Jehoram, the king of Israel and Ahaziah, the king of Judah, set out. Each was in his own chariot. When they had gone out to meet Jehu, they met him at the plot of ground that had belonged to Naboth of Jezreel. ²² When Jehoram saw Jehu, he asked, "Have you come peacefully, Jehu?"

He answered, "What peace is there while your mother Jezebel keeps committing so many **acts of fornication and sorcery?**"

²³ Then Jehoram turned his chariot around and tried to flee. He called out to Ahaziah, "Treason, Ahaziah!"

²⁴ Jehu took hold of his bow and shot Jehoram between his shoulder blades. The arrow came out of his heart again, and he collapsed in his chariot. ²⁵ Jehu told his assisting officer Bidkar: "Pick him up and throw him on the plot of ground that belonged to Naboth of Jezreel! For remember that, when you and I were riding side by side in a chariot behind his father Ahab, the LORD made this pronouncement against him: ²⁶ 'As surely as I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons yesterday,' declares the Lord, 'I shall pay you back on this plot of ground.' Now therefore, pick him up and throw him on that plot of ground, according to the Word of the LORD!"

The death of Ahaziah, the king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 22:7-9

²⁷ When Ahaziah, the king of Judah saw this, he fled in the direction of Beth-Haggan. Jehu pursued him and ordered, "Shoot him too in his chariot!"

They struck him on the way up to Gur, which is near Ibleam. Although he fled to Megiddo, he died there.

²⁸ His officials carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the City of David. ²⁹ Ahaziah had become king of Judah in the eleventh year of Jehoram, the son of Ahab.

The death of Queen Jezebel

³⁰ When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard about it. She applied black eye-paint, arranged her hair and

looked down through a window. ³¹ When Jehu was coming through the city-gate, she asked, "Have you come peacefully, Zimri, you murderer of your master?"

³² He looked up to the window and asked: "Who is on my side? Who?"

Two or three eunuchs looked down at him. ³³ He said, "Drop her down!"

When they dropped her down, some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses when they trampled on her. ³⁴ Then Jehu went in and ate and drank. Then he said: "Please take care of that cursed woman and bury her! For she was a king's daughter."

³⁵ However, when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than her skull, her feet and the palms of her hands. ³⁶ When they came back and reported this to Jehu, he said: "This is the Word of the LORD, which He spoke through His servant, Elijah the Tishbite, 'The dogs will eat the body of Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel. ³⁷ The corpse of Jezebel will be like manure on the surface of the field in the territory of Jezreel, so that no one will say, 'This is Jezebel.'"

10

The slaughter of Ahab's and Ahaziah's families by Jehu

¹ Ahab had seventy male heirs in Samaria. Jehu wrote letters and sent them to the rulers of the city in Samaria, to the leaders of Jezreel, to the elders and to the guardians of Ahab's children in Samaria. He said:

² "Now therefore, when this letter reaches you, since your master's children are with you and since you have chariots, horses, a fortified city and weapons, ³ select the best and most qualified of your master's sons! Put him on his father's throne and then fight for your master's family!"

⁴ However, they were extremely afraid and said: "Look! The two kings could not resist him. How, then, can we ourselves resist him?"

⁵ So, the manager of the palace, the manager of the city, the elders and the guardians sent men to tell Jehu: "We are your servants and shall do everything that you tell us. We shall not make anyone king. Do whatever you think is best!"

⁶ Then he wrote to them a second letter, saying: "If you are on my side and, if you listen to what I say, take the heads of your master's heirs and come to me at Jezreel tomorrow at about this time!"

The seventy sons of the king were with the influential men of the city, who were rearing them. ⁷ When the letter reached them, they took the king's sons, slaughtered the seventy of them, put their heads in baskets and sent them to Jehu at Jezreel. ⁸ When the messenger came and reported to him, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons," Jehu ordered, "Lay them in two piles at the entrance of the city-gate until the morning!"

⁹ When he went out the next morning, he stood and told all the people: "You are innocent. It has been I

who have formed a conspiracy against my master and killed him; but who has struck down all these?

¹⁰ Know then that nothing of the Word of the LORD that the LORD has spoken about the family of Ahab will fall to the ground! The LORD has carried out what He has predicted through His servant Elijah.”

¹¹ Jehu struck down all who remained of the family of Ahab in Jezreel, all his influential men, his close friends and his priests, until he left him no survivor.

¹² Then he set out and went towards Samaria. While he was on the road, at Beth-Eked of the Shepherds,

¹³ Jehu met the relatives of Ahaziah, the king of Judah. He asked, “Who are you?”

They answered, “We are relatives of Ahaziah and have come down to make a friendly visit to the sons of the king and the sons of the queen mother.”

¹⁴ Jehu ordered, “Take them alive!”

They took them alive and then slaughtered them beside the cistern at Beth-Eked. He did not allow any of those forty-two men to survive.

¹⁵ When Jehu left that place, he met Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, who was coming to meet him. He greeted him and asked him, “Are you as loyal to me as I am to you?”

Jehonadab answered, “Yes, I am.”

Jehu replied, “If you are, give me your hand!”

So, Jehonadab gave Jehu his hand, and Jehu took him up with him into his chariot. ¹⁶ He said, “Come with me and watch how devoted I am to the LORD!”

So, they had him ride in Jehu’s chariot. ¹⁷ When Jehu arrived at Samaria, he struck down all the rest of those who belonged to Ahab in Samaria, so that he wiped them out, according to the Word of the LORD, which He had spoken to Elijah.

The slaughter of the priests of Baal by Jehu

¹⁸ Then Jehu assembled all the people and told them: “Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him intensely. ¹⁹ Now therefore, summon to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants and all his priests! None should be missing! For I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal. Anyone who fails to come shall not live!”

However, Jehu had acted cunningly to destroy the worshippers of Baal. ²⁰ Jehu ordered, “Use rites of purification to prepare for a festive assembly in honour of Baal!”

So, they proclaimed it. ²¹ Jehu sent a message throughout Israel, and all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was no one left who did not come. When they went into the temple of Baal, the temple of Baal was filled from one end to the other. ²² Jehu told the man in charge of the wardrobe, “Fetch out robes for all the worshippers of Baal!”

So, he brought the robes out for them. ²³ Then Jehu and Jehonadab, the son of Rechab, went into the temple of Baal, and Jehu told the worshippers of Baal, “Check and see that there are no worshippers of the LORD here among you, but only the worshipers of

Baal!”

²⁴ Then they went in to prepare sacrifices and burnt offerings. Jehu had stationed eighty men outside and said, “The man who allows any of the men whom I am placing in your hands to escape will pay for his life with his own.”

²⁵ When Jehu had finished preparing the burnt offering, he told the guards and the assisting officers: “Go in and strike them down! No one shall come out!”

So, they struck them down with the sword. Then the guards and the assisting officers threw the bodies out and went into the city of the temple of Baal. ²⁶ They brought out the sacred pillars that were in the temple of Baal and burned them. ²⁷ They broke down the sacred pillar of Baal, tore down the temple of Baal and turned it into a toilet. That is what it still is today.

²⁸ So, Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel. ²⁹ However, Jehu did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. He left the golden calves that were in Bethel and Dan. ³⁰ The LORD told Jehu: “Because you have done well in carrying out what I consider right and have done to the family of Ahab everything that I had planned to do, four generations of your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel.”

The death of Jehu

³¹ However, Jehu was not careful to live according to the Law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit. ³² In those days the LORD began to cut off some parts of Israel. Hazael defeated the Israelites throughout their territory ³³ east of the Jordan: all the land of Gilead, the people of Gad, Reuben and Manasseh, the land beyond Aroer, which is beside the stream of the Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan. ³⁴ As for the other events of Jehu’s reign, all that he did and all his achievements, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ³⁵ Jehu went to rest with his fathers and they buried him in Samaria. His son Jehoahaz succeeded him as king. ³⁶ Jehu had been king of Israel in Samaria for a period of twenty-eight years.

11

The reign of Athaliah in Judah — 2 Chronicles 22:10-12

¹ When Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy the whole royal family. ² However, Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram and the sister of Ahaziah, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king’s sons who were being put to death. She put him and his nurse in a bedroom, and they hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not put to death. ³ Joash remained in hiding with his nurse for six years in the Temple of the LORD while Athaliah was reigning over the land.

The anointing of the child Joash by Jehoiada — 2 Chronicles 23:1-11

⁴ However, in the seventh year Jehoiada sent for the

captains of the units of a hundred, the Carian bodyguards and the other guards and had them come to him in the Temple of the LORD. He made a covenant with them, put them under oath in the Temple of the LORD and then showed them the king's son. ⁵ He commanded them: "This is what you must do: one third of you, those who are coming in on the Sabbath, and who are on guard duty at the king's palace, ⁶ another third who are at the Sur gate, and another third at the gate behind the guards — you shall take turns on guard duty at the palace! ⁷ The two divisions of you, all who come off duty on the Sabbath, shall be on guard duty at the Temple of the LORD to watch over the king! ⁸ You shall form a circle around the king! Everyone shall have his weapons in his hands! Whoever approaches your ranks shall be put to death! You shall stay close to the king wherever he goes!"

The crowning of the young king Joash

⁹ The captains of units of a hundred did exactly as the priest Jehoiada had commanded. Each brought his men who were coming in for duty on the Sabbath, with those who were going off duty on the Sabbath and they came to the priest Jehoiada. ¹⁰ The priest supplied the captains of the units of a hundred with the spears and the small round shields that had belonged to King David, which were in the Temple of the LORD. ¹¹ Each of the guards stood around the king with his weapons in his hands, from the southern side of the Temple to the northern side of the Temple, near the altar and near the Temple. ¹² Jehoiada brought out the king's son, put the crown on him and gave him the Testimony. They made him king, anointed him, clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"

The death of Athaliah — 2 Chronicles 23:12-24:1

¹³ When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the rest of the people, she went to the people at the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁴ When she looked, she saw the king standing beside the pillar, as the custom was, and the captains and the trumpeters beside the king and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Athaliah tore her clothes and called out, "Treason! Treason!"

¹⁵ Then the priest Jehoiada commanded the captains of units of a hundred, who were in charge of the army: "Take her outside between the ranks and use your swords to put to death anyone who follows her!"

For the priest had said, "She must not be put to death in the Temple of the LORD!"

¹⁶ So, they arrested her and, when she was coming in through the place where the horses enter the palace grounds, she was put to death there. ¹⁷ Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD, the king and people, that they should be the people of the LORD. He also made a covenant between the king and the people. ¹⁸ Then all the people of the land went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They thoroughly smashed his altars and his images and killed Mattan, the priest

of Baal, in front of the altars. Then the priest Jehoiada posted guards at the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁹ Then he took the captains of units of a hundred, the Carian bodyguards, the other guards and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the Temple of the LORD. They entered the king's palace through the gate of the guards. So, he sat on the throne of the kings. ²⁰ All the people of the land were glad, and the city was at peace. They had put Athaliah to death with the sword at the king's palace. ²¹ Joash was seven years old when he became king.

12

The reign of Joash as king of Judah and the repair of the Temple — 2 Chronicles 24:1-14, 24:23-27

¹ In the seventh year of Jehu, Joash began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for forty years. His mother's name was Zibiah from Beer-Sheba. ² Joash did what the LORD considered right while the priest Jehoiada was instructing him. ³ Nevertheless, the high places were not removed. The people continued to sacrifice and burn offerings on the high places.

⁴ Joash told the priests: "Collect all the money that is brought into the Temple of the LORD from the sacred gifts, the money from the registration of each person in a census, the money from the valuation of persons and all the other money that anyone contributes voluntarily to the Temple of the LORD! ⁵ Each of the priests shall receive it from his treasurer and they shall repair deterioration in the Temple wherever any is found!"

⁶ However, by the twenty-third year of King Joash, the priests had not repaired the dilapidation in the Temple. ⁷ Therefore, King Joash summoned the priest Jehoiada and the other priests and asked them: "Why are you not repairing the deterioration in the Temple? Now therefore, do not receive any more money from your treasurers! Rather, hand it over for the repairs to the Temple!"

⁸ The priests agreed that they would not receive any more money from the people and that they would not repair the deterioration in the Temple themselves.

⁹ Then Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid and placed it beside the altar on the right side as people entered the Temple of the LORD. The priests who guarded the entrance put into the chest all the money that was brought into the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁰ Whenever they saw that there was a large amount of money in the chest, the king's secretary and the High Priest came up, tied up in bags the money that was available in the Temple of the LORD and counted it. ¹¹ Then they used to pay out the money that had been counted to the workmen who had been appointed to carry out the work on the Temple of the LORD. They paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who were working on the Temple of the LORD, ¹² to the masons and the stonecutters, as well as to buy timber and quarried stone to repair the dete-

rioration in the Temple of the LORD and for all the other expenses to repair the Temple. ¹³ However, the money that had been brought into the Temple of the LORD was not spent on making silver basins, wick trimmers, bowls used for pouring, trumpets or any other golden or silver articles for the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁴ Instead, they kept paying it out to the workmen, who used it to repair the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁵ They did not require an accounting from those to whom they issued the money to pay the workers, for they used to act honestly. ¹⁶ The money from the guilt-offerings and from the sin-offerings was not brought into the Temple of the LORD. It belonged to the priests.

The threat to Jerusalem by Hazael of Aram

¹⁷ At that time Hazael, the king of Aram, came up, fought against Gath and captured it. Then Hazael decided to attack Jerusalem. ¹⁸ Joash, the king of Judah, took all the sacred objects that his forefathers, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram and Ahaziah, the kings of Judah, had dedicated, and the gifts he himself had dedicated and all the gold that was available in the treasuries of the Temple of the LORD and of the king's palace and sent them to Hazael, the king of Aram. Then Hazael withdrew from Jerusalem.

The assassination of King Joash — 2 Chronicles 24:23-27

¹⁹ As for the other events of Joash's reign and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ²⁰ His officials proceeded to make a conspiracy against Joash and struck Joash down at Beth-Millo, on the road down to Silla. ²¹ His officials who struck him down were Jozabad, the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad, the son of Shomer. He died, and they buried him with his fathers in the City of David, and his son Amaziah succeeded him as king.

13

The reign of Jehoahaz as king of Israel

¹ In the twenty-third year of Joash, the son of Ahaziah, the king of Judah, Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, began to reign over Israel in Samaria and reigned for seventeen years. ² He did what the LORD considered evil and followed the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. He did not turn away from them. ³ The LORD became angry with Israel and for all that time He delivered them into the control of Hazael, the king of Aram, and the control of Ben-Hadad, the son of Hazael. ⁴ Then Jehoahaz was intent on the favour of the LORD, and the LORD listened to him. For He saw that the king of Aram was oppressing Israel severely. ⁵ The LORD gave Israel a saviour, and they escaped from the power of the Arameans and then the Israelites lived in their homes as they had done before. ⁶ Nevertheless, they did not turn away from the sins of the family of Jeroboam, which he caused Israel to commit. Israel continued to practise them. The Asherah also remained standing in Sa-

maria. ⁷ Indeed, Jehoahaz had no army left except fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand foot-soldiers, because the king of Aram had destroyed the rest and made them like the dust when grain is being threshed. ⁸ As for the other events of the reign of Jehoahaz, all that he did and his might, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ⁹ Jehoahaz went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria. His son Jehoash succeeded him as king.

The reign of Jehoash as king of Israel

¹⁰ In the thirty-seventh year of Joash, the king of Judah, Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, began to reign over Israel in Samaria and reigned for sixteen years. ¹¹ He also did what the LORD considered evil. He did not turn away from all the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit but continued to practise them. ¹² As for the other events of the reign of Jehoash, all that he did and the ability with which he fought against Amaziah, the king of Judah, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ¹³ Jehoash went to rest with his fathers, and Jeroboam succeeded him on the throne. Jehoash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

The death of Elisha

¹⁴ When Elisha was suffering from the illness from which he was to die, Jehoash, the king of Israel went down to him and wept before him, crying, "My father, my father! The chariots and the horsemen of Israel!"

¹⁵ Elisha told him, "Take a bow and some arrows!" So, he took a bow and some arrows. ¹⁶ Then Elisha told the king of Israel, "Take the bow in your hands!" When he had taken it, Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. ¹⁷ He said, "Open the eastern window!" When he opened it, Elisha said, "Shoot!" When he had shot, Elisha said: "The arrow of victory of the LORD and the arrow of victory over Aram! You will fight the Arameans in Aphek until you completely destroy them."

¹⁸ Then Elisha said, "Take the arrows!" When the king took them, Elisha told the king of Israel: "Strike the ground!"

He struck three times and then stopped. ¹⁹ Then the man of God was angry with him and said: "You should have struck five or six times! Then you would have struck down Aram until you had completely destroyed it. Now, however, you will strike down Aram only three times."

Elisha's last miracle

²⁰ Elisha died, and they buried him. Moabite raiding parties used to invade the land at the beginning of the year. ²¹ When some Israelites were burying a man, they saw a raiding party and so they quickly put the man into the grave of Elisha. When the man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life and stood up on his feet.

The recapture of Israelite cities from Aram

²² Hazael, the king of Aram, oppressed Israel

throughout the time of Jehoahaz. ²³ However, the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them. He turned toward them because of His Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To this day He has been unwilling to destroy them and has not cast them from His presence. ²⁴ When Hazael, the king of Aram, died, his son Ben-Hadad succeeded him as king. ²⁵ Then Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, recaptured from Ben-Hadad, the son of Hazael, the cities that Ben-Hadad had taken in war from his father Jehoahaz. Jehoash defeated him three times and recovered those cities of Israel.

14

The reign of Amaziah as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 25:1-13

¹ In the second year of Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, the king of Israel, Amaziah, the son of Joash, the king of Judah, began to reign. ² He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Jehoaddin, from Jerusalem. ³ He did what the LORD considered right, yet not like his forefather David. He did exactly what his father Joash had been doing. ⁴ Nevertheless, the high places were not removed. The people continued to sacrifice and burn offerings on the high places. ⁵ As soon as the royal power was firmly in his grasp, he killed his officials who had murdered his father, the king. ⁶ However, he did not put the children of the murderers to death, according to what has been recorded in the Book of the Law of Moses, where the LORD commanded: "Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, and children shall not be put to death because of their fathers! Rather, any person shall be put to death only for his own sin!"

⁷ Amaziah was the one who struck down ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt, captured Sela in battle and named it "Joktheel," the name it still has today.

The defeat and death of King Amaziah of Judah — 2 Chronicles 25:14-26:2

⁸ Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, the king of Israel. He said, "Come, let us meet face to face!"

⁹ Jehoash, the king of Israel, sent a reply to Amaziah, the king of Judah: "A thorn-bush in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon: 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife!' However, a wild animal in Lebanon came along and trampled down the thorn-bush.

¹⁰ You have indeed defeated Edom and are conceited. Enjoy your glory and stay at home! Why, then, should you plunge into misfortune so that you fall and so that Judah falls with you?"

¹¹ However, Amaziah would not listen. So, Jehoash, the king of Israel, attacked, and he and Amaziah, the king of Judah, faced one another in battle at Beth-Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. ¹² Israel defeated Judah, and every man fled to his home. ¹³ Jehoash, the king of Israel, captured Amaziah, the king of Judah,

the son of Joash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-Shemesh. Then Jehoash went to Jerusalem and broke down two hundred metres of the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. ¹⁴ He took all the gold and silver and all the vessels that he found in the Temple of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's palace. He also took hostages and then returned to Samaria. ¹⁵ As for the other events of the reign of Jehoash, his achievements and his war against Amaziah, the king of Judah, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ¹⁶ Jehoash went to rest with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and his son Jeroboam succeeded him as king. ¹⁷ Amaziah, the son of Joash, the king of Judah, lived for fifteen years after the death of Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz, the king of Israel. ¹⁸ As for the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ¹⁹ Some people formed a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. However, they sent men to Lachish after him and put him to death there. ²⁰ They brought him back on horses, and he was buried in Jerusalem with his fathers, in the City of David. ²¹ All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah. ²² Azariah was the one who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah, after King Amaziah had gone to rest with his fathers.

The reign of Jeroboam II as king of Israel

²³ In the fifteenth year of Amaziah, the son of Joash, the king of Judah, Jeroboam, the son of Jehoash, the king of Israel, began to reign in Samaria and reigned for forty-one years. ²⁴ He did what the LORD considered evil. He did not turn away from all the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. ²⁵ He was the one who restored the border of Israel from Lebo-Hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the Word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath-Hepher. ²⁶ For the LORD had seen that Israel had been suffering very bitterly. The slaves and free people were all ruined, and there was no one to help Israel. ²⁷ Since the LORD had not said that He would blot out the name of Israel from under the sky, He saved them through Jeroboam, the son of Jehoash. ²⁸ As for the other events of the reign of Jeroboam, all that he did, his achievements, his warfare and his restoration to Israel of Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ²⁹ Jeroboam went to rest with his fathers, the kings of Israel, and his son Zechariah succeeded him as king.

15

The reign of Uzziah (also called Azariah) as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 26:3-4

¹ In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam, the king of

Israel, Azariah, the son of Amaziah, the king of Judah, began to reign. ² He was sixteen years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-two years. His mother's name was Jecoliah. She was from Jerusalem. ³ He did what the LORD considered right, exactly as his father Amaziah had been doing. ⁴ Nevertheless, the high places were not removed. The people still kept sacrificing and burning offerings on the high places.

The skin-disease of King Uzziah (or Azariah) — 2 Chronicles 26:21-23

⁵ The LORD afflicted the king with an infectious skin-disease until the day he died. He lived in a separate house. The king's son Jotham was in charge of the palace and administered justice for the people of the land. ⁶ As for the other events of the reign of Azariah and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ⁷ Azariah went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David. His son Jotham succeeded him as king.

The reign of Zechariah as king of Israel for six months

⁸ In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah, the king of Judah, Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, became king over Israel in Samaria and reigned for six months. ⁹ He did what the LORD considered evil, as his fathers had been doing. He did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. ¹⁰ Shallum, the son of Jabesh, formed a conspiracy against him, struck him down in public, put him to death and succeeded him as king. ¹¹ You will find the rest of the deeds of Zechariah recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel. ¹² This was the promise that the LORD had spoken to Jehu: "Your sons will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation."

That is what happened.

The reign of Shallum as king of Israel for one month

¹³ Shallum, the son of Jabesh, began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah, the king of Judah, and reigned in Samaria for one month. ¹⁴ Then Menahem, the son of Gadi, came up from Tirzah and arrived at Samaria. He struck down and killed Shallum, the son of Jabesh, in Samaria and succeeded him as king. ¹⁵ You will find the rest of the deeds of Shallum and the conspiracy that he formed recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel. ¹⁶ At that time Menahem attacked Tiphshah and all who were in that city and its territory between it and Tirzah. He attacked it because they had not opened their gates. He ripped open all the women in it who were pregnant.

The reign of Menahem as king of Israel

¹⁷ In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah, the king of Judah, Menahem, the son of Gadi, began to reign over Israel and reigned in Samaria for ten years. ¹⁸ He did what the LORD considered evil. Throughout his life he did not turn away from all the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. ¹⁹ Pul, the king of Assyria, invaded the country, and

Menahem gave Pul thirty-five thousand kilograms of silver to gain his support and strengthen his own control over the kingdom. ²⁰ Menahem exacted the money from Israel. Every wealthy man had to pay six hundred grams of silver to the king of Assyria. Then the king of Assyria withdrew and stopped occupying the country. ²¹ As for the other events of the reign of Menahem and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel? ²² Menahem went to rest with his fathers, and his son Pekahiah succeeded him as king.

The reign of Pekahiah as king of Israel

²³ In the fiftieth year of Azariah, the king of Judah, Pekahiah, the son of Menahem, began to reign over Israel in Samaria and reigned for two years. ²⁴ He did what the LORD considered evil. He did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. ²⁵ Pekah, the son of Remaliah, his assisting officer, formed a conspiracy against him with fifty men from Gilead. Together with Argob and Arieah, Pekah struck Pekahiah down in the fortress of the king's palace in Samaria. Pekah killed him and succeeded him as king. ²⁶ You will find the other events of the reign of Pekahiah and all that he did recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

The reign of Pekah as king of Israel

²⁷ In the fifty-second year of Azariah, the king of Judah, Pekah, the son of Remaliah, began to reign over Israel in Samaria and reigned for twenty years. ²⁸ He did what the LORD considered evil. He did not turn away from the sins that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had caused Israel to commit. ²⁹ In the days of Pekah, the king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, came and captured Ijon, Abel-Beth-Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee and all the land of Naphtali and deported the people to Assyria. ³⁰ Then Hoshea, the son of Elah, formed a conspiracy against Pekah, the son of Remaliah. He struck him down, killed him and succeeded him as king in the twentieth year of Jotham, the son of Uzziah. ³¹ You will find the other events of the reign of Pekah and all that he did recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

The reign of Jotham as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 27:1-9

³² In the second year of Pekah, the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, Jotham, the son of Uzziah, the king of Judah, began to reign. ³³ He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. His mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok. ³⁴ He did what the LORD considered right, exactly as his father Uzziah had been doing. ³⁵ Nevertheless, the high places were not removed. The people still kept sacrificing and burning offerings on the high places. Jotham rebuilt the Upper Gate of the Temple of the LORD. ³⁶ As for the other events of the reign of Jotham and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ³⁷ In those days the LORD began to send Rezin, the king of Aram, and Pekah, the son of

Remaliah, against Judah. ³⁸ Jotham went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David, the city of his father. His son Ahaz succeeded him as king.

16

The reign of Ahaz as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 28:1-27

¹ In the seventeenth year of Pekah, the son of Remaliah, Ahaz, the son of Jotham, the king of Judah, began to reign. ² Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He did not do what the LORD, his God, considered right, as his father David had done. ³ He lived like the kings of Israel. He even sacrificed his son in fire, copying the despicable practices of the nations that the LORD had driven out ahead of the Israelites. ⁴ He sacrificed and burnt offerings on the high places, on the hills and under every leafy tree. ⁵ Then Rezin, the king of Aram, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, the king of Israel, came up to wage war on Jerusalem. Although they besieged Ahaz, they could not conquer him. ⁶ At that time Rezin, the king of Aram, recovered Elath for Aram. He drove the people of Judah out of Elath, and then the Edomites came to Elath and have been living there to this day. ⁷ Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, to tell him: "I am your servant and your son. Come up and rescue me from the hands of the king of Aram and the king of Israel, who are attacking me!"

⁸ Ahaz also took the silver and gold that were available in the Temple of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's palace and sent them as a present to the king of Assyria. ⁹ The king of Assyria listened to him. The king of Assyria attacked Damascus, captured it, deported its people to Kir and killed Rezin. ¹⁰ When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, he saw the altar that was in Damascus. King Ahaz sent a pattern and model of the altar to the priest Urijah, so that an exact copy could be built. ¹¹ The priest Urijah built an altar, following all the details that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. The priest Urijah finished it before King Ahaz returned from Damascus. ¹² When the king came from Damascus, he saw the altar. Then the king approached the altar and made offerings on it. ¹³ He offered his burnt offering and his grain-offering, poured his drink offering and poured out the blood of his peace-offerings against the altar. ¹⁴ He even removed the bronze altar, which had been before the LORD, away from the front of the Temple. He moved it from the place between his altar and the Temple of the LORD and put it on the northern side of his altar. ¹⁵ King Ahaz commanded the priest Urijah: "Offer the morning burnt offering, the evening grain-offering, the king's burnt offering and his grain-offering, the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain-offering and their drink offering on the greater altar! Pour out against it all the blood of the burnt offerings

and all the blood of the sacrifices! However, I shall use the bronze altar to carry out an examination of an offering."

¹⁶ The priest Urijah did exactly as King Ahaz had commanded. ¹⁷ King Ahaz cut up the rims of the stands and removed the washbasin from each of them. He took the pool down from the bronze oxen that had been under it and put it on a layer of stones. ¹⁸ He removed from the Temple of the LORD the covered way for the Sabbath, which had been built at the Temple and the outer entrance for the king, in deference to the king of Assyria. ¹⁹ As for the rest of the things that Ahaz did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ²⁰ Ahaz went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David, and his son Hezekiah succeeded him as king.

17

The reign of Hoshea as king of Israel — 2 Kings 18:9-12

¹ In the twelfth year of Ahaz, the king of Judah, Hoshea, the son of Elah, began to reign over Israel in Samaria and reigned for nine years. ² He did what the Lord considered evil but did not do the kinds of things that the kings of Israel before him had been doing.

The capture of Samaria and the end of the northern kingdom of Israel

³ Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria came up against Hoshea, who had become his vassal and had been paying him tribute. ⁴ However, the king of Assyria had discovered that Hoshea had been a traitor. He had sent messengers to So, the king of Egypt and had not sent up any tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had been doing year by year. Therefore, the king of Assyria detained him and put him in prison. ⁵ Then the king of Assyria invaded the entire land, attacked Samaria and besieged it for three years. ⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, beside the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

The reasons for the fall of Samaria

⁷ This occurred because the people of Israel had been sinning against the LORD, their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, out of the hands of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and had been fearing other gods. ⁸ They had been living according to the statutes of the nations that the LORD had driven out ahead of the Israelites and according to the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. ⁹ The people of Israel had been attributing things to the LORD, their God, that were not right. They had been building high places for themselves in all their cities, from watchmen's towers to fortified cities. ¹⁰ They had been setting up pillars and Asherah posts for themselves on every high hill and under every leafy tree. ¹¹ There they burnt offerings on all the high places, like the nations that the LORD had driven out ahead of them. They did wicked things, so that they

provoked the LORD to anger. ¹² They worshipped idols, about which the LORD had told them, “You shall not do this!” ¹³ Yet the LORD had been warning Israel and Judah through every prophet and every seer: “Turn from your evil ways and keep My Commandments and My Statutes, in accordance with the whole Law, which I have commanded your fathers, and which I have been sending to you through My servants, the prophets!”

¹⁴ However, they would not listen. They were as stubborn as their fathers had been, who had not trusted in the LORD, their God. ¹⁵ They rejected His Prescriptions and His Covenant, which He had made with their fathers, and His warning signs, which He had given them. They went after worthless idols and became worthless. They followed the nations that were around them, about whom the LORD had commanded them that they should not act as they had been doing. ¹⁶ They abandoned all the Commandments of the LORD, their God, and made metal images of two calves for themselves. They also made an Asherah-pole. They worshipped all the starry host of the sky and served Baal. ¹⁷ They sacrificed their sons and their daughters in the fire, threw lots to practise divination, looked for and gave omens and sold themselves to do what the LORD considered evil, so that they provoked Him to anger. ¹⁸ Therefore, the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from His presence. None was left but the tribe of Judah alone. ¹⁹ Judah also had not been keeping the Commandments of the LORD, their God, but had been living by the statutes that Israel had introduced. ²⁰ The LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them and put them into the hands of those who plundered them, until He threw them out of His sight. ²¹ When He had torn Israel from the family of David, they made Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, king. Jeroboam led Israel astray from following the LORD and caused them to commit great sin. ²² The Israelites lived in all the sins that Jeroboam committed. They did not turn away from them, ²³ until the LORD removed Israel from His presence, as He had threatened through all His servants, the prophets. So, Israel was taken away from their own land into exile in Assyria and they are still there today.

The settlement of foreign people in the land of Israel, the origin of the Samaritans

²⁴ The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim and settled them in the cities of Samaria instead of the Israelites. They took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities. ²⁵ When they began to live there, they did not fear the LORD, and the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them. ²⁶ Then some people told the king of Assyria: “The nations that you have deported and settled in the cities of Samaria do not know what the god of the land requires. Therefore, He has sent lions among them and, you see, they are killing

them, because they do not know what the god of the land requires.”

²⁷ Then the king of Assyria commanded: “Send one of the priests to Samaria whom you have taken captive from there! Let him go and live there and instruct them what the god of the land requires!”

²⁸ One of the priests whom they had taken captive from Samaria came and lived at Bethel and kept instructing them how they should fear the LORD.

²⁹ However, every nation still kept making gods of its own and put them in the shrines that the Samaritans had made at the high places. Every nation kept doing that in the cities in which they were living. ³⁰ The men of Babylon made Succoth-Benoth. The men of Cuth made Nergal. The men of Hamath made Ashima. ³¹ The men of Avva made Nibhaz and Tartak. The men of Sepharvaim kept burning their children in the fire to Adram-Melech and Anam-Melech, the gods of Sepharvaim. ³² While they feared the LORD, they also appointed all kinds of people as priests of the high places, who continued to officiate for them in the shrines on the high places. ³³ Although they continued to fear the LORD, they continued to serve their own gods, in accordance with the customs of the nations from which they had been brought as exiles. ³⁴ To this day they persist in their former practices. They do not fear the LORD or follow the Israelites’ Statutes and Requirements or the Law and the Commandments that the LORD had given to the descendants of Jacob, whom He had named “Israel.”

³⁵ The LORD had made a Covenant with them and had commanded them: “You shall not fear other gods, you shall not bow down to them, you shall not serve them or offer sacrifices to them! ³⁶ Rather, you shall fear the LORD, who has brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm! You shall bow down to Him and offer sacrifices to Him! ³⁷ You shall always be careful to put into practice the Prescriptions, the Decisions, the Law and the Commandments that He has written for you and you shall not fear other gods! ³⁸ You shall not forget the Covenant that I have made with you and you shall not fear other gods! ³⁹ Rather, you shall fear the LORD, your God! He will deliver you from the hands of all your enemies.”

⁴⁰ However, they would not listen but persisted in their former practices. ⁴¹ So, although these nations continued to fear the LORD, they also continued to serve their own idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did.

18

The beginning of the reign of Hezekiah as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 29:1-2, 31:1, 31:20-21

¹ In the third year of Hoshea, the son of Elah, the king of Israel, Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, the king of Judah, began to reign. ² He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for

twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abi, the daughter of Zechariah.³ He did what the LORD considered right, exactly as his forefather David had done.⁴ He removed the high places, smashed the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherah-poles. He broke in pieces the bronze snake that Moses had made, because up to that time the Israelites had been burning offerings to it. People had been calling it "Nehushtan."⁵ He trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah who came after him or who had been before him.⁶ He held fast to the LORD. He did not turn away from following Him but kept the Commandments that the LORD had given to Moses.⁷ The LORD was with him. He was successful in whatever he undertook. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him.⁸ He struck down the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, including both the watchmen's towers and the fortified cities.

The capture of Samaria in the sixth year of Hezekiah — 2 Kings 17:3-7

⁹ In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea, the son of Elah, the king of Israel, Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, attacked Samaria and besieged it.¹⁰ He captured it after three full years. Samaria was captured in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Israel.¹¹ The king of Assyria took the Israelites away to Assyria as captives and settled them in Halah, beside the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.¹² This happened because they had not been listening to what the LORD, their God, had been saying but had been transgressing His Covenant, everything that Moses, the servant of the LORD, had commanded. They would not listen or carry them out.

The invasion of Judah by the Assyrians under Sennacherib — 2 Chronicles 32:1-19, Isaiah 36:1-22

¹³ In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.¹⁴ Hezekiah, the king of Judah, sent this message to the king of Assyria at Lachish: "I have done wrong. Withdraw from me! I shall bear whatever you impose on me."

The king of Assyria demanded ten thousand, five hundred kilograms of silver and one thousand and fifty kilograms of gold from Hezekiah, the king of Judah.¹⁵ Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was available in the Temple of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's palace.¹⁶ At that time Hezekiah, the king of Judah, stripped off the gold that he had used to plate the doors and doorposts of the Temple of the LORD and gave it to the king of Assyria.

¹⁷ The king of Assyria sent his commander of the army, his chief officer and his chief cup-bearer with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They came up and arrived at Jerusalem. When they had come up, they came and stood at the channel of the Upper Pool, which is on the road to the Fuller's Field.¹⁸ When they called for the king, Eliakim, who

was the son of Hilkiah, and who was the manager of the palace, Shebna, the secretary and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, came out to them.

¹⁹ The chief cup-bearer told them: "Please, tell Hezekiah, 'This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, has asked: "On what have you based this confidence of yours?"²⁰ Have you been thinking that mere words dropped from the lips are strategy and power for war? On whom are you relying now, that you have rebelled against me?'²¹ Look, now! You are depending on Egypt, that staff that is a crushed reed, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. That is what Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, is to all who are depending on him.²² However, if you tell me, 'We are depending on the LORD, our God,' is not He the One whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed and who has told Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'?'²³ Now therefore, please make a wager with my master, the king of Assyria! I shall give you two thousand horses, if you on your part can put riders on them.²⁴ How then can you drive back a single captain among the least of my master's officials, although you are depending on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?'²⁵ Moreover, have I come up against this place to destroy it without the consent of the LORD? The LORD has told me, 'Go up against this land and destroy it!'"

²⁶ Then Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, Shebna and Joah told the chief cup-bearer: "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic! For we understand it. Do not speak to us in the Jewish language while the people on the wall are listening!"

²⁷ However, the chief cup-bearer asked them: "Has my master sent me to say these things only to your master and to you? Has he not sent me to say them to the men sitting on the wall, when, like you, they will be eating their own dung and drinking their own urine?"

²⁸ Then the chief cup-bearer stood up and shouted loudly in the Jewish language: "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria!²⁹ This is what the king has said: 'Hezekiah should not deceive you!' For he will not be able to deliver you out of his hand.

³⁰ Hezekiah should not persuade you to trust in the LORD by saying, 'The LORD will certainly deliver us, and this city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.'³¹ Do not listen to Hezekiah! For this is what the king of Assyria has said: 'Surrender to me! Come out to me! Then everyone of you can eat from his own grapevine and from his own fig tree and each of you can drink the water from his own cistern,³² until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, that you may live and not die. Do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you by saying, 'The LORD will deliver us!'³³ Has any of the gods of the nations ever

delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ³⁴ Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? ³⁵ Who among all the gods of these countries have delivered their lands from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"

³⁶ However, the people remained silent and did not answer him at all. For the king had commanded, "You shall not answer him!"

³⁷ Then Eliakim, who was the son of Hilkiyah and who managed the palace, Shebna, the secretary and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and reported to him what the chief cup-bearer had said.

19

Isaiah's prediction of deliverance for Jerusalem — Isaiah 37:1-7

¹ When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and went into the Temple of the LORD. ² He sent Eliakim, the manager of his palace, and Shebna, the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz. ³ They told him: "This is what Hezekiah has said, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke and disgrace. For children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to give them birth. ⁴ It may be that the LORD, your God will hear all that the chief cup-bearer has been saying, whom his master, the king of Assyria, has sent to insult the living God and will rebuke him for the words that the LORD, your God, has heard. Therefore, lift up your prayer for the remnant that still survives!"

⁵ So, the officials of King Hezekiah went to Isaiah.

⁶ Isaiah answered them: "This is what you shall tell your master, 'This is what the LORD has said: "Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have been blaspheming Me! ⁷ See! I am putting such a spirit in him, that, when he hears a rumour, he will go back to his own land. Then I shall cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."'

Sennacherib's threat — Isaiah 37:8-13

⁸ When the chief cup-bearer returned, he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah. For he had heard that the king had left Lachish. ⁹ The king received a report about Tirhakah, the king of Cush: "Look! He has set out to fight against you."

He sent messengers to Hezekiah again: ¹⁰ "This is what you shall tell Hezekiah, the king of Judah: 'Your God, on whom you are depending, should not deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria! ¹¹ Look! You yourself have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the other lands, devoting them to destruction. Will you yourself be delivered? ¹² Have the gods of the other nations delivered them, the nations that my forefathers have destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph and the people

of Eden, who were in Tel-Assar? ¹³ Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim or of Hena or of Ivvah?"

The prayer of Hezekiah — Isaiah 37:14-35

¹⁴ When Hezekiah had received the letter from the messengers and read it, he went up to the Temple of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD.

¹⁵ Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: "O LORD, God of Israel, You who are enthroned between the cherubim, You, You alone, are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.

¹⁶ Turn Your ear, O LORD and hear! Open Your eyes, O LORD and see! Listen to the words that Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God! ¹⁷ It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have laid waste the other nations and their lands. ¹⁸ They have put their gods into the fire. For they were not gods but what men's hands have made of wood and stone, and so they have destroyed them. ¹⁹ Now therefore, LORD, our God, please save us from his hands, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You, O LORD, You alone, are God!"

The prophecy through Isaiah that Sennacherib will be defeated — Isaiah 37:21-38

²⁰ Then Isaiah, the son of Amoz, sent a message to Hezekiah: "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: 'I have heard your prayer to Me about Sennacherib, the king of Assyria. ²¹ This is the Word that the LORD has spoken against him: "The virgin, the daughter of Zion, has despised you. She has ridiculed you. The daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head behind you. ²² Whom have you insulted and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel! ²³ Through your messengers you have been insulting the Lord. You have been saying, 'With my many chariots I myself have gone up the heights of the mountains, to the most distant part of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars and its choicest juniper trees. I have entered its most remote retreat, its densest forest. ²⁴ I myself have dug wells and drunk foreign waters! I have dried up all the branching streams of Egypt with the soles of my feet!"

²⁵ "Have you not heard? I prepared it long ago. I shaped from days of old what I have now caused to happen, that you should be turning fortified cities into desolate heaps of ruins. ²⁶ Their inhabitants, stripped of their power, have been filled with terror and become ashamed. They had been like plants in the field and like fresh green grass. Like grass on the rooftops, they have now been scorched before they have grown up. ²⁷ However, I know where you sit down, when you go out, when you come in and how you are working yourself into a passion against Me. ²⁸ Because you have worked yourself into a passion against Me, and your smugness has come up into My ears, I shall put My hook through your nose and My bridle through your lips and make you go back by the

way on which you have come.

²⁹ “This will be the sign for you: This year, eat what grows by itself and in the second year what grows of its own accord! Then, in the third year, sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit! ³⁰ What has been spared from the family of Judah and is left will again take root down below and bear fruit up above. ³¹ For a remnant will come out of Jerusalem and what has been spared will come out of Mount Zion. The eager devotion of the LORD will accomplish this. ³² Therefore, this is what the LORD has said about the king of Assyria: ‘He will not come into this city. He will not shoot an arrow there. He will not come before it with a shield and will not heap a siege mound up against it. ³³ He will go back on the way by which he came and will not enter this city,’ declares the LORD. ³⁴ ‘For I shall protect this city and save it, for My own sake and for the sake of My servant David.’”

The deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib — 2 Chronicles 32:20-23, Isaiah 37:36-38

³⁵ That night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians. When people got up in the morning, they saw all the dead bodies. ³⁶ Then Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, broke camp and withdrew. He went back to Nineveh and stayed there. ³⁷ While he was worshipping in the temple of his god, Nisroch, Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword and escaped to the land of Ararat. Then his son Esarhaddon succeeded him as king.

20

The cure of Hezekiah's illness — 2 Chronicles 32:24-26, Isaiah 38:1-8, 21-22

¹ In those days Hezekiah became ill and was dying. The prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, came to him and told him: “This is what the LORD has said, ‘Give instructions to your family! For you will die. You will not recover.’”

² Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD: ³ “Oh, please, LORD, please remember that I have been living before You faithfully and with complete loyalty! I have been doing what You consider good.”

Hezekiah wept bitterly. ⁴ Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the Word of the LORD came to him: ⁵ “Go back! Tell Hezekiah, the leader of My people, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, has said: “I have heard your prayer. I have seen your tears. Look! I shall heal you. On the day after tomorrow you will go up to the Temple of the LORD. ⁶ I shall also add fifteen years to your life. I shall deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria and shall also defend this city for My own sake and for the sake of My servant David.’”

⁷ Isaiah said, “Bring a pressed cake of figs!”

So, people took one and applied it to the inflamed spot, and he recovered. ⁸ Hezekiah asked Isaiah,

“What will be the sign that the LORD will heal me and that I shall go up to the Temple of the LORD on the day after tomorrow?”

⁹ Isaiah replied: “This will be the sign to you from the LORD that the LORD will do what He has promised: Shall the shadow go forward ten intervals or shall it go back ten intervals?”

¹⁰ Hezekiah answered: “It is an easy thing for the shadow to grow ten intervals longer. No! Let the shadow go back ten intervals instead!”

¹¹ Then the prophet Isaiah called to the LORD, and He made the shadow that had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz go back ten intervals.

The permission for envoys from Babylon to inspect the treasures in Jerusalem — Isaiah 39:1-8

¹² At that time Merodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan, the king of Babylon, sent a letter and a gift to Hezekiah. For he had heard that Hezekiah was ill.

¹³ Hezekiah listened to the envoys and showed them his whole treasure house, the silver, the gold, the perfumes, the precious oil, his armoury and everything else that was available in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in his entire realm that Hezekiah did not show them. ¹⁴ Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and asked him, “What did these men say? From where did they come to you?”

Hezekiah answered, “They came from a distant country, from Babylon.”

¹⁵ The prophet asked, “What have they seen in your palace?”

Hezekiah answered: “They have seen everything in my palace. There has been nothing in my storehouses that I have not shown them.”

¹⁶ Then Isaiah told Hezekiah: “Hear the Word of the LORD: ¹⁷ ‘Look! The days are coming when everything that is in your palace and that your fathers have stored up until this day will be carried away to Babylon. Nothing will be left.’ The LORD has said so.

¹⁸ Some of your own descendants, who will come from you, whose father you will be, will be taken away and will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”

¹⁹ Hezekiah answered Isaiah: “The Word of the LORD, which you have spoken, is good.”

For he thought, “Is it not good if there is peace and security in my lifetime?”

The death of Hezekiah — 2 Chronicles 32:32-33

²⁰ As for the other events of the reign of Hezekiah, all his achievements and his construction of the pool and the tunnel by which he brought water into the city, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ²¹ Hezekiah went to rest with his fathers, and his son Manasseh succeeded him as king.

21

The reign of Manasseh as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 33:1-10

¹ Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-five years. His mother's name was Hephzibah. ² He did what the

LORD regarded as evil, following the detestable practices of the nations that the LORD had driven out ahead of the Israelites. ³ He rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed. He erected altars for Baal, made an Asherah-pole, as Ahab, the king of Israel, had done, worshipped all the starry host of the sky and served them. ⁴ He kept building altars in the Temple of the LORD, about which the LORD had said, "I shall put My name in Jerusalem."

⁵ He built altars for the whole starry host of the sky in the two courts of the Temple of the LORD. ⁶ He sacrificed his own son in the fire, kept practising magic and observing omens and consulted spirits of the dead and familiar spirits. He did much that the LORD considered evil, so that he provoked Him to anger. ⁷ He placed the carved Asherah-pole that he had made in the Temple, about which the LORD had told David and his son Solomon: "I shall put My name for ever in this Temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel. ⁸ I shall not cause the feet of Israel to wander any longer out of the land that I have given to their forefathers, if only they carefully put into practice exactly what I have commanded them and the whole Law that My servant Moses commanded them."

⁹ However, they did not listen, and Manasseh led them astray, so that they did more evil than the nations that the LORD had destroyed before the Israelites. ¹⁰ The LORD said through His servants, the prophets: ¹¹ "Because Manasseh, the king of Judah, has committed these detestable sins and has done things that are more evil than all that the Amorites who were before him had been committing and because he has caused Judah also to sin with his disgusting idols, ¹² therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel has said: 'Look! I am bringing such calamity on Jerusalem and Judah that the two ears of everyone who hears about it will ring. ¹³ I shall stretch the measuring line of Samaria and the levelling instrument of the family of Ahab over Jerusalem. I shall also wipe Jerusalem as someone wipes a dish. After he has wiped it he turns it upside down. ¹⁴ I shall forsake the remnant of My inheritance and put them into the hands of their enemies, and they will be plundered and pillaged by all their enemies. ¹⁵ For they have been doing what I consider evil and have been provoking Me to anger since the day when their forefathers came out of Egypt, even to this day."

The conclusion of the reign of Manasseh — 2 Chronicles 33:18-20

¹⁶ Moreover, Manasseh also killed very many innocent people, until he had filled Jerusalem with murder from one end to the other, in addition to his sin, which he caused Judah to commit, so that they did what the LORD considered evil. ¹⁷ As for the other events of the reign of Manasseh, all that he did and the sin that he committed, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ¹⁸ Manasseh went to rest

with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his palace, in the garden of Uzza, and his son Amon succeeded him as king.

The reign of Amon as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 33:21-25

¹⁹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for two years. His mother's name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz, from Jotbah. ²⁰ He did what the LORD considered evil, as his father Manasseh had been doing. ²¹ He lived in every way like his father, served the disgusting idols that his father had been serving and worshipped them. ²² He abandoned the LORD, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of the LORD. ²³ The officials of Amon formed a conspiracy against him and killed the king in his palace. ²⁴ However, the people of the land struck down all those who had formed the conspiracy against King Amon. Then the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his place. ²⁵ As for the rest of the things that Amon did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ²⁶ He was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and his son Josiah succeeded him as king.

22

The reign of Josiah as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 34:1-2

¹ Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-one years. His mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah, from Bozkath. ² He did what the LORD considered right and walked in all the ways of his father David. He did not turn aside to the right or to the left. ³ In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent the secretary, Shaphan, the son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, to the Temple of the LORD. He said: ⁴ "Go up to Hilkiah, the High Priest, that he may get the money ready that has been brought into the Temple of the LORD, which the doorkeepers have been collecting from the people! ⁵ They shall also entrust it to the workmen who have been appointed to supervise the work on the Temple! They shall pay it to the workmen at the Temple of the LORD, who are carrying out the repairs on it! ⁶ They shall pay the carpenters, the builders and the masons and use it to buy timber and quarried stone to repair the Temple! ⁷ However, they shall not be asked to supply an accounting for the money that is entrusted to them! For they are acting honestly,"

The discovery of the book of the Law in the Temple — 2 Chronicles 34:8-28

⁸ Then Hilkiah, the High Priest, told Shaphan, the secretary: "I have found the Book of the Law in the Temple of the LORD."

Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

⁹ Shaphan, the secretary, went in to the king and reported to the king, "We, your officials, have poured out the money that was found in the Temple and have entrusted it to the workmen who have been appointed for the Temple of the LORD."

¹⁰ Then Shaphan, the secretary, reported to the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book."

Shaphan also read it before the king. ¹¹ When the king heard what the Book of the Law said, he tore his clothes. ¹² The king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, Achbor, the son of Micaiah, Shaphan, the secretary, and Asaiah, the king's minister: ¹³ "Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, about the Words of this book, which has been found! For the wrath of the LORD, which has been inflamed against us, is great. For our fathers have not been listening to the Words of this book. They have not been carrying out all that has been written concerning us."

¹⁴ Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan and Asaiah went to the prophetess Huldah, the wife of Shallum, the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas. Shallum was the keeper of the wardrobe. Huldah was living in the Second District of Jerusalem, and they talked with her. ¹⁵ She told them: "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: 'Tell the man who has sent you to me, ¹⁶ "This is what the LORD has said, 'Look! I shall bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, everything that is said in the book that the king of Judah has read. ¹⁷ Because they have forsaken Me and have been burning offerings to other gods, so that they have been provoking Me to anger with all that they have been making with their hands, My wrath will be set on fire against this place and will not be put out.'"¹⁸ However, this is what you shall tell the king of Judah, who has sent you to inquire of the LORD: 'This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: "Concerning the Words that you have heard, ¹⁹ because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would be laid waste and accursed and because you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I Myself have also heard you," declares the Lord. ²⁰ "Therefore, look! I shall gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in your grave in peace. Your own eyes will not see all the calamity that I shall bring on this place.'"²¹

So, they reported this to the king.

23

King Josiah's reforms and the renewal of the Covenant — 2 Chronicles 34:29-33, 33, 35:1-27, 36:1

¹ After the king had sent a message to all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem, they assembled with him. ² The king went up to the Temple of the LORD with all the men of Judah. All the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets and all the people, both small and great, joined him. While they listened, he read all the Words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the Temple of the LORD. ³ Then the king stood beside the pillar and renewed the Covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His

Commandments, His Regulations and His Decrees, with all his heart and all his soul. He confirmed the Words of this Covenant, which had been written in this book. Then all the people agreed to the Covenant. ⁴ The king commanded Hilkiah, the High Priest, the priests next in rank and the doorkeepers, to remove from the Temple of the LORD all the articles that had been made for Baal, Asherah and all the starry host of the sky. He burned the articles outside Jerusalem on the terraces near the Kidron and carried their ashes to Bethel. ⁵ Then he deposed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to burn offerings on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places around Jerusalem. He also deposed those who had been burning offerings to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to constellations and to all the starry host of the sky. ⁶ He took the Asherah-pole from the Temple of the LORD to the Kidron Brook outside Jerusalem. He burned it in the Kidron Valley, ground it to powder and scattered its dust over the graves of the common people. ⁷ He tore down the huts of the male cult-prostitutes that were in the Temple of the LORD, where women used to weave coverings for the Asherah-pole. ⁸ He brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, from Geba to Beer-Sheba and defiled the high places where the priests had been burning sacrifices. He also broke down the high places at the gates that were at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua, the governor of the city. These had been to the left of anyone going through the city gate. ⁹ However, the priests of the high places had not been coming up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem. Instead, they had been eating unleavened bread among their fellow-Israelites. ¹⁰ Josiah also defiled Topheth, which was in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no one might use it to burn his son or daughter as an offering to Molech. ¹¹ He removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun from the entrance to the Temple of the LORD. They had been in the courtyard, near the room of the official named Nathan-Melech. Josiah then burned up the chariots of the sun. ¹² The king also broke down the altars that the kings of Judah had erected on the roof near the upper room of Ahaz and the altars that Manasseh had built in the two courts of the Temple of the LORD. He tore them down from there, smashed them up and threw the rubble from them into the Kidron Valley. ¹³ The king also desecrated the high places east of Jerusalem. They had been on the southern part of the Hill of Corruption. Solomon, the king of Israel, had built them for Ashtoreth, the disgusting goddess of the Sidonians, for Chemosh, the disgusting god of the Moabites and for Milcom, the detestable god of the Ammonites. ¹⁴ Josiah smashed the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherah-poles and filled their places with human bones. ¹⁵ He also tore down the altar at Bethel, the high place that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin, had made. He tore down both that

altar and the high place. He burned the high place, crushing it to powder. He also burned the Asherah-pole. ¹⁶ When Josiah turned around and saw the graves on the hillside there, he sent men to take the bones out of the graves and burned them on the altar, to defile it. This fulfilled the Word of the LORD that the man of God, who had predicted these things, had proclaimed. ¹⁷ Then Josiah asked, "What gravestone is this that I see?"

The men of the city told him, "It is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and pronounced against the altar of Bethel the very things that you have done to it."

¹⁸ He said: "Let him rest! Let no one disturb his bones!"

So, they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria. ¹⁹ Josiah also removed all the shrines of the high places that the kings of Israel had built in the cities of Samaria, which had provoked God to anger. Josiah dealt with them just as he had done at Bethel. ²⁰ He slaughtered all the priests of the high places who were there, on the altars and burned human bones on them. Then he went back to Jerusalem.

The celebration of the Passover at the time of Josiah — 2 Chronicles 35:1, 18-19

²¹ Then the king commanded all the people, "Celebrate the Passover to the LORD, your God, as it has been written in this Book of the Covenant!"

²² For no such Passover had been celebrated during the time of the judges, who had ruled Israel or during the entire time of the kings of Israel and of Judah.

²³ However, in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was celebrated to the LORD in Jerusalem.

²⁴ Josiah also got rid of those who talked to ghosts, those who told the future by spirits, the household gods, the other idols and all the other detestable things that could be seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem. He did this to carry out the Instructions of the Law that had been written in the book that the priest Hilkiah had found in the Temple of the LORD.

²⁵ Before Josiah there had been no king like him. He turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul and with all his strength, according to the whole Law of Moses. No one else like him arose after him.

²⁶ Nevertheless, the LORD did not turn away His fiercely hot anger, which had broken out against Judah because of all that Manasseh had done to provoke Him to anger. ²⁷ Therefore, the LORD said: "I shall remove Judah also from My presence, as I have removed Israel and shall reject this city, Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the Temple about which I had promised, 'My name will be there.'"

The death of Josiah in battle — 2 Chronicles 35:20-36:1

²⁸ As for the other events of the reign of Josiah and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ²⁹ In Josiah's days Pharaoh-Neco, the king of Egypt, went up to the king of Assyria

at the Euphrates River. King Josiah went against him. When Pharaoh-Neco faced him at Megiddo, he killed him. ³⁰ His officials carried his dead body away from Megiddo in a chariot, brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb.

The reign of Jehoahaz as king of Judah and his captivity — 2 Chronicles 36:1-4

Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, anointed him and made him king to succeed his father.

³¹ Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for three months. His mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. ³² He did what the LORD considered evil, exactly as his forefathers had done. ³³ Pharaoh-Neco put him in chains at Riblah in the land of Hamath, to prevent him from being king in Jerusalem and imposed a fine on the land of three thousand, five hundred kilograms of silver and thirty-five kilograms of gold. ³⁴ Pharaoh-Neco made Eliakim, the son of Josiah, king to succeed his father Josiah and changed his name to "Jehoiakim."¹⁰⁴ However, he took Jehoahaz away when he went to Egypt, and Jehoahaz died there.

The reign of Jehoiakim (also called Eliakim) as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 36:5-8

³⁵ Jehoiakim paid the silver and the gold to Pharaoh but assessed the country for tax to pay the money that Pharaoh demanded. He compelled all the people of the land to pay the silver and the gold as he had been assessed, that he might pay it to Pharaoh-Neco.

³⁶ Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother's name was Zebidah, the daughter of Pedaiiah, from Rumah. ³⁷ He did what the LORD regarded as evil, just as his forefathers had done.

24

The occupation of Judah by enemies

¹ During Jehoiakim's reign, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came up and Jehoiakim became subject to him for three years. Then he changed his mind and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. ² The LORD sent raiding parties of the Chaldeans, of the Arameans, of the Moabites and of the Ammonites against Jehoiakim. The LORD sent them against Judah to destroy it, as He had threatened when He spoke through His servants, the prophets. ³ Surely this happened to Judah by the Command of the LORD, to remove them out of His sight, because of all the sins that Manasseh had committed, ⁴ and for the innocent people whom he had murdered. He had filled Jerusalem with the murder of innocent people, and the LORD refused to pardon it. ⁵ As for the other events of Jehoiakim's reign and all that he did, have they not been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Judah? ⁶ Jehoiakim went to

¹⁰⁴ Eliakim means "God raises up," and Jehoiakim means, "The LORD raises up."

rest with his fathers, and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him as king. ⁷ The king of Egypt did not leave his land again, because the king of Babylon had taken all the territory of the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

The reign of Jehoiachin as king of Judah and his captivity — 2 Chronicles 36:9-10

⁸ Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king and reigned in Jerusalem for three months. His mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan from Jerusalem. ⁹ He did what the LORD regarded as evil, just as his father had been doing. ¹⁰ At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. ¹¹ Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came to the city while his officers were besieging it. ¹² Then Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, with his mother, his officials, his leading men and his palace-officers surrendered to the king of Babylon. The king of Babylon took Jehoiachin prisoner in the eighth year of his reign.

The capture of Jerusalem

¹³ He carried off from there all the treasures of the Temple of the LORD and the treasures of the king's palace. He cut in pieces all the golden articles in the Temple of the LORD, which Solomon, the king of Israel, had made, as the LORD had threatened. ¹⁴ He also took all Jerusalem away into captivity: all the leading men, all the fighting men, ten thousand captives, all the craftsmen and the metalworkers. No one was left behind except the poorest people of the land. ¹⁵ He took Jehoiachin to Babylon as a captive. He also took the king's mother, the king's wives, his palace-officials and the leading men of the land from Jerusalem to captivity in Babylon. ¹⁶ The king of Babylon also brought into captivity in Babylon the entire force of seven thousand fighting men, one thousand craftsmen and metalworkers, all who were capable of military service.

The reign of Zedekiah as king of Judah — 2 Chronicles 36:11-14, Jeremiah 52:1-3

¹⁷ The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, his successor as king and changed his name to "Zedekiah."¹⁰⁵ ¹⁸ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king and reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. ¹⁹ He did what the LORD regarded as evil, just as Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰ Indeed, this happened to Jerusalem and Judah because the LORD was angry. Finally He cast them out of His sight.

Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25

The destruction of Jerusalem — 2 Chronicles 36:15-21, Jeremiah 39:1-10, 40:5-9, 41:1-3, 16-18, 52:3-30

¹ In the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar, the king

of Babylon, came with his whole army against Jerusalem. He encamped against the city, and they built a siege-mound all around it. ² The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ³ On the ninth day of the (fourth) month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the citizens. ⁴ Then the city wall was broken through, and all the soldiers fled during the night by the way of the city-gate between the two walls, which was beside the king's garden. Although the Chaldeans were attacking the city all around it, the king went along the road towards the Arabah. ⁵ However, the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and caught up with him on the waterless plains of Jericho, and his whole company left him and was scattered from him. ⁶ When they had captured the king, they brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah and passed sentence on him. ⁷ They killed the sons of Zedekiah while he was watching, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, tied him up with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.

⁸ On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, a captain of the imperial guard, an official of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He burned the Temple of the LORD, the king's palace and all the houses in Jerusalem. He burned down every important building. ¹⁰ The whole army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the imperial guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem. ¹¹ Nebuzaradan, the captain of the imperial guard, carried into exile the rest of the people who were left in the city, including those who had deserted to the king of Babylon and any others of the crowd that remained. ¹² However, the captain of the imperial guard left behind some of the poorest people of the land to work in the vineyards and fields. ¹³ The Chaldeans broke in pieces the bronze pillars that were in the Temple of the LORD, the wheeled stands and the bronze pool that were in the Temple of the LORD and transported the bronze to Babylon. ¹⁴ They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, basins, all the bronze utensils used in the Temple service, ¹⁵ the fire pans and the bowls used for pouring. The captain of the imperial guard took away anything made of gold or silver. ¹⁶ The bronze from the two pillars, the one pool and the wheeled stands, from all these articles, which Solomon had made for the Temple of the LORD, was more than could be weighed. ¹⁷ The one pillar was nine metres high and had a bronze capital on it. The capital was one and a half metres high. There were a lattice network and pomegranates, all of bronze, around the capital. The second pillar with its network was similar. ¹⁸ The captain of the imperial guard took Seraiah, the Chief Priest and Zephaniah, the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. ¹⁹ He also took out of the city one officer who had been in command of the fighting men and five men who had

¹⁰⁵ Zedekiah means, "The LORD is righteousness."

2 Kings

access to the king and who had been found in the city. He also took the secretary, who was the commander of the army and who used to muster the soldiers of the land, and sixty male citizens who had been found in the city. ²⁰ Nebuzaradan, the captain of the imperial guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹ The king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So, the people of Judah went into exile away from their own land.

The appointment of Gedaliah as governor of Judah — Jeremiah 40:5-9, 41:1-3, 41:16-18

²² Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, appointed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, as governor over the people who had been left behind in the land of Judah, whom he had allowed to remain.

²³ When all the army officers and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. They were Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, Johanan, the son of Kareah, Seraiah, the son of Tan-Humeth from Netophah and Jaazaniah from Maachah, together with their men.

²⁴ Gedaliah swore an oath to them and their men, telling them: “Do not be afraid of the Chaldean officials! Live in the land, serve the king of Babylon and you

will be successful!”

²⁵ However, in the seventh month, Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, a member of the royal family, came with ten men, struck down Gedaliah and put him to death, as well as the Jews and the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. ²⁶ Then all the people, both small and great, together with the army officers, left and went to Egypt. For they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

The imprisonment of Jehoiachin in Babylon and his release — Jeremiah 52:31-34

²⁷ On the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month of the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, in the year when Evil-Merodach began to reign as the king of Babylon, Evil-Merodach graciously released Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, from prison. ²⁸ He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more honourable seat than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. ²⁹ Jehoiachin took off his prison garments and dined regularly in the king’s presence for the rest of his life. ³⁰ He was given a regular daily allowance from the king all his life.

1 CHRONICLES

1

The genealogy from Adam to the sons of Noah — Genesis 5:1-32

¹ There were Adam, Seth, Enosh, ² Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, ³ Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, ⁴ Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth.

The descendants of Japheth — Genesis 10:2-5

⁵ The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras. ⁶ The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Diphath and Togarmah. ⁷ The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim and Rodanim.

The descendants of Ham — Genesis 10:6-20

⁸ The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan. ⁹ The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. ¹⁰ Cush was the father of Nimrod. He was the first on earth to be a mighty warrior. ¹¹ Mizraim was the father of Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphthum, ¹² Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom the Philistines came) and Capthorim. ¹³ Canaan was the father of Sidon, his first-born and Heth, ¹⁴ the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁵ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁶ the Arvadites, the Zemarites and the Hamathites.

The descendants of Shem — Genesis 10:21-32, 11:10-27, Luke 3:34-38

¹⁷ The descendants of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud and Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshech. ¹⁸ Arpachshad was the father of Shelah and Shelah was the father of Eber. ¹⁹ Eber had two sons. The name of the one was Peleg, because in his days the earth was divided. His brother's name was Joktan. ²⁰ Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²¹ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²² Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, ²³ Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. ²⁴ Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, ²⁵ Eber, Peleg, Reu, ²⁶ Serug, Nahor, Terah, ²⁷ and Abram, that is, Abraham.

The family of Abraham — Genesis 25:1-4

²⁸ The sons of Abraham were Isaac and Ishmael.

The descendants of Hagar and Ishmael — Genesis 25:12-16

²⁹ These are their family histories: the first-born of Ishmael was Nebaioth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ³⁰ Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, ³¹ Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. These were the sons of Ishmael.

The descendants of Abraham and Keturah — Genesis 25:1-4

³² The sons born to Keturah, Abraham's concubine, were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan were Sheba and Dedan.

³³ The sons of Midian were Ephah, Ephraim, Hanoch, Abida and Eldaah. All these were the descendants of Keturah. ³⁴ Abraham was the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac were Esau and Israel.

The descendants of Abraham and Sarah — Genesis 36:10-14

³⁵ The sons of Esau were Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam and Korah. ³⁶ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman,

Omar, Zephi, Gatam and Kenaz and, by Timna, Amalek. ³⁷ The sons of Reuel were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah.

The people of Seir in Edom — Genesis 36:20-28

³⁸ The sons of Seir were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer and Dishan. ³⁹ The sons of Lotan were Hori and Homam. Lotan's sister was Timna. ⁴⁰ The sons of Shobal were Alyan, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi and Onam. The sons of Zibeon were Aiah and Anah. ⁴¹ The son of Anah was Dishon. The sons of Dishon were Hamran, Eshban, Ithran and Cheran. ⁴² The sons of Ezer were Bilhan, Zaavan and Yaakan. The sons of Dishan were Uz and Aran.

The kings of Edom — Genesis 36:31-43

⁴³ These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites: Bela, the son of Beor, whose city was named "Dinhabah." ⁴⁴ When Bela died, Jobab, the son of Zerah from Bozrah, succeeded him as king. ⁴⁵ When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites succeeded him as king. ⁴⁶ When Husham died, Hadad, the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the open country of Moab, succeeded him as king. His city was named "Avith." ⁴⁷ When Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah succeeded him as king. ⁴⁸ When Samlah died, Shaul from Rehoboth on the Euphrates succeeded him as king. ⁴⁹ When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan, the son of Achbor, succeeded him as king. ⁵⁰ When Baal-Hanan died, Hadad succeeded him as king. His city was named "Pai." His wife's name was "Mehetabel," the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-Zahab. ⁵¹ Hadad also died. The chiefs of Edom were: Chief Timna, Chief Alvah, Chief Jetheth, ⁵² Chief Oholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, ⁵³ Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, ⁵⁴ Chief Magdiel and Chief Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom.

2

The sons of Israel — Genesis 29:31-30:24, 35:16-26, 46:8-25

¹ These were the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, ² Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad and Asher.

The descendants of Judah — Genesis 46:12, Ruth 4:18-22, Matthew 1:3-6, Luke 3:1-33

³ The sons of Judah were Er, Onan and Shelah. These three were born to him by Bath-Shua, a Canaanite woman. The LORD considered Er, Judah's first-born, evil and so He put him to death. ⁴ Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law, also bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all. ⁵ The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. ⁶ The sons of Zerah were Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol and Dara, five in all. ⁷ The son of Carmi was "Achar,"¹⁰⁶ who made Israel taboo by acting unfaithfully, when he took things that were under the sacred ban. ⁸ The son of Ethan was Azariah.

¹⁰⁶ Achar means, "trouble." In Joshua 7 his name is spelt "Achan."

⁹ The sons born to Hezron were Jerahmeel, Ram and Chelubai.

Ram and his descendants down to the family of David

¹⁰ Ram was the father of Amminadab and Amminadab was the father of Nahshon, the leader of the people of Judah. ¹¹ Nahshon was the father of Salma, Salma was the father of Boaz. ¹² Boaz was the father of Obed and Obed was the father of Jesse. ¹³ Jesse was the father of Eliab, his first-born. The second was Abinadab, the third was Shimea, ¹⁴ the fourth was Nethanel, the fifth was Raddai, ¹⁵ the sixth was Ozem and the seventh was David. ¹⁶ Their sisters were Zeruihah and Abigail. Zeruihah's three sons were Abishai, Joab and Asahel. ¹⁷ Abigail was the mother of Amasa and the father of Amasa was Jether, the Ishmaelite.

The family of Caleb

¹⁸ Caleb, the son of Hezron, was the father of children by his wife Azubah and by Jerioth. Azubah's sons were Jeshur, Shobab and Ardon. ¹⁹ When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. ²⁰ Hur was the father of Uri and Uri was the father of Bezalel. ²¹ Afterwards Hezron had relations with the daughter of Machir, the father of Gilead. He married her when he was sixty years old, and she bore him Segub. ²² Segub was the father of Jair, who had twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead. ²³ However, Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-Jair, as well as Kenath with its surrounding settlements, sixty cities. All these people had been the descendants of Machir, the father of Gilead. ²⁴ After Hezron had died in Caleb-Ephrathah, Hezron's wife Abijah bore him Ashhur, the father of Tekoa.

The descendants of Jerahmeel

²⁵ The sons of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were Ram, his first-born, Bunah, Oren, Ozem and Ahijah. ²⁶ Jerahmeel also had another wife, whose name was Atarah. She was the mother of Onam. ²⁷ The sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, Jamin and Eker. ²⁸ The sons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai were Nadab and Abishur. ²⁹ The name of Abishur's wife was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. ³⁰ The sons of Nadab were Seled and Appaim, but Seled died without children. ³¹ The son of Appaim was Ishi. The son of Ishi was Sheshan. The son of Sheshan was Ahlai. ³² The sons of Jada, Shammai's brother, were Jether and Jonathan and Jether died without children. ³³ The sons of Jonathan were Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel. ³⁴ Sheshan had no sons but only daughters. Sheshan had an Egyptian servant whose name was Jarha. ³⁵ Sheshan gave his daughter in marriage to his servant Jarha, and she bore him Attai. ³⁶ Attai was the father of Nathan and Nathan was the father of Zabad. ³⁷ Zabad was the father of Ephlal and Ephlal was the father of Obed. ³⁸ Obed was the father of Jehu and Jehu was the father of Azariah. ³⁹ Azariah was the father of Helez and Helez was

the father of Eleasah. ⁴⁰ Eleasah was the father of Sismai and Sismai was the father of Shallum. ⁴¹ Shallum was the father of Jekamiah and Jekamiah was the father of Elishama.

The clans descended from Caleb

⁴² The descendants of Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, were Mesha, his first-born, who was the father of Ziph, as well as the sons of Mareshah. Mareshah was the father of Hebron. ⁴³ The sons of Hebron were Korah, Tappuah, Rekem and Shema. ⁴⁴ Shema was the father of Raham and Raham was the father of Jorkeam. Rekem was the father of Shammai. ⁴⁵ The son of Shammai was Maon, and Maon was the founder of Beth-Zur. ⁴⁶ Caleb's concubine Ephah was the mother of Haran, Moza and Gazez. Haran was the father of Gazez. ⁴⁷ The sons of Jahdai were Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah and Shaaph. ⁴⁸ Caleb's concubine Maacah was the mother of Sheber and Tirhanah. ⁴⁹ She also bore Shaaph, the father of Madmannah and Sheva, the father of Machbenah and of Gibeon. Caleb's daughter was Achsah. ⁵⁰ These were the descendants of Caleb.

The descendants of Hur

The sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephrathah, were Shobal, the founder of Kiriath-Jearim, ⁵¹ Salma, the founder of Bethlehem and Hareph, the founder of Beth-Gader. ⁵² Shobal, the founder of Kiriath-Jearim, had other descendants: Haroeh and half of the families of Menuhoth. ⁵³ The clans of Kiriath-Jearim were the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites and the Mishraites. From these came the people of Zorah and of Eshtaol. ⁵⁴ The descendants of Salma were Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth-Beth-Joab and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites, ⁵⁵ and the clans of the scribes who lived at Jabez, namely, the Tirathites, the Shimeathites and the Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab, ⁵⁵ and the clans of the scribes who lived at Jabez, namely, the Tirathites, the Shimeathites and the Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab.

3

The sons of David — 2 Samuel 3:2-5, 2 Samuel 5:5, 5:13-16, 1 Chronicles 14:4-7, Matthew 1:6-12

¹ These were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the first-born was Amnon, by Ahinoam from Jezreel. The second was Daniel, by Abigail from Carmel. ² The third was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, the king of Geshur. The fourth was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. ³ The fifth was Shephatiah, by Abital. The sixth was Ithream, the son of David's wife Eglah. ⁴ David had six sons in Hebron, where he reigned for seven years and six months. He reigned for thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ⁵ These were the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon.

These four were by Bath-Shua,^{*107} the daughter of Ammiel. ⁶ There were also Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, ⁷ Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁸ Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet. There were nine. ⁹ All these were David's sons, besides the sons of the concubines, and Tamar was their sister.

The kings of Judah descended from David — Matthew 1:6-12

¹⁰ Solomon's son was Rehoboam, Abijah was his son, Asa was his son, Jehoshaphat was his son, ¹¹ Joram was his son, Ahaziah was his son, Joash was his son, ¹² Amaziah was his son, Azariah was his son, Jotham was his son, ¹³ Ahaz was his son, Hezekiah was his son, Manasseh was his son, ¹⁴ Amon was his son, and Josiah was his son. ¹⁵ The sons of Josiah were Johanan, the first-born, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah and the fourth Shallum. ¹⁶ The descendants of Jehoiakim were his son Jeconiah and his son Zedekiah.

The royal line after the exile in Babylon

¹⁷ The descendants of Jehoiachin the captive were his son Shealtiel, ¹⁸ Malchiram, Pedaiiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama and Nedabiah. ¹⁹ The sons of Pedaiiah were Zerub-Babel and Shimei. The sons of Zerub-Babel were Meshullam and Hananiah and Shelomith was their sister. ²⁰ There were also five others: Hashubah, Ohel, Berekiah, Hasadiah and Jushab-Hesed. ²¹ The descendants of Hananiah were Pelatiah and Jeshaiiah, as well as the sons of Rephaiah, of Arnan, of Obadiah and of Shecaniah. ²² The descendants of Shecaniah were Shemaiah and his sons, Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah and Shaphat. There were six of these. ²³ The sons of Neariah were Elioenai, Hizkiah and Azrikam. There were three of these. ²⁴ The sons of Elioenai were Hodaviah, Elishib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah and Anani. There were seven of these.

4

Other clans of Judah

¹ The descendants of Judah were Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur and Shobal. ² Reaiah, the son of Shobal, was the father of Jahath and Jahath was the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These were the clans of the Zorathites. ³ These were the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma and Idbash and the name of their sister was Hazzelelponi. ⁴ Penuel was the father of Gedor and Ezer was the father of Hushah. These were the sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephrathah, the founder of Bethlehem. ⁵ Ashhur, the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah. ⁶ Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hopher, Temeni and Haahashtari. These were the descendants of Naarah. ⁷ The sons of Helah were Zereth, Izhar and Ethnan. ⁸ Koz was the father of Anub, Zobeab and of the clans of Aharhel, the son of Harum. ⁹ Jabez was more honourable than his brothers were.

His mother named him Jabez, saying, "Because I gave birth to him in pain."

¹⁰ Jabez cried out to the God of Israel: "I pray that You will bless me and enlarge my territory! Let Your hand be with me and keep me free from harm, that I may not cause trouble!"

God granted his request. ¹¹ Chelub, the brother of Shuhah, was the father of Mehir, and he was the father of Eshton. ¹² Eshton was the father of Beth-Rapha, Paseah and Tehinnah, who was the father of Ir-Nahash. These were the men of Recah. ¹³ The sons of Kenaz were Othniel and Seraiah. The sons of Othniel were Hathath and Meonothai. ¹⁴ Meonothai was the father of Ophrah. Seraiah was the father of Joab, the founder of Ge-Harashim.^{*108} It was called that because the people were craftsmen. ¹⁵ The sons of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, were Iru, Elah and Naam. The son of Elah was Kenaz. ¹⁶ The sons of Jehallelel were Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria and Asarel. ¹⁷ The sons of Ezrah were Jether, Mered, Ephraim and Jalon. Mered's wife bore Miriam, Shammai and Ishbah, the father of Eshtemoa. ¹⁸ Mered's Jewish wife bore Jered, the father of Gedor, Heber, the father of Soco and Jekuthiel, the father of Zanoah. The others were the children of Pharaoh's daughter Bithiah, whom Mered had married. ¹⁹ The sons of the wife of Hodiah, the sister of Naham, were the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite. ²⁰ The sons of Shimon were Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan and Tilon. The descendants of Ishi were Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth. ²¹ The sons of Shelah, the son of Judah, were Er, the father of Lecah, Laadah, the father of Mareshah and the clans of the family of linen workers at Beth-Ashbea, ²² Jokim, the men of Cozeba, Joash and Saraph, who ruled over Moab before he returned to Bethlehem. These records have been handed down from antiquity. ²³ These were the potters who lived at Netaim and Gederah. They lived there with the king, doing his work.

The descendants of Simeon — Genesis 46:10, Joshua 19:2-10

²⁴ The sons of Simeon were Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah and Shaul. ²⁵ Shallum was the son of Shaul, Mibsam was his son and Mishma was his son. ²⁶ The descendants of Mishma were his son Hammuel, Zaccur his son, Shimei his son. ²⁷ Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters. However, his brothers did not have many children, so their entire clan did not become as numerous as the people of Judah were and their whole clan did not become as large as the people of Judah did. ²⁸ They lived at Beer-Sheba, Moladah, Hazar-Shual, ²⁹ Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, ³⁰ Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, ³¹ Beth-Marcaboth, Hazar-Susim, Beth-Biri and Shaaraim. These were their cities until David became king. ³² Their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen and Ashan. There were five of these

¹⁰⁷ Elsewhere spelt "Bathsehba."

¹⁰⁸ Ge Harashim means, "Valley of craftsmen."

towns, ³³ together with all their villages that were around these towns as far as Baal. These were their settlements, and they kept their own genealogical record. ³⁴ Other descendants were Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah, the son of Amaziah, ³⁵ Joel, Jehu, the son of Joshibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel, ³⁶ Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, ³⁷ and Ziza, the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah. ³⁸ These men who have been listed by name were princes in their clans, and their paternal families became very numerous. ³⁹ They moved to the outskirts of Gedor, on the eastern side of the valley, to search for pasture for their flocks. ⁴⁰ They found rich, good pasture, and the land was spacious, quiet and undisturbed, for some descendants of Ham had formerly been living there. ⁴¹ These men, who have been registered by name, came in the days of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, and destroyed their tents as well as the Meunites who were present there. They devoted them to destruction, as is evident to this day. Then they settled in their place, because there was pasture for their flocks there. ⁴² Some of them, five hundred men descended from Simeon, went to the hill-country of Seir. Their leaders were Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. ⁴³ They defeated the remaining Amalekites who had escaped and they have been living there to this day.

5

The descendants of Reuben — Genesis 46:8-9

¹ The sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, — indeed, although he was the first-born, because he defiled his father's marriage bed, his birth-right was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that he could not have himself registered in the genealogical table as the oldest son. ² Although Judah became strong among his brothers and a prince was to come from him, the birth-right belonged to Joseph. ³ The sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi. ⁴ The descendants of Joel were his son Shemaiah, Gog his son, Shimei his son, ⁵ Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son, ⁶ and Beerah his son, whom Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, carried away into exile. Beerah was a leader of the Reubenites. ⁷ His kinsmen by their clans, when they were registered on a genealogical table were Jeiel, the chief, Zechariah, ⁸ and Bela, the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel. They lived in the area from Aroer to Nebo and Baal Meon. ⁹ To the east they lived as far as the edge of the desert that extends from the Euphrates River, because they had so many cattle in the land of Gilead. ¹⁰ In the days of Saul they waged war against the descendants of Hagar. They defeated them and then lived in their tents throughout the region east of Gilead.

The descendants of Gad

¹¹ The descendants of Gad lived next to them in the land of Bashan as far as Salecah. ¹² Joel was the chief, Shapham the second and then Janai and Shaphat, in Bashan. ¹³ Their relatives in their paternal family were Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia and Eber. There were seven of them. ¹⁴ These were the sons of Abihail, the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz. ¹⁵ Ahi, the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, was the chief in their paternal family. ¹⁶ They lived in Gilead, in Bashan and in its villages and in all the pasturelands of Sharon as far as they extended. ¹⁷ All of these were entered in the genealogical tables in the days of Jotham, the king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam, the king of Israel.

The battle of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh, against the descendants of Hagar

¹⁸ The descendants of Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh had forty-four thousand, seven hundred and sixty valiant men, who were skilled in fighting, who could handle shield and sword and who could draw a bow. ¹⁹ They fought a war against the descendants of Hagar, Jetur, Naphish and Nodab. ²⁰ They received help against them, and the descendants of Hagar and all who were with them were delivered into their power. For they cried out to God in the battle, and He was moved by their entreaties, because they trusted in Him. ²¹ They carried off their livestock: fifty thousand of their camels, two hundred and fifty thousand sheep and two thousand donkeys. They also took one hundred thousand people captive. ²² Indeed, many others fell slain, because the war was God's doing. Then they lived there instead of them until the exile.

The half-tribe of Manasseh east of the Jordan

²³ The people belonging to the half-tribe of Manasseh also lived in the land from Bashan to Baal-Hermon, Senir and Mount Hermon and there were many of them. ²⁴ These were the heads of their paternal families: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah and Jahdiel. They were brave warriors, famous men and heads of their paternal families.

The capture of Gad, Reuben and the half of the tribe of Manasseh by the Assyrians

²⁵ However, they were unfaithful to the God of their fathers and ran wantonly after the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them. ²⁶ Then the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul, the king of Assyria, that is Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria, and he took the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh into exile. He took them to Halah, Habor, Hara and the river Gozan, where they still are today.

6

The descendants of Levi — Genesis 46:11

¹ The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

² The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and

Uzziel. ³ The children of Amram were Aaron, Moses and Miriam. The sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ⁴ Eleazar was the father of Phinehas. Phinehas was the father of Abishua. ⁵ Abishua was the father of Bukki. Bukki was the father of Uzzi. ⁶ Uzzi was the father of Zerachiah. Zerachiah was the father of Meraioth. ⁷ Meraioth was the father of Amariah. Amariah was the father of Ahitub. ⁸ Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Ahimaaz. ⁹ Ahimaaz was the father of Azariah. Azariah was the father of Johanan. ¹⁰ Johanan was the father of Azariah. He was the one who served as a priest in the Temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem. ¹¹ Azariah was the father of Amariah. Amariah was the father of Ahitub. ¹² Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Shallum. ¹³ Shallum was the father of Hilkiah. Hilkiah was the father of Azariah. ¹⁴ Azariah was the father of Seraiah. Seraiah was the father of Jehozadak. ¹⁵ Jehozadak went into captivity when the LORD used Nebuchadnezzar to send Judah and Jerusalem into exile.

Levi's line

¹⁶ The sons of Levi were Gershom, Kohath and Merari. ¹⁷ These are the names of the sons of Gershom: Libni and Shimei. ¹⁸ The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. ¹⁹ The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites according to their fathers: ²⁰ Gershom's son was Libni. His son was Jahath. His son was Zimma. ²¹ His son was Joah. His son was Iddo. His son was Zerah. His son was Jeatherai. ²² The descendants of Kohath were as follows: His son was Amminadab. His son was Korah. His son was Assir. ²³ His son was Elkanah. His son was Ebiasaph. His son was Assir. ²⁴ His son was Tahath. His son was Uriel. His son was Uziah. His son was Shaul. ²⁵ The sons of Elkanah were Amasai and Ahimoth. ²⁶ The descendants of Elkanah were as follows: His son was Zophai. His son was Nahath. ²⁷ His son was Eliab. His son was Jeroham. His son was Elkanah. ²⁸ The sons of Samuel were Joel, his first-born and Abijah, the second son. ²⁹ The descendants of Merari were as follows: Mahli. His son was Libni. His son was Shimei. His son was Uzzah. ³⁰ His son was Shimea. His son was Haggiah, and his son was Asaiah.

The musicians appointed by David for the worship in Jerusalem

³¹ These are the men whom David put in charge of the singing in the house of the LORD after the Ark had found its resting-place there. ³² They used to minister with song before the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting until Solomon built the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem. They took their positions as they were allocated to perform their service. ³³ These are the men who used to serve and their sons. From the descendants of Kohath there were Heman the singer, the son of Joel, the son of Samuel, ³⁴ the son of Elkanah, the

son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah, ³⁵ the son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai, ³⁶ the son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah, ³⁷ the son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, ³⁸ the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel. ³⁹ There was also Heman's relative Asaph, who used to stand at his right hand, namely, Asaph, the son of Berechiah, the son of Shimea, ⁴⁰ the son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchijah, ⁴¹ the son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah, ⁴² the son of Ethan, the son of Zimma, the son of Shimei, ⁴³ the son of Jahath, the son of Gershon, the son of Levi. ⁴⁴ Their other relatives were on the left hand. They were the descendants of Merari, Ethan, the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, ⁴⁵ the son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah, ⁴⁶ the son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shemer, ⁴⁷ the son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi. ⁴⁸ Their other relatives, the Levites, were assigned to all the other service of the Tabernacle, the house of God.

The work of the priestly line of Aaron

⁴⁹ Moreover, Aaron and his descendants used to burn offerings on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense in connection with all the work of the Most Holy Place. They made atonement for Israel, exactly as Moses, the servant of God, had commanded. ⁵⁰ These were the descendants of Aaron: his son was Eleazar. His son was Phinehas. His son was Abishua. ⁵¹ His son was Bukki. His son was Uzzi. His son was Zerachiah. ⁵² His son was Meraioth. His son was Amariah. His son was Ahitub. ⁵³ His son was Zadok and his son was Ahimaaz.

The cities allotted to the Levites — Joshua 21:1-42

⁵⁴ These were the places where the Levites lived according to their settlements inside their borders (They were allocated by lot to the descendants of Aaron who belonged to the clan of Kohath): ⁵⁵ Hebron in the land of Judah and its surrounding pasturelands were assigned to them. ⁵⁶ However, the fields and villages around the city had been assigned to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. ⁵⁷ The cities of refuge were also assigned to the descendants of Aaron. They were given Hebron and also Libnah with its pasturelands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its pasturelands, ⁵⁸ Hilen with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands, ⁵⁹ Ashan with its pasturelands and Beth-Shemesh with its pasturelands. ⁶⁰ From the tribe of Benjamin they received Geba with its pasturelands, Alemeth with its pasturelands and Anathoth with its pasturelands. All the cities that belonged to the Kohathite clans numbered thirteen. ⁶¹ Ten cities were assigned by lot from the half-tribe of Manasseh to the rest of the descendants of Kohath who belonged to the clan of the tribe. ⁶² Thirteen cities were allotted to the descendants of Gershom ac-

according to their clans from the tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher, from the tribe of Naphtali and from the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. ⁶³ Twelve cities were allotted to the descendants of Merari according to their clans from the tribe of Reuben, from the tribe of Gad and from the tribe of Zebulun. ⁶⁴ So, the Israelites gave these cities and their pasturelands to the Levites. ⁶⁵ They gave by lot these cities, which are mentioned by name, from the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Simeon and the tribe of Benjamin. ⁶⁶ Some of the clans of the descendants of Kohath had cities from the tribe of Ephraim as their territory. ⁶⁷ They were given Shechem, one of the cities of refuge, together with its pasturelands, in the hill-country of Ephraim and Gezer, with its pasturelands, ⁶⁸ Jokmeam with its pasturelands, Beth-Horon with its pasturelands, ⁶⁹ Aijalon with its pasturelands and Gath-Rimmon with its pasturelands. ⁷⁰ From the half-tribe of Manasseh the rest of the clans of the Kohathites were assigned: Aner with its pasturelands and Bileam with its pasturelands. ⁷¹ The descendants of Gershom received, from the clan of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands and Ashtaroth with its pasturelands. ⁷² They received, from the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands, ⁷³ Ramoth with its pasturelands and Anem with its pasturelands. ⁷⁴ They received, from the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands, ⁷⁵ Hukok with its pasturelands and Rehob with its pasturelands. ⁷⁶ They received, from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands, Hammon with its pasturelands and Kiriathaim with its pasturelands. ⁷⁷ The rest, the descendants of Merari, were allotted, from the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono with its pasturelands and Tabor with its pasturelands. ⁷⁸ From the tribe of Reuben across the Jordan east of Jericho they received Bezer in the wilderness with its pasturelands, Jahzah with its pasturelands, ⁷⁹ Kedemoth with its pasturelands and Mephaath with its pasturelands. ⁸⁰ From the tribe of Gad they received Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands, Mahanaim with its pasturelands, ⁸¹ Heshbon with its pasturelands and Jazer with its pasturelands.

7

The descendants of Issachar — Genesis 46:13

¹ Issachar had four sons: Tola, Puah, Jashub and Shimron. ² The sons of Tola were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam and Shemuel. They were heads of their paternal families descended from Tola. During the time of David, twenty-two thousand, six hundred warriors were listed in their family records. ³ The son of Uzzi was Izrahiah. The sons of Izrahiah were Michael, Obadiah, Joel and Isshiah. All five of them were leading men. ⁴ In addition to them, according to the paternal families in their family-history, there

were thirty-six thousand men in army units ready for war. For they had many wives and children. ⁵ Their relatives who were warriors belonging to all the clans of Issachar were registered in their genealogical table as eighty-seven thousand in all.

The descendants of Benjamin — Genesis 46:21

⁶ Benjamin had three sons: Bela, Becher and Jediael. ⁷ Bela had five sons: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth and Iri. They were heads of paternal families, mighty warriors. Twenty-two thousand and thirty-four warriors were registered in their genealogical table. ⁸ The sons of Becher were Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elieoenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth and Alemeth. All these were the sons of Becher. ⁹ They were registered as leaders of their paternal families in their genealogical table according to their family histories. There were twenty-two thousand, two hundred warriors. ¹⁰ The son of Jediael was Bilhan, and the sons of Bilhan were Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish and Ahishahar. ¹¹ All these descendants of Jediael according to the leaders of their paternal families numbered seventeen thousand, two hundred warriors, able to go out to war. ¹² The Shuppites, and the Huppites were the sons of Ir. The Hushites were the descendants of Aher.

The descendants of Naphtali — Genesis 46:24

¹³ The sons of Naphtali were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer and Shallum, the descendants of Bilhah.

The descendants of Manasseh who lived west of the Jordan River

¹⁴ The following were the descendants of Manasseh: Asriel was his descendant through his Aramean concubine. She gave birth to Makir, the father of Gilead. ¹⁵ Machir took a wife from among the Huppites and Shuppites. The name of his sister was also Maacah. The name of the second son was Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had only daughters. ¹⁶ Maacah, the wife of Machir, bore a son and named him Peresh. The name of his brother was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rakem. ¹⁷ The son of Ulam was Bedan. These were the descendants of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. ¹⁸ His sister Hammoleketh gave birth to Ishhod, Abiezer and Mahlah. ¹⁹ The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi and Aniam.

The descendants of Ephraim

²⁰ The descendants of Ephraim were Shuthelah and Bered, his son, Tahath, his son, Eladah his son, Tahath his son, ²¹ Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son and Ezer and Elead. The native-born men of Gath in that land killed them because they had come down to take away their livestock. ²² Their father Ephraim mourned for a long time, and his relatives came to comfort him. ²³ When Ephraim had relations with his wife, she conceived and gave birth to a son. He named him Beriah, because calamity had happened in his family. ²⁴ His daughter was Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth-Horon and Uzzan-Sheerah. ²⁵ His son was Rephah. His son was Resheph. His son was Te-

lah. His son was Tahan. ²⁶ His son was Ladan. His son was Ammihud. His son was Elishama. ²⁷ His son was Nun, and his son was Joshua. ²⁸ Their property in land and their settlements were Bethel and its villages, Naaran to the east, Gezer and its villages to the west, Shechem and its villages, as far as Ayyah and its villages. ²⁹ The descendants of Manasseh also possessed Beth-Shean with its villages, Taanach with its villages, Megiddo with its villages and Dor with its villages. The descendants of Joseph, the son of Israel, lived in these places.

The descendants of Asher — Genesis 46:17

³⁰ The sons of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi and Beriah, and their sister was Serah. ³¹ The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith. ³² Heber was the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham and their sister Shua. ³³ The sons of Japhlet were Pasach, Bimhal and Ashvath. These were the sons of Japhlet. ³⁴ The sons of Shemer were Ahi, Rohgah, Hubbah and Aram. ³⁵ The sons of his brother Helem were Zophah, Imna, Shelesh and Amal. ³⁶ The sons of Zophah were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, ³⁷ Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Jithran and Beera. ³⁸ The sons of Jether were Jephunneh, Pispah and Ara. ³⁹ The sons of Ulla were Arah, Hanniel and Rizia. ⁴⁰ All of these were descendants of Asher, leaders of paternal families, selected warriors who were leaders among princes. The number of men who were registered on their genealogical table as soldiers who were ready for war was twenty-six thousand.

8

The descendants of Benjamin — Genesis 46:21

¹ Benjamin was the father of Bela, his first-born. Ashbel was the second son, Aharah was the third, ² Nohah was the fourth, and Rapha was the fifth. ³ The sons of Bela were Addar, Gera, Abihud, ⁴ Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, ⁵ Gera, Shephuphan and Huram. ⁶ These were the sons of Ehud, who were the heads of families of the people living in Geba and were deported to Manahath: ⁷ Naaman, Ahijah and Gera, who deported them. Ehud was also the father of Uzza and Ahihud. ⁸ Shaharaim had children in the country of Moab after he had divorced his wives Hushim and Baara. ⁹ By his wife Hodesh he was the father of Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, ¹⁰ Jeuz, Sachiah and Mirmah. These were his sons, who were heads of their families. ¹¹ By Hushim Shaharaim was also the father of Abitub and Elpaal. ¹² The descendants of Elpaal were Eber, Misham and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its villages, ¹³ and Beriah and Shema. They were heads of families of the people living at Aijalon, who had driven out the people living in Gath. ¹⁴ Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, ¹⁵ Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, ¹⁶ Michael, Jispah and Joha were the sons of Beriah. ¹⁷ Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, ¹⁸ Ishmerai, Jizliah and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal. ¹⁹ Jakim,

Zichri, Zabdi, ²⁰ Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, ²¹ Adaiah, Beraiah and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei. ²² Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, ²³ Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, ²⁴ Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, ²⁵ Iphdeiah and Penuel were the sons of Shashak. ²⁶ Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, ²⁷ Jareshiah, Elijah and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham. ²⁸ These were the heads of families, according to their family histories and leading men. These lived in Jerusalem.

²⁹ Jeiel, the father of Gibeon, lived in Gibeon, and the name of his wife was Maacah. ³⁰ His first-born son was Abdon and then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, ³¹ Gedor, Ahio, Zecher, ³² and Mikloth, who was the father of Shimeah. They also lived near their relatives in Jerusalem, not far from their other relatives. ³³ Ner was the father of Kish. Kish was the father of Saul, and Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab and Eshbaal. ³⁴ The son of Jonathan was Merib-Baal, and Merib-Baal was the father of Micah. ³⁵ The sons of Micah were Pithon, Melech, Tarea and Ahaz. ³⁶ Ahaz was the father of Jehoaddah. Jehoaddah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza. ³⁷ Moza was the father of Binea. Raphah was his son. Eleasah was his son and Azel was his son. ³⁸ Azel had six sons, and these were their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel. ³⁹ The sons of his brother Eshek were Ulam his first-born, Jeush the second son and Eliphelet the third. ⁴⁰ The sons of Ulam were brave warriors, who were skilled bowmen. They had many sons and grandsons, one hundred and fifty of them. All these belonged to the descendants of Benjamin.

9

¹ All Israel had themselves registered on genealogical tables and have been recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel. Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because of their unfaithfulness.

The people who lived in Jerusalem after the exile — Nehemiah 11:3-19

² The first to live in their landed property in their cities again were some Israelites, the priests, the Levites and the Temple servants. ³ Some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh, who lived in Jerusalem were: ⁴ Uthai, the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, who had descended from Perez, the son of Judah. ⁵ Some of the descendants of Shilah were Asaiah the first-born and his other sons. ⁶ Some of the descendants of Zerah were Jeuel and their six hundred and ninety relatives. ⁷ Among the descendants of Benjamin were Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hassenuah, ⁸ Ibneiah, the son of Jeroham, Elah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri and Meshullam, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah, ⁹ and their nine hundred and fifty-six relatives according to their family histories. All these men were heads

of their paternal families.

The priests, Levites and gatekeepers at Jerusalem after the return from Babylon

¹⁰ Some of the priests were Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin, ¹¹ Azariah, the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the High Priest in the house of God, ¹² Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah and Maasai, the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer, ¹³ besides their one thousand, seven hundred and sixty relatives, who were heads of their paternal families, men who were well qualified to work in serving at the house of God.

¹⁴ Among the Levites there were Shemaiah, the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, who had descended from Merari, ¹⁵ Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal and Mattaniah, the son of Mica, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph, ¹⁶ Obadiah, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun and Berechiah, the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the people of Netophah. ¹⁷ The gatekeepers were Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman and their relatives. Shallum was the chief. ¹⁸ Until now they have been stationed at the King's Gate on the eastern side.

These were the gatekeepers belonging to the camps of the Levites. ¹⁹ Shallum, the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his relatives belonging to his paternal family, the descendants of Korah, were in charge of the work of the service. They guarded the thresholds of the Tabernacle, as their fathers had been in charge of guarding the entrance of the dwelling of the LORD. ²⁰ Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, had in an earlier time been the chief officer over them. The LORD was with him. ²¹ Zechariah, the son of Meshelemiah, was gatekeeper at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ²² All these, who had been chosen to be gatekeepers at the thresholds, numbered two hundred and twelve. They had themselves registered by their genealogies in their villages. David and Samuel, the seer, had appointed them to their trusted duty. ²³ So, they and their descendants were guards in charge of the gates of the house of the LORD, that is, the house called "the Tabernacle." ²⁴ The gatekeepers were on the four sides, east, west, north and south. ²⁵ Their relatives who were in their villages had to come in from time to time to share their duties for seven-day periods. ²⁶ Indeed, the four chief gatekeepers, who were Levites, had the official duty of supervising the halls and the treasures of the house of God. ²⁷ They used to spend the night around the house of God, for they were responsible to guard it and to open it every morning. ²⁸ Some of them had charge of the articles used in the service. For they used to count them when they brought them in and took them out. ²⁹ Others of them were appointed to

take care of the furniture and all the other articles of the sanctuary, as well as the fine wheat flour, the wine, the olive-oil, the incense and the perfumes. ³⁰ Some of the sons of the priests used to mix the perfumes. ³¹ Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the first-born son of Shallum, the descendant of Korah, was entrusted with making the flat cakes. ³² Some of their relatives among the descendants of Kohath were in charge preparing the bread that was laid out in rows every Sabbath. ³³ Those who were the singers, the heads of Levite families, stayed in the halls of the Temple and were exempt from other service, because they were responsible for that work day and night. ³⁴ These were heads of Levite families and listed in their family histories as leaders. These lived in Jerusalem.

The genealogy of Saul — 1 Chronicles 8:28-38

³⁵ Jeiel, the father of Gibeon, lived in Gibeon. His wife's name was Maacah. ³⁶ His first-born son was Abdon and then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, ³⁷ Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah and Mikloth. ³⁸ Mikloth was the father of Shimeam. These also lived opposite their relatives in Jerusalem, not far from their other relatives. ³⁹ Ner was the father of Kish. Kish was the father of Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malchi-Shua, Abinadab and Eshbaal. ⁴⁰ The son of Jonathan was Merib-Baal, and Merib-Baal was the father of Micah. ⁴¹ The sons of Micah were Pithon, Melech, Tahrea and Ahaz. ⁴² Ahaz was the father of Jarah. Jarah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza. ⁴³ Moza was the father of Binea. Rephaiah was his son. Eleasah was his son, and Azel was his son. ⁴⁴ Azel had six sons and these were their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel.

10

The death of Saul and his sons — 1 Samuel 31:1-13, 2 Samuel 1:4-12

¹ When the Philistines fought against Israel, the Israelites fled from the Philistines and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. ² The Philistines followed hard after Saul and his sons and the Philistines struck down Saul's sons Jonathan, Abinadab and Malchi-Shua. ³ The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers got him in range of their bows and wounded him. ⁴ Then Saul told his armour-bearer: "Draw your sword and stab me with it, that these uncircumcised men may not come and abuse me!"

However, his armour-bearer refused, because he was very afraid. So, Saul took his own sword and fell on it. ⁵ When his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his own sword and died. ⁶ So, Saul, his three sons and all his household died together. ⁷ When all the Israelites who were in the valley saw that the army had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled. Then the Philistines came and lived in them. ⁸ The next day, when

the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹ They stripped him, took his head and his weapons and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim the good news among their idols and their people. ¹⁰ They put his weapons in the temple of their gods and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon. ¹¹ However, when all the people of Jabesh-Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹² all the brave men set out, took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons and brought them to Jabesh. They buried their bones under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh and fasted for seven days. ¹³ So, Saul died because of his unfaithfulness, which he had committed against the LORD. He had not kept the Command of the LORD and had also consulted a medium to try to obtain guidance. ¹⁴ He had not tried to obtain guidance from the LORD. Therefore, He put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David, the son of Jesse.

11

The anointing of David as king over Israel — 2 Samuel 5:1-3

¹ Then all Israel gathered together to David at Hebron and said: "Look! We are your own bone and flesh.

² In times past, even when Saul was king, it was you who led the army of Israel as its commander. The LORD, your God, has told you, 'You will be the shepherd over My people Israel. You will be the leader over My people Israel.'"

³ When all the elders of Israel had come to the king at Hebron, David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. They anointed David as king over Israel, as the LORD had promised through Samuel.

The capture of Jerusalem by David — 2 Samuel 5:6-20

⁴ David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus. The Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, were there. ⁵ The people who were living at Jebus told David, "You will not come in here."

Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, which is the City of David. ⁶ David had said, "Whoever strikes the Jebusites first will become the chief and the commander."

Joab, the son of Zeruiah, went up first and so he became the commander. ⁷ Then David lived in the stronghold. That is why people called it "the City of David." ⁸ He built the city all around from the supporting terrace to the surrounding area, and Joab repaired the rest of the city. ⁹ David became increasingly powerful, and the LORD of hosts was with him.

David's three mighty men and their exploits — 2 Samuel 23:8-39

¹⁰ These were the commanders of David's warriors, who gave him strong support in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to make him king, as the LORD had promised concerning Israel. ¹¹ This is a list of David's mighty men: Jashobeam, a Hachmonite, was the chief of the assisting officers. He brandished his spear against three hundred men and killed them in one encounter. ¹² After him among the three mighty men

came Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite. ¹³ He was with David at Pas-Dammim, where the Philistines had gathered for battle. There was a plot of ground full of barley, and the army had fled from the Philistines.

¹⁴ However, he took his stand in the middle of the plot. They defended it and struck down the Philistines.

The LORD brought about a great victory. ¹⁵ Three of the thirty leading men went down to David at the rock at the cave of Adullam, while an army of the Philistines was camping in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁶ At that time David was in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was at Bethlehem. ¹⁷ David said with longing, "I wish that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem, which is beside the gate!"

¹⁸ Then the three warriors broke through the camp of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, which was beside the gate, took it and brought it to David. However, David refused to drink it and poured it out to the LORD. ¹⁹ He said: "May God forbid that I should do this! Shall I drink the blood of these men, who have risked their lives? For they have risked their lives to bring it."

He refused to drink it. This is what the three warriors did.

David's thirty warriors — 2 Samuel 23:18-39

²⁰ Abishai, the brother of Joab, was the chief of another Three. He brandished his spear against three hundred men and killed them and won a name among these Three. ²¹ He was more honoured than the other two men of the Three and became their commander. However, he was not included among the other Three.

²² Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was a valiant man from Kabzeel, who performed great exploits. He struck down two Moabite warriors. He also went down into a pit on a snowy day and killed a lion. ²³ He also struck down an Egyptian who was two and a half metres tall. Although the Egyptian had a spear like a weaver's beam in his hand, Benaiah went down against him with a staff, snatched the spear from the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear.

²⁴ These were things that Benaiah the son of Jehoiada did. He too was as famous as the three warriors were.

²⁵ He was more highly honoured than the Thirty were but was not included among the Three. David put him in charge of his bodyguard. ²⁶ The chief warriors were

Asahel, the brother of Joab, Elhanan, the son of Dodo from Bethlehem, ²⁷ Shammoth from Harod, Helez the Pelonite, ²⁸ Ira the son of Ikkesh from Tekoa, Abiezer from Anathoth, ²⁹ Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite, ³⁰ Maharai from Netophah, Heled, the son of Baanah, from Netophah, ³¹ Ithai, the son of Ribai from Gibeah, belonging to the people of Benjamin, Benaiah from Pirathon, ³² Hurai from the ravines of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite, ³³ Azmaveth from Baharum, Eliahba from Shaalbon, ³⁴ the sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan, the son of Shagee, the Ha-

rarite, ³⁵ Ahiam the son of Sachar the Hararite, Eliphai the son of Ur, ³⁶ Hopher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, ³⁷ Hezro from Carmel, Naarai, the son of Ezbai, ³⁸ Joel, the brother of Nathan, Mibhar, the son of Hagri, ³⁹ Zelek, the Ammonite, Naharai of Beeroth (the armour-bearer of Joab, the son of Zeruah), ⁴⁰ Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, ⁴¹ Uriah the Hittite, Zabab, the son of Ahlai, ⁴² Adina, the son of Shiza, the Reubenite (a leader of the Reubenites) and the thirty men with him, ⁴³ Hanan, the son of Maacah and Joshaphat, the Mithnite, ⁴⁴ Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel, the sons of Hotham from Aroer, ⁴⁵ Jedaiel, the son of Shimri and his brother Joha, the Tizite, ⁴⁶ Eliel, the Mahavite, Jeribai and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam and Ithmah, the Moabite, ⁴⁷ Eliel, Obed and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

12

The warriors who joined David at Ziklag while Saul was pursuing him — 1 Samuel 22:1-2

¹ These were the men who came to David at Ziklag, while he was still banished from the presence of Saul, the son of Kish. They were among the warriors who helped him in the war. ² They were armed with bows and could sling stones and shoot arrows with their bows, using either the right hand or the left. They were relatives of Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. ³ The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, both sons of Shemaah from Gibeah. There were also Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; Beracah, Jehu from Anathoth, ⁴ Ishmaiah from Gibeon, a warrior among the thirty and a leader over the thirty, Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad from Gederah, ⁵ Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah and Shephatiah, the Haruphite. ⁶ There were Elkanah, Jisshiah, Azarel, Joezer and Jashobeam, Korah's descendants. ⁷ There were also Joelah and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham from Gedor. ⁸ Some descendants of Gad went over to David at the stronghold in the wilderness. They were brave warriors, who had experience in battle and were expert with shields and spears. Their faces were like the faces of lions, and they were as swift as gazelles on the mountains. ⁹ Ezer was the chief, Obadiah the second, and Eliab was the third. ¹⁰ Mishmannah was the fourth, and Jeremiah was the fifth. ¹¹ Attai was the sixth, Eliel was the seventh, ¹² Johanan was the eighth, Elzabad was the ninth, ¹³ Jeremiah was the tenth, and Machbannai was the eleventh. ¹⁴ These descendants of Gad were officers of the army. The least was a match for a hundred men, and the greatest for a thousand. ¹⁵ These were the men who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it was overflowing all its banks, and put to flight all the people in the valleys, to the east and to the west. ¹⁶ Some of the men of Benjamin and Judah also came to David at the stronghold. ¹⁷ David went out to meet them and told them: "If you have come to me in peace to help me, I am willing for

you to join me. However, if you have come to betray me to my enemies, when my hands are free from violence, may the God of our fathers see it and rebuke you!"

¹⁸ Then the Spirit took possession of Amasai, the chief of the Thirty, and he said: "We are yours, David! We are with you, son of Jesse! May everything go well with you, and may everything be well with those who help you! For your God has been helping you."

Then David accepted them and made them leaders of his raiding party. ¹⁹ Some of the men of Manasseh deserted to David when he went with the Philistines to fight against Saul. Nevertheless, David did not help the Philistines, because, when the princes of the Philistines considered the matter, they sent him away. They said, "He will desert to his master Saul at the cost of our own heads."

²⁰ When David went to Ziklag, these were the men of Manasseh who deserted to join him: Adnah, Jozabad, Jedaiel, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu and Zillethai. They had been leaders of units of a thousand in Manasseh.

²¹ They helped David against the raiding party. For they were all brave warriors and were commanders in the army. ²² For from day to day men kept coming to David to help him, until he had a large army, like an army of God.

The warriors who joined David at Hebron

²³ These are the numbers of the companies of the men who were ready for battle and who came to David in Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him, as the LORD had commanded. ²⁴ The men of Judah equipped for war, bearing shields and spears, numbered six thousand, eight hundred. ²⁵ The men from Simeon, brave warriors ready for battle, numbered seven thousand, one hundred. ²⁶ The men from Levi numbered four thousand, six hundred. ²⁷ There was also Jehoiada, the leader of the family of Aaron, and with him there were three thousand, seven hundred men. ²⁸ There was also Zadok, a brave young warrior, with twenty-two officers from his own fathers' family.

²⁹ There were three thousand of the men of Benjamin, who were relatives of Saul, although until then the majority of them remained loyal to the family of Saul.

³⁰ There were twenty thousand, eight hundred brave warriors from the people of Ephraim. They were famous men in their paternal families. ³¹ There were eighteen thousand from the half-tribe of Manasseh, who had been designated by name to come and make David king. ³² There were two hundred leaders from the people of Issachar. They were men who understood the times, so that they knew what Israel should do, and all their relatives were under their command.

³³ There were fifty thousand experienced soldiers prepared for battle from Zebulun. They had all kinds of weapons and were seasoned troops, equipped for battle with all the weapons of war. They could keep their ranks and were completely loyal. ³⁴ There were one

thousand officers from Naphtali and they had with them thirty-seven thousand men armed with shields and spears. ³⁵ There were twenty-eight thousand, six hundred men equipped for battle from the people of Dan. ³⁶ There were forty thousand experienced soldiers from Asher who were ready for battle. ³⁷ There were one hundred and twenty thousand men from east of the Jordan, from the people of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh. They were armed with all kinds of military weapons. ³⁸ All these were warriors, who could keep ranks. They had come to Hebron with the single purpose of making David king over all Israel. All the rest of the Israelites were also unanimous in wanting to make David king. ³⁹ The men spent three days there with David, eating and drinking. For their families had supplied provisions for them. ⁴⁰ Their neighbours from as far away as Issachar, Zebulun and Naphtali also brought food on donkeys, camels, mules and oxen. There were plentiful supplies of flour, fig cakes, raisin cakes, wine, oil, cattle and sheep, because there was joy in Israel.

13

The bringing of the Ark from Kiriath-Jearim to the house of Obed-Edom — 2 Samuel 6:1-11

¹ David consulted with the commanders of units of a thousand and units of a hundred and with every other leader. ² David told the whole assembly of Israel: “If you consider it right and, if it is the will of the LORD, our God, let us spread out with a message to the rest of our relatives in all the lands of Israel and to the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasturelands, to tell them to join us! ³ Then let us bring the Ark of our God home to us! For we did not use it to obtain God’s advice during the time of Saul.”

⁴ All the assembly agreed to do this, for all the people considered that it was right to do it. ⁵ So, David assembled all Israel from the Shihor River in Egypt to Lebo-Hamath, to bring the Ark of God from Kiriath-Jearim. ⁶ David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-Jearim, which belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the Ark of God, the LORD, who sits between the cherubim, the Ark that is called by the Name. ⁷ They carried the Ark of God from the house of Abinadab on a new cart. Uzzah and Ahio were driving the cart. ⁸ David and all Israel were rejoicing before God with all their might, with songs and with lyres, harps, tambourines, cymbals and trumpets. ⁹ When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to take hold of the Ark, for the oxen caused it to go loose. ¹⁰ The LORD became angry with Uzzah and struck him down because he laid his hand on the Ark, and he died there before God.

¹¹ David was angry because the LORD had burst out against Uzzah. That place has been called “Perez-Uzzah” to this day. ¹² David was afraid of God that day and asked, “How shall I bring the Ark of God home to me?”

¹³ So, David did not take the Ark into the city of David to be with him but took it aside to the house of Obed-Edom, who was from Gath. ¹⁴ The Ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house for three months. The LORD blessed the family of Obed-Edom and everything he had.

14

David’s palace and his family in Jerusalem — 2 Samuel 5:11-16, 1 Chronicles 3:5-8

¹ Hiram, the king of Tyre, sent messengers to David and also sent cedar trees, masons and carpenters, to build a palace for him. ² David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel and that He had highly honoured his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

³ David married more women in Jerusalem and David was the father of more sons and daughters. ⁴ These were the names of the children whom he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ⁵ Ithar, Elishua, Elpelet, ⁶ Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁷ Elishama, Be-Eliada and Eliphelet.

The defeat of the Philistines by David — 2 Samuel 5:17-25

⁸ When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines came up to search for David. David heard about it and went out against them. ⁹ The Philistines had come and made a raid in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁰ David asked God: “Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You hand them over to me?”

The LORD told him: “Go up! I shall hand them over to you.”

¹¹ He went up to Baal-Perazim and David struck them down there. David said, “God has used my hand to break through my enemies, like a bursting flood.”

That is why that place has been named “Baal-Perazim.”¹⁰⁹ ¹² The Philistines had abandoned their gods there, and David gave orders, and his men burned them up. ¹³ Once again the Philistines made a raid in the valley. ¹⁴ When David inquired of God again, God told him: “You shall not go up after them! Circle around behind them and approach them from the direction of the balsam trees! ¹⁵ When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then go out to battle! For God has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines.”

¹⁶ David did as God had commanded him, and they struck down the Philistine army from Gibeon to Gezer. ¹⁷ The fame of David spread throughout all the other countries, and the LORD made all the other nations afraid of him.

15

The preparations for the Ark in Jerusalem and the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem — 2 Samuel 6:12-19

¹ David had constructed buildings for himself in the City of David. He prepared a place for the Ark of God

¹⁰⁹ Baal-Perazim means, “Lord who breaks out.”

and pitched a tent for it. ² Then David said: “No one but the Levites may carry the Ark of God! For the LORD has chosen them to carry the Ark of the LORD and to minister to Him for ever.”

³ David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring the Ark of the LORD up to its place, which he had prepared for it. ⁴ David gathered together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites. ⁵ Uriel was the leader of the descendants of Kohath, and there were a hundred and twenty of his relatives. ⁶ Asaiah was the leader of the descendants of Merari, and there were two hundred and twenty of his relatives. ⁷ Joel was the leader of the descendants of Gershon, and there were one hundred and thirty of his relatives. ⁸ Shemaiah was the leader of the descendants of Eli-Zaphan, and there were two hundred of his relatives. ⁹ Eliel was the leader of the descendants of Hebron and there were eighty of his relatives. ¹⁰ Amminadab was the leader of the descendants of Uzziel, and there were one hundred and twelve of his relatives. ¹¹ David summoned the priests, Zadok and Abiathar, and the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel and Amminadab. ¹² He told them: “You are the leaders of the paternal families of the Levites. You and your relatives, consecrate yourselves, that you may bring up the Ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it! ¹³ Because you were not here the first time, the LORD, our God, broke out against us. For we had not consulted Him about doing it in the prescribed way.”

¹⁴ So, the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the Ark of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁵ The Levites carried the Ark of God with the poles on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded, according to the Word of the LORD. ¹⁶ David also commanded the leaders of the Levites to appoint their relatives to be singers who should play loudly on musical instruments, on harps, lyres and cymbals, to produce loud and joyful sounds. ¹⁷ So, the Levites appointed Heman, the son of Joel and Asaph, the son of Berechiah, from his relatives. From their relatives who were the descendants of Merari they appointed Ethan, the son of Kushaiah. ¹⁸ They appointed with them their relatives next in rank, Zechariah, Ben-Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu and Mikneiah and Obed-Edom and Jeiel as the gatekeepers. ¹⁹ The singers, Heman, Asaph and Ethan, were to make music with bronze cymbals. ²⁰ Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah and Benaiah were to play harps according to Alamoth. ²¹ Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel and Azariah were to lead the music with lyres according to the Sheminith. ²² Chenaniah was a leader of the Levites in setting the pitch in the singing. He gave instruction in the pitch, because he was skilled at it. ²³ Berechiah and Elkanah were to be doorkeepers

for the Ark. ²⁴ Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the Ark of God. Obed-Edom and Jehiah were also to be doorkeepers for the Ark. ²⁵ So, David, the elders of Israel and the commanders of units of a thousand went to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-Edom with rejoicing. ²⁶ Because God helped the Levites who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. ²⁷ David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and so were all the Levites who were carrying the Ark, as well as the singers and Chenaniah, the leader who set the pitch for the singers. David wore a linen priestly garment. ²⁸ All Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD with joyful shouting, with the sounding of rams’ horns, trumpets and cymbals and made loud music on harps and lyres. ²⁹ When the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD came to the City of David, Michal, Saul’s daughter, looked down through a window and, when she saw King David dancing and rejoicing, she heartily despised him.

16

The placing of the Ark in the tent at Jerusalem — 2 Samuel 6:17-19

¹ They brought in the Ark of God and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it. Then they offered burnt offerings and peace-offerings before God. ² When David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. ³ He also distributed to every man and woman in Israel a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins. ⁴ Then he appointed some of the Levites to minister before the Ark of the LORD, to make invocations and to thank and praise the LORD, the God of Israel.

The leading of worship at Jerusalem by the Levites — 2 Samuel 6:19-20

⁵ Asaph was the leader, and next to him were Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom and Jeiel. They were to play harps and lyres, and Asaph was to sound the cymbals. ⁶ The priests, Benaiah and Jahaziel, were to blow trumpets regularly before the Ark of the Covenant of God.

David’s psalm of thanksgiving — Psalm 105:1-15, Psalm 96:2-13, Psalm 106:1, 47-48

⁷ On that day David for the first time entrusted to Asaph and his relatives, as the leaders, the task of giving thanks to the LORD:

⁸ “Give thanks to the LORD! Call on His name! Make known among the peoples what He has done!

⁹ “Sing to Him! Sing praises to Him! Give attention to all His marvellous deeds!

¹⁰ “Glory in His holy name! Let the hearts of those who search for the LORD rejoice!

¹¹ “Try to find the LORD and His strength! Search for His face constantly!

¹² “Remember His marvellous deeds, which He has

done, His omens and the Decisions that He has uttered, ¹³ descendants of His servant Israel, descendants of Jacob, His chosen ones!

¹⁴ “He is the LORD, our God. His Decisions are in all the earth.

¹⁵ “Remember His Covenant for ever, the Word that He has commanded, for a thousand generations, ¹⁶ the Covenant that He has made with Abraham and His oath to Isaac!

¹⁷ “He has confirmed it as a Prescription for Jacob, as an everlasting Covenant for Israel, ¹⁸ saying, ‘I shall give you the land of Canaan as the region that you will inherit,’ ¹⁹ when you were few in number, few indeed and living in it as foreigners.

²⁰ “They wandered from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another nation.

²¹ “He permitted no one to oppress them and reprovved kings because of them: ²² ‘Do not touch My anointed ones and do My prophets no harm!’

²³ “Sing to the LORD, all the earth! Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day!

²⁴ “Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all the peoples!

²⁵ “For the LORD is great and very worthy of praise. He should be feared above all gods.

²⁶ “For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD has made the heavens.

²⁷ “Splendour and grandeur are before Him. Strength and joy are in His place.

²⁸ “Give to the LORD, families of the peoples, give to the LORD glory and strength!

²⁹ “Give to the LORD the glory due to His name! Bring an offering and come before Him! Worship the LORD in holy grandeur!

³⁰ “Tremble before Him, all the earth! Yes, the world will be firmly established. It will not totter.

³¹ “Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad! Let people say among the nations, ‘The LORD has been reigning!’

³² “Let the sea and all its fullness roar like thunder! Let the field and all that is in it be jubilant!

³³ “Then all the trees of the forest will shout with joy before the LORD. For He is coming to judge the earth.

³⁴ “Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His mercy endures for ever!

³⁵ “Say also: ‘**Save** us, O God of our salvation! Gather and deliver us **from the nations**, that we may give thanks to Your holy name and pride ourselves in praising You!’

³⁶ “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!”

Then all the people said, “Amen!” and “Praise to the LORD!”

The regular worship at Jerusalem

³⁷ David left Asaph and his relatives there before the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD to minister regular-

ly before the Ark, as they were needed every day.

³⁸ He also left Obed-Edom and sixty-eight of their other relatives there. Obed-Edom, the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah were gatekeepers. ³⁹ He left Zadok, the priest, and his relatives, the other priests, before the Tabernacle of the LORD at the high place in Gibeon.

⁴⁰ They were to offer burnt offerings to the LORD regularly morning and evening on the altar of burnt offering, in accordance with everything that had been written in the Law of the LORD, which He had commanded for Israel. ⁴¹ With them were Heman, Jeduthun and the rest of those who had been chosen and designated by name to give thanks to the LORD, because His mercy endures for ever. ⁴² Heman and Jeduthun were with them to play trumpets, cymbals and other instruments for sacred songs. The sons of Jeduthun were at the gate. ⁴³ Then all the people went to their own homes. David also went back to bless his family.

17

*David's wish to build the Temple and God's Covenant with him—
2 Samuel 7:1-17*

¹ When David settled in his house he told the prophet Nathan, “Look! I am living in a house of cedar, while the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD remains inside the curtains of a tent.”

² Nathan told David, “Do whatever you have in mind! For God is with you.”

³ However, that same night the Word of God came to Nathan, ⁴ “Go and tell My servant David: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “You are not the one who will build Me the house to dwell in. ⁵ For I have not lived in a house since I brought the Israelites up until this time but have been from one tent to another and from one Tabernacle to another. ⁶ Wherever I have moved about with all Israel, have I ever spoken a Word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I had commanded to shepherd My people, to ask: ‘Why have you not built a house of cedar for Me?’” ⁷ Now therefore, this is what you shall tell My servant David: ‘This is what **the LORD of hosts** has said: “I have taken you from the pasture where you were following the sheep **to be a leader over My people Israel**. ⁸ I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies who were in front of you. I shall make a name for you, like the names of the greatest men on the earth. ⁹ I shall provide a place for My people Israel and plant them, that they may live in a place of their own and not be disturbed any longer. Wicked people will no longer wipe them out as they used to do at the beginning, ¹⁰ since the time when I appointed judges over My people Israel. I shall subdue all your enemies. I am also informing you that the LORD will build a house for you. ¹¹ When your time has come to an end and you go to be with your ancestors, I shall raise up your **Descendant** after you, who will be **one of your own offspring**, and shall establish

His kingdom. ¹² He will build a house for Me, and I shall establish **His throne for ever.** ¹³ **I shall be His Father, and He will be My Son.** I shall not take My faithful love away from Him as I took it away from your predecessor. ¹⁴ I shall set Him over My house and My **kingdom for ever. His throne will be established for ever.**””

¹⁵ Nathan told David all these Words, exactly as everything had been revealed in the vision.

David's prayer in response to the Messianic promise — 2 Samuel 7:18-29

¹⁶ Then King David went in and sat down before the LORD. He asked: “Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my family, that You have brought me as far as this? ¹⁷ Moreover, You have considered this a small thing, O God. You have also spoken about the distant future of Your servant's family and have looked on me as a man of exalted rank, O LORD God. ¹⁸ What more, then, can David say to You for honouring Your servant? Indeed, You Yourself know Your servant. ¹⁹ O LORD, You have brought about all this greatness for the sake of Your servant and according to Your own will and so You are making all these great things known to Your servant. ²⁰ O LORD, there is no one like You, and there is no other God except You, exactly as we have heard with our own ears. ²¹ Moreover, who is like Your people Israel? It is the one nation on the earth that God came to redeem to be His own people and to make a name for Yourself by great and awesome deeds, by driving out nations from before Your people, whom You have redeemed from Egypt. ²² You have established Your people Israel for Yourself, to be Your very own people for ever. You, O LORD, have become their God. ²³ Now therefore, O LORD, let the promise that You have made about Your servant and about his house be established for ever! Do also as You have promised, ²⁴ that Your name may be established and be great for ever, when people say, ‘The LORD of hosts, the God over Israel, is Israel's God!’ Then the house of Your servant David will be established in Your presence. ²⁵ For You, my God, have revealed it for Your servant to hear, that You will build a house for him. That is why I, Your servant, have found the courage to pray before You. ²⁶ Now therefore, O LORD, You are God and have promised this good thing to Your servant. ²⁷ Now therefore, You have been intent on blessing the house of Your servant, that it may continue in Your presence for ever. For You, O LORD, have blessed it, and it will be blessed for ever.”

18

The establishment and extension of David's kingdom — 2 Samuel 8:1-14

¹ After this, David defeated the Philistines and made them his subjects. He also took Gath and its villages away from the control of the Philistines. ² When he defeated Moab, the Moabites became subject to David and paid taxes to him. ³ David also defeated Hadadezer, the king of Zobah, as far as Hamath, when

he went to establish his control at the Euphrates River.

⁴ David captured from him one-thousand chariots, seven-thousand horsemen and twenty-thousand foot-soldiers. David cut the leg tendons of all the chariot-horses but left enough for a hundred chariots. ⁵ When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, the king of Zobah, David struck down twenty-two thousand Arameans. ⁶ Then David put garrisons among the Arameans around Damascus, and the Arameans became subjects of David and paid taxes to him. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. ⁷ David took the golden shields that belonged to the officials of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸ David also took a very large quantity of bronze from Tebah and Cun, cities that belonged to Hadadezer. Solomon used it to make the bronze pool, the pillars and the bronze utensils. ⁹ When Tou, the king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, the king of Zobah, ¹⁰ he sent his son Hadoram to King David, to ask about his health and to congratulate him for his victory in battle over Hadadezer. For Hadadezer had often been at war against Tou. Hadoram brought all kinds of articles of gold, silver and bronze. ¹¹ King David also dedicated these articles to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he had carried off from all the other nations, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines and Amalek. ¹² Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, also struck down eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. ¹³ Then he put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became subjects to David. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

David's officials — 2 Samuel 8:15-18

¹⁴ So, David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people. ¹⁵ Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was the commander of the army and Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahilud, was the recorder. ¹⁶ Zadok, the son of Ahitub, and Abimelech, the son of Abiathar, were the priests and Shavsha was the secretary. ¹⁷ Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, was in charge of the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and David's sons were chief ministers at the king's side.

19

David's victory over Ammon and Aram — 2 Samuel 10:1-19

¹ After this, Nahash, the king of the Ammonites, died, and his son succeeded him as king. ² David thought, “I shall treat Hanun, the son of Nahash, kindly as his father has been treating me kindly.”

So, David sent messengers to express sympathy to him concerning his father. David's officials came to Hanun in the land of the Ammonites, to express sympathy to him. ³ However, the princes of the Ammonites asked Hanun: “Do you think that David is honouring your father, because he has sent men to you to express sympathy? Have his officials not come to you to investigate, to overthrow and to spy out the land?”

⁴ So, Hanun took David's officials, shaved them, cut

their garments off in the middle, at their hips and sent them away. ⁵ When some people came and told David about the men, he sent men to meet them, for those men were deeply humiliated. The king said, “Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown and then come back!”

⁶ When the Ammonites realised that they had made themselves offensive to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent thirty-five thousand kilograms of silver to hire chariots and horsemen for themselves from Mesopotamia, from Aram-Maacah and from Zobah.

⁷ They also hired thirty-two thousand chariots, as well as the king of Maacah with his army, came and encamped in front of Medeba. Then the Ammonites were mustered from their cities and came for the battle. ⁸ When David heard about it, he sent Joab out with the whole army of warriors. ⁹ The Ammonites came out and drew up in battle formation at the entrance of the city, and the kings who had come were by themselves in the open country. ¹⁰ When Joab saw that the line of battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he selected some of the best soldiers in Israel and deployed them against the Arameans. ¹¹ He put the rest of the army under the command of his brother Abishai, and they deployed them against the Ammonites. ¹² Joab said: “If the Arameans are too strong for me, you shall come to rescue me! However, if the Ammonites are too strong for you, I shall rescue you. ¹³ Be brave and let us show ourselves courageous for our people and for the cities of our God! Then the LORD will do what He considers good.”

¹⁴ Then Joab and the troops who were with him advanced toward the Arameans to fight them, and they fled before him. ¹⁵ When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans had fled, they also fled from Joab’s brother Abishai and went inside the city. Then Joab went back to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ However, when the Arameans saw that Israel had defeated them, they sent messengers and had Arameans brought from beyond the River, with Shophach the commander of the army of Hadadezer leading them. ¹⁷ When David was told about this, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan, advanced against them and drew up his forces against them. When David formed his lines to meet the Arameans in battle, they fought against him. ¹⁸ The Arameans fled from Israel, and David killed seven-thousand of their charioteers and forty-thousand foot-soldiers. He also killed Shophach, the commander of their army. ¹⁹ When the vassals of Hadadezer saw that Israel had defeated them, they made peace with David and became subject to him. The Arameans refused to come to rescue the Ammonites again.

20

The defeat of the Ammonites and the capture of Rabbah — 2 Samuel 11:1, 12:26-31

¹ In the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, Joab led out the armed forces. He rav-

aged the country of the Ammonites, went to Rabbah and besieged it. While David remained at Jerusalem, Joab defeated Rabbah and demolished it. ² David took the crown from the head of their king. He found that it weighed thirty-five kilograms. It was made of gold and had a precious stone in it. It was placed on David’s head. He also took a very great quantity of plunder out of the city.

³ He brought out the people who were in it, consigned them to labour with saws, iron picks and stone-cutting tools and transferred them to moulding bricks. David did this to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and the whole army returned to Jerusalem.

The renewed war against the Philistines — 2 Samuel 21:15-22

⁴ After this, war broke out with the Philistines at Gezer. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite struck down Sippai, who was one of the descendants of the Rephaites, and the Philistines were subjugated. ⁵ When there was another battle against the Philistines, Elhanan, the son of Jair, struck down Lahmi, the brother of Goliath from Gath. The shaft of his spear was like a weaver’s beam. ⁶ When there was another battle at Gath, there was a huge man who had twenty-four fingers and toes, six on each hand and six on each foot. He also was descended from Rapha. ⁷ When he insulted Israel, Jonathan, the son of Shimea, David’s brother, struck him down. ⁸ These were descended from the Rephaites at Gath and fell by the hands of David and his servants.

21

David’s census of his soldiers and the plague — 2 Samuel 24:1-17

¹ Satan stood up against Israel and incited David to count the people of Israel. ² David told Joab and the other commanders of the army, “Go and count the Israelites from Beer-Sheba to Dan and bring me a report, that I may know how many there are!”

³ However, Joab replied: “May the LORD increase His people a hundred times more than they are! O king, my master, are not all of them the subjects of my master? Why does my master want to do this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?”

⁴ However, the king’s order overruled Joab. So, Joab left and went throughout Israel and then came back to Jerusalem. ⁵ When Joab reported to David the total of the people who had been counted, there were in all Israel one million one hundred thousand men who could draw a sword, including four hundred and seventy thousand in Judah who could draw a sword.

⁶ Moreover, Joab had not counted Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king’s command had been disgusting to Joab. ⁷ However, God regarded this activity as evil and struck Israel. ⁸ David said to God: “I have sinned greatly by doing this. However, now, please take away the guilt of Your servant! For I have been behaving very foolishly.”

⁹ Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David’s seer: ¹⁰ “Go and tell David, ‘This is what the LORD has said: “I

am laying three options before you. Choose one of them for Me to carry out against you!””

¹¹ When Gad came to David he told him: “This is what the LORD has said, ‘Make your choice: ¹² either three years of famine or three months during which your foes will sweep you away before them while the swords of your enemies overtake you or three days of the sword of the LORD, a plague on the country, with the angel of the LORD working destruction throughout the territory of Israel!’ Now therefore, consider which answer I should take back to the One who has sent me!”

¹³ Then David told Gad: “I am in great trouble. Please let me fall into the hands of the LORD! For He is exceedingly merciful; but may I not fall into the hands of human beings!”

¹⁴ So, the LORD sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel died. ¹⁵ God sent the angel to Jerusalem to destroy it but, when he was about to destroy it, the LORD looked and relented from the calamity. He told the angel, who was working destruction: “It is enough! Now drop your hand!”

The angel of the LORD was standing at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁶ When David looked up, he saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, with his drawn sword in his hand extended over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, covered with sackcloth, fell face-down. ¹⁷ David said to God: “Have not I myself given the order to number the soldiers? I myself have sinned and done great evil. However, what have these sheep done? O LORD, my God, please let Your hand be against me and against my father’s family! However, do not let the plague be on Your people!”

The building of an altar to God at the threshing floor of Araunah — 2 Samuel 24:18-25

¹⁸ The angel of the LORD commanded Gad to tell David that David should go up and set up an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan*¹¹⁰ the Jebusite. ¹⁹ According to what Gad had said when he had spoken in the name of the LORD, David went up. ²⁰ While Ornan was threshing wheat, he turned around and saw the angel. His four sons, who were with him, hid themselves. ²¹ When David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David. Ornan went out from the threshing floor and respectfully bowed down before David with his face to the ground. ²² David asked Ornan: “Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build an altar to the LORD on it! Sell it to me at its full price, that the plague on the people may be stopped!”

²³ Then Ornan told David: “Take it and let my master, the king, do what he thinks is right! Look! I have donated the oxen for the burnt offerings, the threshing sledges for the wood and the wheat for the grain-offering. I have donated it all.”

²⁴ However, King David told Ornan: “No! Rather, I shall certainly buy it for the full price. For I shall not take what belongs to you for the LORD or offer burnt offerings that have not cost me anything.”

²⁵ So, David paid Ornan by weight seven kilograms and two hundred grams of gold for the place. ²⁶ David built an altar to the LORD there, sacrificed burnt offerings and peace-offerings and called on the LORD, and He answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering. ²⁷ Then the LORD spoke to the angel, and he put His sword back in its scabbard.

The choice of a place for the Temple

²⁸ At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he offered sacrifices there. ²⁹ The Tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time on the high place at Gibeon. ³⁰ However, David could not go before it to inquire of God, for the sword of the angel of the LORD terrified him.

22

¹ Then David said, “This is where the Temple of the LORD God shall be and this is where the altar of burnt offering for Israel shall be.”

David’s preparations to help Solomon build the Temple

² David gave orders to gather together the resident-foreigners who were in the land of Israel and appointed stonecutters to prepare dressed stones to build the Temple of God. ³ David also provided great quantities of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for clamps, as well as more bronze than could be weighed. ⁴ He also provided more cedar logs than could be counted, because the men of Sidon and Tyre brought large quantities of cedar-wood to David. ⁵ For David said: “My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the Temple that will be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and splendid throughout all other countries. I should like to prepare for it.”

So, David prepared extensively before he died.

David’s instructions to Solomon and the leaders

⁶ Then he called for his son Solomon and charged him to build a Temple for the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁷ David told Solomon: “My son, I myself had intended to build a Temple for the name of the LORD, my God. ⁸ However, the Word of the LORD came to me: ‘You have shed much blood and have fought great wars. You shall not build a Temple for My name! For you have shed so much blood on the earth in My sight. ⁹ Look! You will have a son who will be a man of peace. I shall give him rest from all his surrounding enemies. For his name will be Solomon,¹¹¹ and I shall give peace and tranquillity to Israel in his time.

¹⁰ He will build a Temple for My name. He will be My son, and I shall be his Father and establish the

¹¹⁰ Araunah was also called “Ornan”

¹¹¹ Solomon means, “Peaceable.”

throne of His kingdom over Israel for ever.’¹¹ Now, my son, may the LORD be with you, that you may be successful and build the Temple of the LORD, your God, just as He has promised about you!¹² Only may the LORD give you discretion and understanding, that, when He gives you charge over Israel, you may keep the Law of the LORD, your God!¹³ Then you will be successful if you are careful to observe the Prescriptions and the Decisions that the LORD commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged!¹⁴ You see, with great pains I have provided for the Temple of the LORD three million five hundred thousand kilograms of gold, thirty-five million kilograms of silver and quantities of bronze and iron that are too great to be weighed, for there has been so much of it. I have also prepared timber and stones, and you may add to these.¹⁵ You have many workmen: stonemasons, masons, carpenters and all kinds of craftsmen for every kind of work.¹⁶ There is more gold, silver, bronze and iron than can be counted. Take action and work, and may the LORD be with you!”

¹⁷ David also commanded all the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon:¹⁸ “Is not the LORD, your God with you? Has He not given you peace on every side? For He has delivered the people who live in this country into my hands, and the land has been brought into subjection before the LORD and His people.¹⁹ Now set your hearts and souls to search for the LORD, your God! Take action and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, that you may bring the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD and the sacred articles of God into the Temple, which will be built for the name of the LORD!”

23

The organisation of the Levites for service at the Temple

¹ When David was old after a long life, he made his son Solomon king over Israel.² David gathered all the leaders of Israel as well as the priests and the Levites.³ The Levites who were thirty years old or more were counted and the number of individual men was thirty-eight thousand.⁴ David said: “Twenty-four thousand of these shall supervise the work in the Temple of the LORD and six thousand shall be officers and judges!⁵ Four thousand shall be gatekeepers and four thousand shall be men who praise the LORD, using the instruments that I have made for giving praise!”⁶ David organised them in divisions corresponding to the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath and Merari.

The descendants of Gershon

⁷ Ladan and Shimei had been the sons of Gershon.⁸ The three sons of Ladan had been Jehiel, the first, and then Zetham and Joel.⁹ The three sons of Shimei had been Shelomoth, Haziël and Haran. These were the heads of the paternal families of Ladan.¹⁰ The sons of Shimei had been Jahath, Zina, Jeush and Beriah. These had been the four sons of Shimei.

¹¹ Jahath had been the first, and Zizah was the second. However, Jeush and Beriah had not had many sons and so they were assigned responsibility as a single paternal family.

The descendants of Kohath

¹² The four sons of Kohath had been Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel.¹³ The sons of Amram had been Aaron and Moses. Aaron had been set apart to consecrate the most holy things, that he and his descendants might for ever offer sacrifices before the LORD, minister to Him and pronounce blessings in His name for ever.¹⁴ Moreover, the sons of Moses, the man of God, had been reckoned as part of the tribe of Levi.¹⁵ The sons of Moses had been Gershom and Eliezer.¹⁶ Shebuel had been the first of the sons of Gershom.¹⁷ The first son of Eliezer had been Rehabiah. Eliezer had had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah had been very numerous.¹⁸ The first of the sons of Izhar had been Shelomith.¹⁹ The sons of Hebron had been Jeriah the first, Amariah, the second, Jahaziel, the third and Jekameam, the fourth.²⁰ The sons of Uzziel had been Micah, the first, and Jisshiah the second.

The descendants of Merari

²¹ The sons of Merari had been Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli had been Eleazar and Kish.²² Eleazar had died without having sons but only daughters. Their relatives, the sons of Kish, had married them.²³ The three sons of Mushi had been Mahli, Eder and Jeremoth.

²⁴ These had been the descendants of Levi by their paternal families, the leaders of the paternal families as they were registered according to the number of the names of the individuals from twenty years old or more. They were to do the work for the service of the Temple of the LORD.²⁵ For David had said: “The LORD, the God of Israel, has given rest to His people and has begun to dwell in Jerusalem for ever.²⁶ The Levites no longer need to carry the Tabernacle or any of the equipment used in its service.”

²⁷ For according to the last instructions of David the descendants of Levi from twenty years old or more were counted.²⁸ Indeed, their duty was to assist the descendants of Aaron in the service of the Temple of the LORD. They were in charge of the courts, the side-rooms, the cleaning of all the sacred things and any other work in the service of the Temple of God.²⁹ Their duty was also to assist with the bread that was set out, the flour for the grain-offerings, the thin cakes of bread baked without yeast, the flat baking pans, the offering mixed with oil and all kinds of measures of quantity and size.³⁰ Their duty was also to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD. They were to do the same in the evening.³¹ They were also to be before the LORD constantly whenever burnt offerings were sacrificed to the LORD on Sabbaths, New Moons and appointed feasts, in the required number and in the manner prescribed for them.³² The Levites

carried out their responsibility for the Tent of Meeting and for the Holy Place and their responsibility to their relatives, the descendants of Aaron, in the service of the Temple of the LORD.

24

The organisation of the divisions of the priests

¹ These were the divisions of the sons of Aaron: The sons of Aaron had been Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ² However, Nadab and Abihu had died before their father did and had no children. So, Eleazar and Ithamar had served as the priests. ³ With the help of Zadok, one of the descendants of Eleazar, and Ahimelech, one of the descendants of Ithamar, David put them in divisions according to their appointed duties in their service. ⁴ Since a larger number of leaders were found among Eleazar's descendants than among Ithamar's, they allocated them in such a way that Eleazar's descendants had sixteen leaders of paternal families, and Ithamar's descendants had eight leaders of paternal families. ⁵ They put them into divisions impartially by lot. For there were officials of the sanctuary and officials of God among both the descendants of Eleazar and the descendants of Ithamar. ⁶ The scribe Shemaiah, the son of Nethanel, a Levite, recorded them in the presence of the king, the princes, Zadok, the priest, Ahimelech, the son of Abiathar, and the leaders of the paternal families of the priests and of the Levites. One paternal family was chosen for Eleazar, and then one was chosen for Ithamar. ⁷ The first lot that came out was for Jehoiarib, the second for Jedaiah, ⁸ the third for Harim, the fourth for Seorim, ⁹ the fifth for Malchijah, the sixth for Mijamin, ¹⁰ the seventh for Hakkoz, the eighth for Abijah, ¹¹ the ninth for Jeshua, the tenth for Shecaniah, ¹² the eleventh for Eliashib, the twelfth for Jakim, ¹³ the thirteenth for Huppah, the fourteenth for Jeshebeab, ¹⁴ the fifteenth for Bilgah, the sixteenth for Immer, ¹⁵ the seventeenth for Hezir, the eighteenth for Happizzes, ¹⁶ the nineteenth for Pethahiah, the twentieth for Jehezkel, ¹⁷ the twenty-first for Jachin, the twenty-second for Gamul, ¹⁸ the twenty-third for Delaiah and the twenty-fourth for Maaziah. ¹⁹ These had their appointed order of their service, so that they came into the Temple of the LORD according to the procedure established for them by their forefather Aaron, as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded him.

The organisation of the rest of the Levites

²⁰ Concerning the rest of Levi's descendants, there had been Shubael, one of the sons of Amram and Jehdeiah, one of the sons of Shubael. ²¹ As for Rehabiah, the first of Rehabiah's sons had been Isshiah. ²² There had been Shelomoth, one of Izhar's descendants and Jahath, one of the sons of Shelomoth. ²³ Jeriah had been the [first] of [Hebron's] sons, the second had been Amariah, Jahaziel had been the third, and Jekameam had been the fourth. ²⁴ Micah had been

one of the sons of Uzziel, and Shamir was one of the sons of Micah. ²⁵ Isshiah had been Micah's brother, and Zechariah had been one of the sons of Isshiah. ²⁶ The sons of Merari had been Mahli and Mushi. Beno had been one of the sons of Jaaziah. ²⁷ Merari's descendants by his son Jaaziah had been Shoham, Zaccur and Ibri. ²⁸ Mahli's son had been Eleazar, but he had no sons. ²⁹ Concerning Kish, Jerahmeel had been one of the sons of Kish. ³⁰ The sons of Mushi had been Mahli, Eder and Jerimoth. These had been the descendants of the Levites according to their paternal families. ³¹ They also cast lots, exactly as their other relatives who had descended from Aaron had done, in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech and the leaders of the families of the priests and of the Levites. The families of the eldest brother were treated exactly as those of the youngest.

25

David's appointment of musicians for the Temple

¹ David, together with the commanders of the army, also set apart for the service the sons of Asaph, of Heman and of Jeduthun, to serve as prophets with lyres, harps and cymbals. This is the list of the men who performed this service: ² Of the sons of Asaph there were Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah and Asharelah. The sons of Asaph were under the direction of Asaph, and he prophesied under the direction of the king. ³ Concerning Jeduthun, the six sons of Jeduthun were Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiyah, Shimei, Hashabiah and Mattithiah. They were under the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with the lyre in thanksgiving and praise to the LORD. ⁴ Concerning Heman, the sons of Heman were Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Josh-bekashah, Mallothi, Hothir and Mahazioth. ⁵ All these were the sons of Heman, the king's seer. They were given to him according to God's promises to exalt him. For God had given Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. ⁶ All these men were under the direction of their fathers as they sang in the Temple of the LORD, with cymbals, harps and lyres, for the service at the Temple of God. Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman were under the direction of the king. ⁷ They, together with their relatives, who had been trained in singing to the LORD, all who were skilful, numbered two hundred and eighty-eight. ⁸ Young and old alike, teachers as well as students, they cast lots for their duties. ⁹ The first lot, which was for Asaph, came out for Joseph. The second came out for Gedaliah. He, his brothers and his sons numbered twelve. ¹⁰ The third came out for Zaccur. He, his sons and his brothers numbered twelve. ¹¹ The fourth came out for Jizri. He, his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹² The fifth came out for Nethaniah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹³ The sixth came out for Bukkiah. He

with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹⁴ The seventh came out for Jesharelah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹⁵ The eighth came out for Jeshaiiah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹⁶ The ninth came out for Mattaniah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹⁷ The tenth came out for Shimei. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹⁸ The eleventh came out for Azarel. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ¹⁹ The twelfth came out for Hashabiah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²⁰ The thirteenth came out for Shubael. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²¹ The fourteenth came out for Mattithiah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²² The fifteenth came out for Jeremoth. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²³ The sixteenth came out for Hananiah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²⁴ The seventeenth came out for Joshbekashah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²⁵ The eighteenth came out for Hanani. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²⁶ The nineteenth came out for Mallothi. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²⁷ The twentieth came out for Eliathah. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²⁸ The twenty-first came out for Hothir. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ²⁹ The twenty-second came out for Giddalti. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ³⁰ The twenty-third came out for Mahazioth. He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve. ³¹ The twenty-fourth came out for Romamti-Ezer: He with his sons and relatives numbered twelve.

26

The appointment of gatekeepers for the Temple

¹ The divisions of the gatekeepers were as follows: Among the descendants of Korah there was Meshelemiah, the son of Kore, one of the descendants of Asaph. ² Meshelemiah had sons. His first-born was Zechariah, Jediael was the second, Zebadiah was the third, Jathniel was the fourth, ³ Elam was the fifth, Jehohanan was the sixth, and Elyehoenai was the seventh. ⁴ Obed-Edom had sons. Shemaiah was his first-born, Jehozabad was the second, Joah was the third, Sachar was the fourth, Nethanel was the fifth, ⁵ Ammiel was the sixth, Issachar was the seventh and Peullethai was the eighth. For God had blessed him. ⁶ His son Shemaiah also had sons, who were leaders of their paternal family, because they were very capable men. ⁷ The sons of Shemaiah were Othni, Rephahel, Obed and El-Zabad. His relatives Elihu and Semachiah were capable men. ⁸ All these were descendants of Obed-Edom. They, their sons and their other relatives were capable men, with the strength to carry out the service. ⁹ Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, who were eighteen capable men. ¹⁰ Hosah, one of the descendants of Merari, had sons: Shimri was the first,

for, although he had not been the first-born, his father had appointed him as the first. ¹¹ Hilkiyah was the second, Tebaliah was the third and Zechariah was the fourth. There were, in all, thirteen sons and other relatives of Hosah. ¹² These divisions of the gatekeepers, listed by their chief men, had duties as they ministered in the Temple of the LORD, just as their other relatives had. ¹³ Young and old alike, they cast lots for each gate, according to their paternal families. ¹⁴ The lot for the eastern side fell to Shelemiah. They cast lots also for his son Zechariah, a wise counsellor, and his lot came out for the northern side. ¹⁵ Obed-Edom's lot came out for the southern side, and the lot for the storehouse fell to his sons. ¹⁶ The lots for the western side and the Shallecheth Gate on the ascending road fell to Shuppim and Hosah. One guarding division was beside another. ¹⁷ On the eastern side there were the six Levites, on the northern side there were four each day, on the southern side there were four each day and there were two at a time at the storehouse. ¹⁸ For the court on the western side there were four at the road and two at the court itself. ¹⁹ These were the divisions of the gatekeepers, who were the descendants of Korah and Merari.

The allocation of other Levites as treasurers for the Temple and judges

²⁰ Among the other Levites, Ahijah was in charge of the treasuries of the Temple of God and of the treasuries of the dedicated gifts. ²¹ The descendants of Ladan, who were descendants of Gershon through Ladan and who were the heads of the paternal families belonging to Ladan, the descendant of Gershon, were Jehieli, ²² and the sons of Jehieli, Zetham and his brother Joel. They were in charge of the treasuries of the Temple of the LORD. ²³ Belonging to the descendants of Amram, of Izhar, of Hebron and of Uzziel ²⁴ there was Shebuel, a descendant of Gershom, who had been the son of Moses. He was the chief officer in charge of the treasuries. ²⁵ His relatives through Eliezer had been his son Rehabiah, his son Jeshaiiah, his son Joram, his son Zichri and his son Shelomoth. ²⁶ This Shelomoth and his relatives were in charge of all the treasuries for the dedicated gifts that King David, the heads of the paternal families, the officers of the units of a thousand and units of a hundred and the other commanders of the army had dedicated. ²⁷ They had dedicated some of the plunder taken in battles to maintain the Temple of the LORD. ²⁸ There was also everything that Samuel the seer, Saul, the son of Kish, Abner, the son of Ner, and Joab, the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated. All such dedicated gifts were in the care of Shelomoth and his relatives.

The allocation of Levites to oversee the worship of Israel

²⁹ Among the descendants of Izhar there were Chenaniah and his sons. They were employed in external duties, as officers and judges over Israel. ³⁰ Among the descendants of Hebron there were Hashabiah and his relatives, one thousand, seven hundred capable

men. They were responsible for the administration of Israel on the western side of the Jordan in connection with all the work of the LORD and the service of the king. ³¹ Among the descendants of Hebron there was Jerijah. He was the chief of the descendants of Hebron according to the genealogical records of their paternal families. In the fortieth year of David's reign a search was made for them, and capable men were found among them at Jazer in Gilead. ³² Jeriah had two thousand, seven hundred relatives, who were capable men and the leaders of paternal families. King David put them in charge of the descendants of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of the descendants of Manasseh in every matter that related to God and the king.

27

The divisions of David's army

¹ This is the list of the Israelites who were the heads of their paternal families, the commanders of units of a thousand and units of a hundred and their officers who used to serve the king in all matters concerning the army divisions. These came on duty and left every month throughout the year. Each division consisted of twenty-four thousand men: ² Jashobeam, the son of Zabdiel, was in charge of the first division for the first month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ³ He was one of the descendants of Perez and was the chief of all the officers of the army for the first month. ⁴ Dodai, a descendant of Ahoh, was in charge of the division for the second month. Although it was his division, Mikloth was the commander. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ⁵ Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the Chief Priest, was the third army commander, for the third month. He was the chief, and there were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ⁶ This was the Benaiah who was a warrior among the Thirty. He was also in command of the Thirty as well as his division. His son was Ammizabad. ⁷ Asahel, the brother of Joab, was the fourth, for the fourth month. His son Zebadiah was his successor. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ⁸ Shamhuth, the descendant of Izrah, was the fifth commander, for the fifth month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ⁹ Ira, the son of Ikkesh from Tekoa, was the sixth, for the sixth month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ¹⁰ Helez, the Pelonite, one of the descendants of Ephraim, was the seventh, for the seventh month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ¹¹ Sibbecai, a descendant of Hushah, a Zerahite, was the eighth, for the eighth month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ¹² Abiezer from Anathoth, a descendant of Benjamin, was the ninth, for the ninth month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ¹³ Mahrai from Netophah, a Zerahite, was the tenth, for the tenth month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ¹⁴ Benaiah from Pirathon, one of the de-

scendants of Ephraim, was the eleventh, for the eleventh month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division. ¹⁵ Heldai from Netophah, a descendant of Othniel, was the twelfth, for the twelfth month. There were twenty-four thousand men in his division.

The officers over the tribes

¹⁶ There were men in charge of the tribes of Israel. Eliezer, the son of Zichri, was the chief officer in command of the descendants of Reuben. Shephatiah, the son of Maacah, was in command of the descendants of Simeon. ¹⁷ Hashabiah, the son of Kemuel, was in command of Levi. Zadok was in command of Aaron. ¹⁸ Elihu, one of David's brothers, was in command of Judah. Omri, the son of Michael, was in command of Issachar. ¹⁹ Ishmaiah, the son of Obadiah, was in command of Zebulun. Jeremoth, the son of Azriel, was in command of Naphtali. ²⁰ Hoshea, the son of Azaziah, was in command of the descendants of Ephraim. Joel, the son of Pedaiah, was in command of the half-tribe of Manasseh. ²¹ Iddo, the son of Zechariah, was in command of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead. Jaasiel, the son of Abner, was in command of Benjamin. ²² Azarel, the son of Jeroham, was in command of Dan. These were the officers of the tribes of Israel.

The counting of Israel

²³ David did not count those who were twenty years old or under. For the LORD had promised to make Israel as numerous as the stars in the sky. ²⁴ Joab, the son of Zeruiah, had begun to count but had not finished. Wrath came on Israel for this numbering, and the number was not entered in the annals of King David.

The king's civic officials

²⁵ Azmaveth, the son of Adiel, was in charge of the royal storehouses. Jonathan, the son of Uzziah, was in charge of the storehouses in the fields, cities, villages and towers. ²⁶ Ezri, the son of Chelub, was in charge of those who worked in the fields cultivating the soil. ²⁷ Shimei from Ramah was in charge of the vineyards and Zabdi from Shepham was in charge of the produce of the vineyards for the wine cellars. ²⁸ Baal-Hanan from Gedor was the supervisor of the olive and sycamore-fig trees in the foothills and Joash was in charge of the stores of olive-oil. ²⁹ Shitrai from Sharon was in charge of the herds grazing in Sharon. Shaphat, the son of Adlai, was in charge of the herds in the valleys. ³⁰ Obil the Ishmaelite was in charge of the camels. Jehdeiah from Meronoth was in charge of the donkeys. ³¹ Jaziz, a descendant of Hagar, was in charge of the flocks. All these were overseers of King David's property. ³² Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counsellor, a man of insight and a scribe. He and Jehiel, the son of Hachmoni, took care of the king's sons. ³³ Ahithophel was the king's adviser and Hushai, a descendant of Archi, was the king's companion. ³⁴ Jehoiada, the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar succeeded Ahithophel. Joab was the commander of

the king's army.

28

David's public assembly in Jerusalem and his plans for the Temple

¹ David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officers over the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of units of a thousand, the commanders of units of a hundred, the stewards of all the property and livestock of the king and his sons, as well as the palace-officials, the mighty warriors and all the other brave warriors. ² Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Listen to me, my relatives and my people! I had dearly wished to build a Temple where the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD might rest to be the footstool of our God and I had prepared to build it. ³ However, God told me, 'You shall not build a Temple for My name! For you are a man of war and have shed blood.' ⁴ Nevertheless, the LORD, the God of Israel has chosen me from all my father's family to be king over Israel for ever. For He has chosen Judah as leader and my father's house inside the family of Judah and among my father's sons. He has taken pleasure in making me king over all Israel. ⁵ From all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) He has also chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. ⁶ He has told me, 'Solomon your son is the one who will build My Temple and My courts. For I have chosen him to be My son and I shall be his Father. ⁷ I shall establish his kingdom for ever if he is as firm in keeping My Commandments and My Decisions as he is today.' ⁸ Now therefore, while all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, is watching us and while God is listening to us, observe and search for all the Commandments of the LORD, your God, that you may possess this good land and pass it on as an inheritance to your descendants after you for ever!

David's instructions to Solomon about the Temple

⁹ "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father and serve him wholeheartedly and with a willing mind! For the LORD searches all hearts and understands every tendency of thought. If you look for Him, He will let you find Him but, if you forsake Him, He will declare you rejected for ever. ¹⁰ Be careful now! For the LORD has chosen you to build a Temple for the sanctuary. Be strong and do it!"

¹¹ Then David gave his son Solomon the plans of the vestibule of the Temple and of its buildings, its store-rooms, its upper rooms, its inner rooms and of the room for the propitiatory cover. ¹² He also gave him the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the Temple of the LORD, for all the surrounding side-rooms, for the treasuries of the Temple of God and the treasuries for dedicated gifts. ¹³ He gave him instructions for the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, for all the work of serving in the Temple of the LORD and for all the articles used in

serving in the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁴ He gave instructions for the weight of gold for all golden articles to be used for each kind of service and for the weight of all silver articles to be used for each kind of service. ¹⁵ He gave instructions for the weight of the golden lampstands and their lamps, the weight of gold for each lampstand and its lamps, for the weight of silver for each lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each lampstand in the service. ¹⁶ He gave instructions about the weight of gold for the tables for the bread set out in rows, for each table and the silver for the silver tables. ¹⁷ He gave instructions for the meat-forks, the bowls used for pouring and the jars of pure gold, for the golden bowls and the weight of each bowl and for the silver bowls and the weight of each bowl. ¹⁸ He gave instructions for the altar of incense, made of refined gold, and its weight. He also gave him the plan for the golden chariot, that is, the golden cherubim, which are spreading their wings and covering the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD. ¹⁹ David said: "All this I have in writing from the hand of the LORD on me. He made me understand all the work to be done according to the plan."

²⁰ Then David told his son Solomon: "Be strong and courageous and do it! Do not be afraid or dismayed! For the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not abandon you or forsake you until you finish all the work for the service of the Temple of the LORD. ²¹ Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the Temple of God. You will also have with you every willing man who is skilled in any workmanship. The officers and all the people will also be completely at your command."

29

Gifts for building the Temple

¹ King David told the whole assembly: "My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced and the work is great. For the Temple will not be for a human being but for the LORD God.

² With all my resources I have provided for the Temple of my God the gold for the golden things, the silver for the silver things, the bronze for the bronze things, the iron for the iron things and wood for the wooden things, besides great quantities of onyx and frames in which gems are set, turquoise, variegated stone, all other kinds of precious stones and marble.

³ Moreover, because I delight in the Temple of my God, I have a treasure of gold and silver that is my own and have donated it to the Temple of my God, in addition to everything else that I have prepared for the holy Temple: ⁴ one hundred and five thousand kilograms of gold, gold from Ophir and two hundred and forty five thousand kilograms of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the buildings, ⁵ the gold for the golden objects and the silver for the silver objects and for everything that the craftsmen will make. Who, therefore, will make a voluntary contribution and con-

secrete himself to the LORD today?"

⁶ Then the leaders of the paternal families made their voluntary contributions, as did also the leaders of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of units of a thousand and of units of a hundred and the officials in charge of the king's work. ⁷ They donated, for the service of the Temple of God, a hundred and seventy-five thousand kilograms of gold, ten thousand darics of gold, three hundred and fifty thousand kilograms of silver, six hundred and thirty thousand kilograms of bronze and three million five hundred thousand kilograms of iron.

⁸ Whoever had precious stones donated them to the treasury of the Temple of the LORD, in the care of Jehiel, who was a descendant from Gershon. ⁹ The people were glad that the leaders had contributed so generously. For they had contributed freely and wholeheartedly to the LORD. King David was also overjoyed.

David's prayer after contributions were made for the Temple

¹⁰ Then David blessed the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly. David said: "Blessed are You, LORD, the God of Israel, our Father, from eternity to eternity! ¹¹ **To You, LORD, belong** the greatness, **the power**, the splendour, the **glory** and the majesty. For everything that is in heaven and on earth is Yours. To You, O LORD, belongs **the kingdom**, and You exalt Yourself as Head over everything. ¹² Both riches and honour come from You, and You rule over everything. In Your hand are power and strength. It is also in Your control to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³ Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name. ¹⁴ However, who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to contribute as willingly as this? Yes, everything comes from You, and we have donated to You only what has come from Your hand. ¹⁵ For we are strangers and foreigners before You, as all our fathers have been. Our days on earth are like a shadow and without hope. ¹⁶ LORD, our God, all this abundance, which we have prepared to build a Temple for You, for Your holy name, comes from Your own hand, and all of it is Your own."

¹⁷ "I know, my God, that You test the heart and delight in uprightness. With an upright heart I have willingly offered all these things. Now I have also seen your people, who are present here, offering willingly and joyfully to You. ¹⁸ O LORD, the God of our fa-

thers Abraham, Isaac and Israel, preserve this motivation in the hearts of your people for ever and fix their hearts toward Yourself! ¹⁹ Grant to my son Solomon perfect devotion, that he may keep Your Commandments, Your Testimonies and Your Prescriptions and that he may carry out everything to build the Temple for which I have provided!"

²⁰ Then David told all the assembly, "Now bless the LORD, your God!"

The whole assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their fathers, bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king. ²¹ They offered sacrifices to the LORD, and, on the next day, they sacrificed burnt offerings to the LORD: one thousand bulls, one thousand rams and one thousand lambs, with their drink offerings and a great number of other sacrifices for all Israel. ²² They ate and drank very joyfully before the LORD on that day.

The appointment of Solomon as the next king — 1 Kings 1:38-40, 2 Kings 2:12

For a second time they made Solomon, the son of David, king and anointed him for the LORD to be the leader and Zadok to be the priest. ²³ Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as the king to succeed his father David. He was successful, and all Israel obeyed him. ²⁴ All the leaders and the capable men, as well as all the sons of King David, submitted to King Solomon. ²⁵ The LORD made all Israel esteem Solomon very highly and bestowed on him such royal majesty as no other king of Israel had had before him.

A summary of David's reign — 1 Kings 2:10-12

²⁶ David, the son of Jesse, had been the king over all Israel. ²⁷ The time during which he had reigned over Israel was forty years. He had been reigning in Hebron for seven years and in Jerusalem for thirty-three years. ²⁸ Then he died at a good age, after a long life, wealthy and honoured. His son Solomon succeeded him as king. ²⁹ The acts of King David, from the first to the last, have been written down in the records of Samuel, the seer, in the records of the prophet Nathan and in the records of Gad, the seer. ³⁰ They include everything about his reign, his might and the events that happened to him, to Israel and to all the kingdoms of the other countries.

2 CHRONICLES

1

Solomon's request to God for wisdom — 1 Kings 3:1-15, 10:26-29

¹ Solomon, the son of David, established himself firmly over his kingdom, and the LORD, his God, was with him and made him exceedingly great. ² Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of units of a thousand and of units of a hundred, to the judges and to all the leaders throughout Israel, the heads of the paternal families. ³ Then Solomon, together with the whole assembly, went to the high place at Gibeon. For God's Tent of Meeting, which Moses, the servant of the LORD, had made in the wilderness, was there.

⁴ However, David had brought up the Ark of God from Kiriath-Jearim to the place that David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem. ⁵ Moreover, the bronze altar that Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made was there in front of the Tabernacle of the LORD. Solomon and the assembly asked for advice there. ⁶ Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which was at the Tent of Meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it. ⁷ That night God appeared to Solomon and told him, "Ask what I am to give you!"

⁸ Solomon said to God: "You have shown great faithful love to David, my father, and have caused me to succeed him as king. ⁹ Now, LORD God, let Your promise to my father David be confirmed! For You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust on the ground. ¹⁰ Now, give me wisdom and knowledge that I may be fully involved with this people! For who can be a judge of this people of yours, which is so great?"

¹¹ God told Solomon: "Because this has been your sincere wish and because you have not asked for wealth, riches, honour or the lives of those who hate you or even asked for a long life but have asked that you may have wisdom and knowledge, that you may use it to judge My people, over whom I have made you king, ¹² wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. I shall also give you wealth, riches and honour, such as none of the other kings who have been before you have had and such as none after you will have."

¹³ Then Solomon went to Jerusalem from the high place at Gibeon, from before the Tent of Meeting, and began to reign over Israel.

Solomon's military and commercial activity — 1 Kings 10:26-29, 2 Chronicles 9:25-28

¹⁴ Solomon accumulated chariots and horses. He had one thousand, four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities as well as with the king in Jerusalem. ¹⁵ The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones and made cedars as plentiful as the sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. ¹⁶ Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Cilicia. The king's traders used to get

them from Cilicia at the market price. ¹⁷ They used to import a chariot from Egypt for seven kilograms and two hundred grams of silver and a horse for one kilogram and eight hundred grams. In this way these traders also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

2

The provision of wood and stone for the Temple — 1 Kings 5:1-18, 7:13-14

¹ Solomon gave orders to begin building a Temple for the name of the LORD and a royal palace for himself.

² Solomon assigned seventy thousand men to carry loads, eighty thousand men to quarry in the hill-country and three thousand, six hundred men to supervise them.

Solomon's alliance with Hiram of Tyre — 1 Kings 5:1-18

³ Solomon sent this message to Hiram, the king of Tyre: "As you did for my father David when you sent him cedar logs to build himself a palace to live in, do the same for me! ⁴ You see, I am about to build a Temple for the name of the LORD, my God, and dedicate it to Him for the burning of perfumed incense before Him, for the regular setting out of the rows of bread and for burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths, the New Moons and the appointed feasts of the LORD, our God. This is a lasting ordinance for Israel. ⁵ The Temple that I am about to build will be great. For our God is greater than all other gods are.

⁶ However, who can build Him a Temple, since heaven, even the highest heaven, cannot contain Him? Who, therefore, am I, that I should build a Temple for Him, except as a place to burn offerings before Him?

⁷ Now therefore, send me a man who has the skill to work in gold, silver, bronze and iron and in maroon, crimson and purple wool and who is also experienced in the art of engraving, that he may be in Judah and Jerusalem with the skilled craftsmen who are with me, whom my father David has provided! ⁸ Send me also cedar, cypress and algum logs from Lebanon! For I myself know that your servants are experts in cutting timber in Lebanon. Then, you see, my servants will join your servants, ⁹ to prepare plenty of timber for me. For the Temple that I am about to build will be large and wonderful. ¹⁰ Indeed, I have supplied three thousand, three hundred and seventy tonnes of crushed wheat, three thousand, three hundred and seventy tonnes of barley, four hundred and forty kilolitres of wine and four hundred and forty kilolitres of olive-oil for your servants, the timber-cutters who fell the timber."

¹¹ Then Hiram, the king of Tyre, answered in a letter that he sent to Solomon, "Because the LORD loves His people, He has made you king over them."

¹² Hiram also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has made the heaven and the earth! He has given King David a wise son, who is endowed with

understanding and insight, who will build a Temple for the LORD and a royal palace for himself. ¹³ Now therefore, I am sending a skilful and intelligent man, Hiram-Abi. ¹⁴ He is the son of one of the women descended from Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre. He is an experienced workman in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone and wood and in wool dyed maroon, in purple wool, fine linen and crimson material. He is experienced in all kinds of engraving and can execute any design given to him. He will work with your craftsmen and with the craftsmen of my master, your father David. ¹⁵ Now, therefore let my master send to his servants the wheat, barley, oil and wine that he has promised! ¹⁶ We ourselves shall cut all the logs that you need from Lebanon and bring them in rafts by sea to Joppa for you, that you may take them up to Jerusalem.”

¹⁷ Then Solomon took a census of all the foreigners living in the land of Israel, after the census that his father David had taken of them, and they were found to number one hundred and fifty-three thousand, six hundred. ¹⁸ He assigned seventy-thousand of them to carry loads, eighty thousand to quarry in the hill-country and three thousand, six hundred as supervisors to put the people to work.

3

The building of the Temple in seven years — 1 Kings 6:1-22

¹ Then Solomon began to build the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared, at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ² He began to build on the second day of the second month of the fourth year of his reign. ³ This was the foundation that Solomon laid for building the Temple of God: it was thirty metres long, according to the old measurement for the cubit and ten metres wide. ⁴ The vestibule in front of the nave of the Temple was ten metres long, equal to the width of the Temple, and was sixty metres high. He overlaid the inside of it with pure gold. ⁵ He panelled the main hall with cypress, overlaid it with fine gold and decorated it with palms and chains. ⁶ He covered the Temple with precious stones to beautify it. The gold came from Parvaim. ⁷ He also overlaid the beams, door-frames, walls and doors of the Temple with gold and carved cherubim on the walls. ⁸ He made the room for the Most Holy Place. Its length corresponded to the width of the Temple, and was ten metres wide. He overlaid it with twenty-one thousand kilograms of fine gold. ⁹ The golden nails weighed six hundred grams. He also overlaid the roof chambers with gold. ¹⁰ In the room for the Most Holy Place he made images of two cherubim and overlaid them with gold. ¹¹ The combined length of the wings of the cherubim was ten metres. One wing of the first cherub was two metres and a half long and touched the wall of the Temple and its other wing, two metres and a half long,

touched the wing of the other cherub. ¹² One wing of the second cherub was two metres and a half long and touched the other wall of the Temple and the other wing was two metres and a half long and touched the wing of the first cherub. ¹³ The wings of these cherubim extended for ten metres. The cherubim were standing on their feet, facing inwards. ¹⁴ He made the veil of purple wool, maroon wool, crimson fabric and fine linen and decorated it with cherubim. ¹⁵ He made two pillars in front of the Temple. They were seventeen and a half metres high, and the capital on the top of each was two and a half metres. ¹⁶ He made chains like the ones in the inner sanctuary and put them on the tops of the pillars. He also made a hundred pomegranates attached them to the chains. ¹⁷ He erected the pillars in front of the Temple, one on the south and the other on the north. He named the southern one “Jachin,”*¹¹² and named the northern one “Boaz.”*¹¹³

4

The furnishings in the Temple — 1 Kings 6:23-38, 7:13-51

¹ Solomon made an altar of bronze, ten metres long, ten metres wide and five metres high. ² He also made the pool of cast metal. It was circular, five metres across from rim to rim and two and a half metres high and took a line of fifteen metres to measure its circumference. ³ Under it, figures of bulls encircled it, ten to each half a metre, going all around the pool. The bulls were in two rows, cast in one piece with the pool. ⁴ The pool was mounted on twelve bulls, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east. The pool was set over them, and their hindquarters were all towards the middle. ⁵ It was a handbreadth in thickness. Its brim was made like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily. It held one hundred and twenty thousand litres. ⁶ He also made ten basins in which to wash and placed five on the southern side and five on the northern side. In these they were to rinse off what was used for the burnt offering, but the pool was for the priests to wash in. ⁷ He made ten golden lampstands according to the specifications for them and placed them in the Temple, five on the south and five on the north. ⁸ He also made ten tables and placed them in the Temple, five on the southern side and five on the northern side. He also made a hundred golden bowls for pouring. ⁹ He also made the courtyard of the priests, the large court and doors for the court and overlaid their doors with bronze. ¹⁰ He placed the pool on the right side, toward the south-east. ¹¹ Hiram also made the pots, the shovels and the bowls used for pouring. So, Hiram finished the work that he had been doing for King Solomon at the Temple of God: ¹² the two pillars, the bowl-shaped ornaments, and two capitals on the tops of the pillars and the two lattice networks to cover the bowl-

¹¹² Jachin means, “He establishes.”

¹¹³ Boaz means, “In Him is strength.”

shaped capitals that were on the tops of the pillars.¹³ He made the four hundred pomegranates for the two lattice networks with two rows of pomegranates for each lattice network to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals that were on the tops of the pillars.¹⁴ He also made the movable stands, the basins on the stands,¹⁵ the one pool and the twelve bulls underneath it.¹⁶ Hiram-Abi also made the pots, the shovels, the forks and all the equipment for these out of burnished bronze for King Solomon for the Temple of the LORD.¹⁷ The king had them cast in clay casting-moulds in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zeredah.¹⁸ Solomon made very large quantities of all these articles. Indeed, the weight of the bronze was not calculated.¹⁹ Solomon also made all the other furnishings that were in the Temple of God: the golden altar, the tables that held the bread of the Presence,²⁰ the lampstands and their lamps of pure gold, to burn as prescribed in front of the inner sanctuary,²¹ the flowers, the lamps, the tongs, which were of gold, the purest gold;²² the wick-trimmers, the bowls used for pouring, the pans for incense and the fire pans, of pure gold. The doors of the Temple, its inner doors to the Most Holy Place and the doors of the main hall of the Temple were of gold.

5

The bringing up of the Ark of the Covenant into the Temple in Jerusalem — 1 Kings 8:1-11

¹ When all the work that Solomon had been doing for the Temple of the LORD was finished, Solomon brought in the things that his father David had dedicated and placed the silver, the gold and all the other articles in the treasury rooms of the Temple of God.² Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the leaders of the tribes and the leaders of the paternal families of the Israelites in Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from the City of David, which is Zion.³ All the men of Israel assembled before the king at the festival that is in the seventh month.⁴ When all the elders of Israel had come, the Levites took up the Ark.⁵ They brought up the Ark, the Tent of Meeting and all the holy furnishings that were in the tent. The priests, who were Levites, brought them up.⁶ King Solomon and the whole congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were in front of the Ark and were sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted.⁷ Then the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD to its place in the inner sanctuary of the Temple, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim.⁸ The cherubim were spreading out their wings over the place of the Ark, so that the cherubim above it covered the Ark and its poles.⁹ The poles were so long that the ends of the poles, extending from the Ark, could be seen from in front of the inner sanctuary. However, they could not be seen from outside. They have been there to this

day.¹⁰ There was nothing in the Ark except the two tablets that Moses had placed there at Horeb, where the LORD had made a Covenant with the Israelites, when they had come out of Egypt.¹¹ Then the priests came out of the Holy Place. For all the priests who were present had consecrated themselves, without regard to their divisions.¹² All the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun, their sons and other relatives, were dressed in fine linen, holding cymbals, harps and lyres, and were standing on the eastern side of the altar. One hundred and twenty priests blowing trumpets accompanied them.¹³ It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make music in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD. When they raised their voices, with the trumpets, the cymbals and the other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD: "For He is good, for His faithful love endures for ever," the house, the Temple of the LORD, was filled with a cloud.¹⁴ The priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, because the glory of the LORD had filled the Temple of God.

6

Solomon's address to the people at the dedication of the Temple — 1 Kings 8:12-21

¹ Then Solomon said: "The LORD has said that He dwells in thick darkness.² However, I have built You a magnificent Temple, a place for You to live in for ever."

³ Then the king turned around and blessed the whole congregation of Israel while the whole congregation of Israel was standing there.⁴ He said: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel! He made a promise with His own mouth to my father David and with His hand He has fulfilled it. He said:⁵ 'Since the day when I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have not chosen any city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a Temple where My name may be and have not chosen anyone to be a prince over My people Israel.⁶ However, I have chosen Jerusalem that My name may be there and have chosen David to be over My people Israel.'⁷ My father David wished to build a Temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.⁸ However, the LORD told my father David, 'Because you desired to build a Temple for My name, you did well in desiring to do it.⁹ Nevertheless, you shall not build the Temple! Rather, your son, who will come from your body, will build the Temple for My name.'¹⁰ The LORD has fulfilled His promise, which He has made. I have succeeded my father, David, and occupied the throne of Israel, as the LORD has promised, and have built the Temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.¹¹ There I have placed the Ark, which contains the Covenant of the LORD, which He has made with the Israelites."

Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple — 1 Kings 8:22-53, Psalm 132:8-10

¹² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD

in front of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. ¹³ For Solomon had made a bronze platform two and a half metres long, two and a half metres wide and one metre and a half high and had placed it in the middle of the court. He stood on it and then he knelt in front of the whole assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. ¹⁴ He said: "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like You, in heaven or on earth. You keep Your Covenant and show faithful love to Your servants, who walk before You with all their hearts. ¹⁵ You have kept Your promise to Your servant, my father David. You have promised it with Your mouth and you have carried it out with Your hand, as is so today. ¹⁶ Now therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, keep Your promise to Your servant, my father David, when You said, 'You will not fail to have a man sitting before Me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons pay close attention to their ways, so that they walk according to My Law as you have been walking before Me!' ¹⁷ Now therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, let Your promise, which You have made to Your servant, David, be confirmed!

¹⁸ "Nevertheless, will God really dwell with man on the earth? Look! The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this Temple, which I have built! ¹⁹ Yet give attention to the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD, my God, and hear the cry and the prayer that Your servant is making before You! ²⁰ May Your eyes be open toward this Temple day and night, toward the place where You have promised to put Your name, that You may listen to the prayer that Your servant is making toward this place! ²¹ Hear the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray toward this place! May You Yourself Hear from heaven, Your dwelling place and, when You hear, forgive!

²² "If a man sins against his neighbour and binds himself with a curse, to place himself under an imprecation and comes and swears his oath before Your altar in this Temple, ²³ then may You Yourself hear from heaven, act and judge Your servants, repaying the guilty person by bringing his conduct on his own head and justifying the righteous person by establishing his innocence!

²⁴ "If Your people Israel are defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against You, turn back, confess Your name, pray and plead before You in this Temple, ²⁵ then hear from heaven, forgive the sin of Your people Israel and bring them again to the land that You gave to them and to their fathers!

²⁶ "When the sky is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You and when they pray towards this place, confess Your name and turn away from their sin, because You have made them suffer, ²⁷ then may You Yourself hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, when You teach them the good Way in which they

should walk and when You give rain on Your land, which You have given to Your people for an inheritance!

²⁸ "When there is famine in the land or a plague, when there is scorching or mildew or locusts or stripping locusts, when their enemies besiege them in the land at their gates or whatever plague or sickness there may be, ²⁹ whenever any human being of all Your people Israel makes any prayer or any supplication, when each one knows his own affliction and his own anguish and spreads out his hands toward this Temple, ³⁰ then may You Yourself hear from heaven, Your dwelling place, and forgive! May You allot to each one as all his ways deserve! For You know his heart. For You, You only, know the hearts of the descendants of Adam. ³¹ Do this, that they may fear You and walk in Your ways all their lives on the land that You have given to our fathers!

³² "Likewise, when the foreigner, who does not belong to Your people Israel, comes from a distant country for the sake of Your great name, Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm — when he comes and prays toward this Temple, ³³ then may You Yourself hear from heaven, Your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of You, that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as Your own people Israel do and that they may know that this Temple, which I have built, bears Your name!

³⁴ "When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way You send them and they pray to You, facing towards this city, which You have chosen and the Temple that I have built for Your name, ³⁵ then may You hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication and do for them what is right!

³⁶ "When they sin against You — for there is no one who does not sin — and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they are taken away as captives to a land that is far away or near, ³⁷ and, when they come back to themselves in the land where they are captives, repent, plead with You in the land where they are captives and say, 'We have sinned, done wrong and acted wickedly,' ³⁸ and when they turn back to You with all their hearts and with all their souls in the land where they are captives and in exile and pray towards their land, which You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen and the Temple that I have built for Your name, ³⁹ then may You hear their prayer and their pleas from heaven, from Your dwelling place, do for them what is right and forgive Your people, who have sinned against You! ⁴⁰ Now, my God, may Your eyes be open and may Your ears be attentive to what is prayed at this place!

⁴¹ "Now therefore, arise, LORD God, and come to Your resting place, You and the Ark of Your strength! May Your priests, LORD God, be clothed with salva-

tion and may Your faithful people rejoice in what is good! ⁴² LORD God, do not reject the one whom You have anointed! Remember Your faithful love towards Your servant David!”

7

The dedication of the Temple with sacrifices — 1 Kings 8:62-66

¹ When Solomon had finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the other sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the Temple. ² The priests could not enter the Temple of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the Temple of the LORD. ³ All the Israelites were watching when the fire came down and the glory of the LORD was on the Temple, and they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement, worshipped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying: “For He is good, for His mercy endures for ever.”

⁴ The king and all the people were offering sacrifices before the LORD. ⁵ King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand cattle and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. The king and all the people dedicated the Temple of God. ⁶ The priests were standing at their assigned places. The Levites also had the musical instruments of the LORD that King David had made for giving thanks to the LORD — for His mercy endures for ever — when David used them to offer praises. The priests were opposite the Levites blowing their trumpets, while all the Israelites were standing. ⁷ Solomon had consecrated the middle part of the court, which was in front of the Temple of the LORD. For there he had offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the peace-offerings, because the bronze altar that Solomon had made could not hold the burnt offerings, the grain-offerings and the pieces of fat. ⁸ At that time Solomon and all Israel with him observed the feast for seven days. It was a very large assembly of people from Lebo-Hamath to the Brook of Egypt. ⁹ On the eighth day they held an assembly. Indeed, they observed the dedication of the altar for seven days and then they celebrated the feast for another seven days. ¹⁰ On the twenty-third day of the seventh month Solomon sent the people away to their homes, joyful and glad in heart because of the goodness that the LORD had shown to David, to Solomon and to His people Israel.

God's second appearance to Solomon and His assurance that He had heard His people's prayers — 1 Kings 9:1-9

¹¹ When Solomon had finished the Temple of the LORD and the king's palace, he had successfully accomplished all that he had planned to do in the Temple of the LORD and in his own palace. ¹² The LORD appeared to Solomon at night and told him: “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place to be My own Temple for sacrifices. ¹³ Look! When I shut up the sky so that there is no rain or when I command the locust to devour the country or if I send a plague among My people, ¹⁴ if My people, who have been

called by My name, humble themselves, pray, try to see My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I Myself shall hear from heaven, shall forgive their sin and heal their land. ¹⁵ Now My eyes will be open and My ears will be attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. ¹⁶ Now therefore, I have chosen and consecrated this Temple, that My name may be there for ever. My eyes and My heart will be there for all time.

¹⁷ As for you, if you walk before Me as David your father has done, if you do exactly as I have commanded you and, if you keep My Prescriptions and My Decisions, ¹⁸ then I shall establish your royal throne, as I covenanted with David your father, when I said, ‘You will never fail to have a man ruling over Israel.’

¹⁹ However, if you people turn aside and forsake My Statutes and My Commandments, which I have set before you and, if you go and serve other gods and worship them, ²⁰ then I shall pull you out by the roots from My land, which I have given you. I shall cast out of My sight this Temple, which I have consecrated for My name, and shall make it a standard warning and an object of ridicule among all other peoples.

²¹ Although this Temple has become very eminent, everyone going past it will be astonished and ask, ‘Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this Temple?’ ²² Then people will answer, ‘Because they have abandoned the LORD, their God, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods and worshipped them and served them. That is why He has brought this entire calamity on them.’”

8

Other activities of King Solomon — 1 Kings 9:10-28

¹ At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon had built the Temple of the LORD and his own palace, ² Solomon rebuilt the cities that Hiram had given to him and settled Israelites in them. ³ Then Solomon went to Hamath-Zobah and captured it. ⁴ He also built up Tadmor in the wilderness as well as all the storage cities that he had built in Hamath. ⁵ He also rebuilt Upper Beth-Horon and Lower Beth-Horon as fortified cities with walls, double-gates and bars. ⁶ He also built Baalath, all the storage cities that Solomon had, all the cities for his chariots, the cities for his horses and everything else that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon and in all the rest of the land over which he ruled. ⁷ All the people who were left from the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who did not belong to Israel, ⁸ that is, their descendants who were left in the land after them, whom the Israelites had not destroyed, these Solomon drafted as forced labour, and that is what they have been until today. ⁹ However, Solomon did not make slaves of the Israelites for his work, but they were the soldiers, the commanders of his officers, the commanders of his chariots and his

horsemen. ¹⁰ These were the two hundred and fifty chief officers of King Solomon, who exercised authority over the people. ¹¹ Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the City of David to the palace that he had built for her. For he said: "My wife shall not live in the house of David, the king of Israel! For the places to which the Ark of the LORD has come are holy."

¹² Then Solomon sacrificed burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built in front of the porch. ¹³ He offered whatever the Law of Moses required for every day, for the Sabbaths, the New Moons and the three annual feasts, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths. ¹⁴ According to the ruling of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their duties and the Levites for their offices of praise and ministry before the priests, as the duty of each day required and the gatekeepers in their divisions at each gate. For this is what David, the man of God, had commanded. ¹⁵ They did not fail to carry out what the king had commanded the priests and Levites in any matter, including that of the treasuries. ¹⁶ All Solomon's work was carried out, from the day when the foundation of the Temple of the LORD was laid until its completion. The Temple of the LORD was now completed. ¹⁷ Then Solomon went to Ezion-Geber and to Elath on the seacoast in the land of Edom. ¹⁸ Hiram sent to Solomon, in the care of his servants, ships and other servants who were familiar with the sea. They went to Ophir together with the servants of Solomon, brought back fifteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty kilograms of gold from there and delivered it to King Solomon.

9

The visit of the Queen of Sheba to Jerusalem — 1 Kings 10:1-13

¹ When **the queen of Sheba** heard how famous Solomon was, she came to test him with difficult questions. She had a very large retinue, camels carrying perfumes and very much gold and precious stones. When she **came to Solomon**, she discussed with him all that she had on her mind. ² Solomon answered all her questions. Nothing was too difficult for Solomon to explain to her. ³ When the queen of Sheba had seen **the wisdom of Solomon**, the palace that he had built, ⁴ the food on his table, how his officials were seated and how his servants waited at the table, their clothing, his cup-bearers and their clothing and his upper room, through which he used to go up to the Temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed. ⁵ She told the king: "The report that I have heard in my own land about your words and about your **wisdom** is true. ⁶ However, I did not believe the reports until I **came** and saw it with my own eyes. Indeed, I was not told half of your great **wisdom**. You have exceeded the report that I heard. ⁷ How advantageous for your men, and how advantageous for your officials, who contin-

ually stand in your presence and listen to your wisdom! ⁸ May the LORD, your God, also be blessed! He takes pleasure in you and has placed you on His throne as king to rule for the LORD, your God. Because your God has loved Israel, He has made you king over them, that you may carry out what is just and right."

⁹ Then she gave the king three thousand, six hundred kilograms of gold, a very large quantity of perfumes and precious stones. There had never been such spices as those that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

¹⁰ Besides that, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum wood and precious stones. ¹¹ The king used the algum wood to make supports for the Temple of the LORD and for the king's palace and to make lyres and harps for the singers. Nothing like them had been seen before in the land of Judah. ¹² King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired and requested. The king gave her more than she had brought to him. Then she left and returned with her officials to her own country.

Solomon's splendour — 1 Kings 5:1, 10:14-29, 2 Chronicles 1:14-17

¹³ The gold that came to Solomon in one year weighed nineteen thousand, nine hundred and eighty kilograms. ¹⁴ This was in addition to the revenue that the traders and merchants kept bringing. All the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land also brought gold and silver to Solomon. ¹⁵ King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold. He used seven kilograms of gold for each shield. ¹⁶ He made three hundred shields of hammered gold. He used three kilograms and six hundred grams of gold to cover each of these shields. The king placed them in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. ¹⁷ The king also made a large ivory throne and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁸ There were six steps going up to the throne, and a golden footstool was attached to it. There were armrests on each side of the seat, and two lions were standing alongside the armrests. ¹⁹ Twelve lions were also standing there on each side of the six steps. Nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. ²⁰ All King Solomon's drinking vessels were golden and all the vessels of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver. Silver was not regarded as valuable at the time of Solomon. ²¹ Indeed, the king had ships that went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. The ships of Tarshish used to come once every three years carrying gold, silver, ivory, apes and baboons. ²² King Solomon was greater in wealth and in wisdom than all the other kings of the earth were. ²³ All the other kings of the earth wanted to have an audience with Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his mind. ²⁴ Each of them brought his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, fragrant substances, perfumes, horses and

mules. This continued year after year. ²⁵ Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots and twelve thousand horses. He stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁶ He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and as far as the border of Egypt. ²⁷ The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem and made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. ²⁸ Horses were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all the other countries.

The death of Solomon — 1 Kings 11:41-43

²⁹ As for the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, have they not been recorded in the history of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah from Shiloh and in the visions of Iddo, the seer, concerning Jeroboam, the son of Nebat? ³⁰ Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years. ³¹ Solomon went to rest with his fathers. He was buried in the city of his father David. His son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

10

The accession of Rehoboam and the rebellion of Israel against him — 1 Kings 12:1-19

¹ Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king. ² Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, had fled from King Solomon to Egypt. Jeroboam heard about it and came back from Egypt.

³ People sent a messenger to invite him back, and Jeroboam and all Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam: ⁴ “Your father put a heavy yoke on us. Now, however, make the hard labour and the heavy yoke that your father imposed on us lighter! Then we shall serve you.”

⁵ Rehoboam answered them, “Come to me again on the day after tomorrow!”

So, the people went away. ⁶ Then King Rehoboam consulted the old men, who had been standing before his father Solomon while he was still alive. He asked: “How do you advise me to reply to these people?”

⁷ They replied to him: “If you are kind to these people, please them and speak favourable words to them, they will always be your servants.”

⁸ However, he rejected the advice that the old men had given him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were standing in his presence.

⁹ He asked them: “What do you advise, that we may reply to these people? They have told me, ‘Make the yoke that your father put on us lighter!’”

¹⁰ The young men who had grown up with him told him: “You must speak in this way to the people who have told you: ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you should make it lighter for us!’ You should tell them this: ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s waist! ¹¹ Now therefore, my father laid a heavy yoke on you. I shall add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I shall discipline you with scorpions.’”

¹² So, Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had said, “Come back to me the day after tomorrow!”

¹³ The king answered them harshly. King Rehoboam rejected the advice of the old men. ¹⁴ He spoke to them as the young men had advised him: “I shall make your yoke heavier. I shall add to it. My father disciplined you with whips, but I shall discipline you with scorpions.”

¹⁵ The king did not listen to the people. For it was a turn of affairs that God had brought about, that the LORD might fulfil His Word, which He had spoken through Ahijah from Shiloh to Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. ¹⁶ When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king: “What claim do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Each of you to your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own family, David!”

So, all Israel went to their tents. ¹⁷ However, Rehoboam reigned over the Israelites who were living in the cities of Judah. ¹⁸ When King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was in charge of the compulsory labour, the Israelites stoned him to death. However, King Rehoboam managed to get into his chariot to escape to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Israel has been in rebellion against the family of David to this day.

11

God’s command to Rehoboam not to try to regain the northern kingdom

¹ When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled the family of Judah and Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand selected fighting men, to fight against Israel, to regain the kingdom for Rehoboam.

² However, the Word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, the man of God. He said: ³ “Tell Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the king of Judah, and all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, ⁴ ‘This is what the LORD has said: “You shall not go up or fight against your relatives! Every man, return to your own home! For this is My doing.’””

So, they listened to the Word of the LORD. They turned back and left and did not go against Jeroboam.

The fortification of Judah by Rehoboam — 1 Kings 12:20-24

⁵ Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built cities to defend Judah. ⁶ He built up Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, ⁷ Beth-Zur, Soco, Adullam, ⁸ Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, ⁹ Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, ¹⁰ Zorah, Aijalon and Hebron. These were fortified cities in Judah and Benjamin. ¹¹ He made the fortifications stronger and put commanders in them, with supplies of food, olive-oil and wine. ¹² He stored shields and spears in all the cities and made the cities very secure. So, Judah and Benjamin continued to belong to him.

The support of Rehoboam by priests and Levites who had been living in Israel — 1 Kings 14:21-24

¹³ The priests and Levites from all their districts throughout Israel committed themselves to Rehoboam. ¹⁴ The Levites even left their pasturelands and

other inherited property and came to Judah and Jerusalem. For Jeroboam and his sons rejected them from serving as priests of the LORD. ¹⁵ Then Jeroboam appointed his own priests for the high places, for the goat idols and for the calves that he had made. ¹⁶ Those who had set their hearts to be intent on the LORD, the God of Israel, followed the Levites out of all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices to the LORD, the God of their fathers. ¹⁷ So, they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and for three years they made Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, more secure. For they walked for three years in the ways of David and Solomon.

The family of Rehoboam

¹⁸ Rehoboam married Mahalath, the daughter of David's son Jerimoth, and of Abihail, the daughter of Jesse's son Eliab. ¹⁹ She bore him the following sons: Jeush, Shemariah and Zaham. ²⁰ After her he married Maacah, the daughter of Absalom. She bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza and Shelomith. ²¹ Rehoboam loved Maacah, the daughter of Absalom more than any of his other wives and concubines. Indeed, he married eighteen wives, had sixty concubines and fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. ²² Rehoboam appointed Abijah, the son of Maacah, as the chief prince among his brothers, because he intended to make him king. ²³ He acted wisely by distributing some of his sons through all the districts of Judah and Benjamin, in all the fortified cities. He supplied them with plenty of provisions and provided many wives for them.

12

The reign of Rehoboam as king of Judah and the removal of the treasures from the Temple in Jerusalem by King Shishak of Egypt – 1 Kings 14:21-31

¹ When Rehoboam had established his kingship and had become strong, he and all Israel with him abandoned the Law of the LORD. ² Because they had been acting unfaithfully to the LORD, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem in the fifth year of King Rehoboam. ³ He came with one thousand, two hundred chariots and sixty thousand horses. The army that came with him from Egypt together with Libyans, Sukkiim and Cushites could not be counted. ⁴ He captured the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem. ⁵ Then the prophet Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and to the princes of Judah, who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak and told them: "This is what the LORD has said, 'You have abandoned Me. I have also abandoned you to the control of Shishak.'" ⁶ Then the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is just." ⁷ When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the Word of the LORD came to Shemaiah: "They have humbled themselves. I shall not destroy them but shall soon grant them some deliverance. I shall not use Shishak to pour out My wrath on Jerusalem.

⁸ Nevertheless, they will be subject to him, that they may know the difference between serving Me and serving the governments of other countries."

⁹ When Shishak, the king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem, he took away the treasures of the Temple of the LORD and the treasures of the king's palace. He took everything away. He also took away the golden shields that Solomon had made. ¹⁰ So, King Rehoboam made shields of bronze to replace them and committed them to the hands of the officers of the bodyguard, who used to protect the entrance of the king's palace. ¹¹ Whenever the king went to the Temple of the LORD, the bodyguard used to carry them and then they used to take them back to the guardroom. ¹² When Rehoboam humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned away from him and He did not completely destroy him.

A summary of the reign of Rehoboam – 1 Kings 14:21-22, 24-31

Moreover, conditions were good in Judah. ¹³ King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and continued as king. Indeed, Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king and reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to put His name. His mother's name was the Ammonite Naamah. ¹⁴ He did what was evil because he had not set his heart on being devoted to the LORD. ¹⁵ As for the records about Rehoboam, the first to the last, have they not been recorded in the records of the prophet Shemaiah and the register of Iddo, the seer? There were continual wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ¹⁶ Rehoboam went to rest with his fathers and was buried in the City of David, and his son Abijah succeeded him as king.

13

The war of King Abijah of Judah against King Jeroboam of Israel – 1 Kings 15:1-8

¹ In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah began to reign over Judah. ² He reigned in Jerusalem for three years. His mother's name was Micaiah, the daughter of Uriel from Gibeah. There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. ³ Abijah got ready for battle with an army of four hundred thousand chosen fighting men. Jeroboam drew up his line of battle against him with eight hundred thousand chosen brave soldiers. ⁴ Then Abijah stood up on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill-country of Ephraim, and said: "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel! ⁵ Do you not realise that the LORD, the God of Israel, has given the kingship over Israel to David and his sons for ever by a Covenant of salt? ⁶ Nevertheless, Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, a servant of Solomon, the son of David, rose up and rebelled against his master. ⁷ Some worthless scoundrels gathered around him and persistently opposed Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young, indecisive and not strong enough to resist them. ⁸ Now therefore, you are planning to re-

sist the kingship of the LORD, which is in the hands of David's descendants. You are an enormous multitude and have with you the golden calves that Jeroboam made for you, to be your gods. ⁹ Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the descendants of Aaron, and the Levites and made priests for yourselves like the peoples of other countries? Anyone who comes to consecrate himself with a young bull or seven rams may become a priest of what are not gods. ¹⁰ However, as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him. We have priests who are sons of Aaron, who are ministering to the LORD, and the Levites are assisting them. ¹¹ They offer burnt offerings and spiced incense to the LORD every morning and every evening. They set out the rows of bread on the ceremonially clean table and care for the golden lampstand and its lamps, that they may burn every evening. For we observe the Requirements of the LORD, our God. You, however, have forsaken Him. ¹² Look! God is with us as our Leader, and here are His priests, and the trumpets that blast to signal for battle against you. Men of Israel, do not fight against the LORD, the God of your fathers! For you will not be successful."

¹³ Jeroboam had sent troops around in an ambush behind them. While they were in front of Judah, the ambush was behind them. ¹⁴ When Judah turned around, they saw that they had to fight in the front and the rear. Then they cried out to the LORD, and the priests blew their trumpets. ¹⁵ Then the men of Judah raised the shout for battle. When the men of Judah shouted, God defeated Jeroboam and all Israel, who were facing Abijah and Judah. ¹⁶ The Israelites fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hands. ¹⁷ Abijah and his army struck them down in a great defeat, so that five hundred thousand chosen men of Israel fell slain. ¹⁸ So, the men of Israel were subdued at that time, and the men of Judah were victorious, because they relied on the LORD, the God of their fathers. ¹⁹ Abijah pursued Jeroboam and took cities away from him, Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron with its villages. ²⁰ Jeroboam did not regain power during the time of Abijah. The LORD struck him down, and he died. ²¹ However, Abijah grew stronger. He also married fourteen wives and had twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. ²² The rest of the acts of Abijah, his ways and his sayings, have been written down in the historical record of the prophet Iddo.

14

¹ Abijah went to rest with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. His son Asa succeeded him as king.

The reign of Asa as King of Judah — 1 Kings 15:9-15

During Asa's time the land had peace for ten years. ² Asa did what the LORD, his God, considered good and right. ³ He took away the foreign altars and the

high places, broke down the pillars and cut down the Asherah-poles. ⁴ He commanded Judah to be intent on the LORD, the God of their fathers, and to put the Law and the Commandment into practice. ⁵ He also removed the high places and the incense-altars from all the cities of Judah. The kingdom was at peace under him. ⁶ He built fortified cities in Judah, because the land was at peace. No one was at war with him during those years, for the LORD had given him peace. ⁷ He told Judah: "We shall build up these cities and surround them with walls, towers, double-gates and bars. The land is still ours, because we have been intent on the LORD, our God. We have been intent on Him, and He has given us peace on every side."

So, they built and were prosperous. ⁸ Asa had an army of three hundred thousand men from Judah, armed with large shields and spears, and two hundred and eighty thousand men from Benjamin who carried shields and shot with bows. All these were brave fighting men.

The defeat of invading Cushites

⁹ When Zerah the Cushite came out against them with an army of a million men and three hundred chariots, he advanced as far as Mareshah. ¹⁰ Asa went out to confront him, and the armies took up battle positions in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. ¹¹ Asa called to the LORD, his God: "O LORD, there is none besides You to help the weak against the mighty. Help us, O LORD, our God! For we have been relying on You and come against this vast throng in Your name. O LORD, You are our God. Let no man prevail against You!"

¹² The LORD defeated the Cushites before Asa and before Judah, and the Cushites fled. ¹³ Asa and the army that was with him pursued them as far as Gerar, and so many of the Cushites fell that they could not recover. For they were smashed before the LORD and His army. Then the men of Judah carried off a very large amount of plunder. ¹⁴ They destroyed all the cities around Gerar, for the LORD had terrified them. They plundered all the cities, because there was much booty in them. ¹⁵ They also attacked the tents of those who had livestock and carried off large numbers of sheep and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

15

The reforms by King Asa of Judah — 1 Kings 15:13-16

¹ The Spirit of God came on Azariah, the son of Oded. ² He went out to meet Asa and told him: "Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin! The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you turn to Him, He will let you find Him. However, if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. ³ For a long time Israel was without the true God, without a priest to teach them and without the Law. ⁴ However, when in their distress they turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and searched for Him, He let them find Him. ⁵ In those times no one could take care of daily business in

peace, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. ⁶ One nation was being beaten in pieces by another, and one city by another, because God threw them into confusion with every kind of distress. ⁷ However, be strong! Your hands should not hang limp! For your work will be rewarded.”

⁸ When Asa heard these Words, which Azariah, the son of Oded, prophesied, he took courage. He put away the detestable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had captured in the hill-country of Ephraim. He also repaired the altar of the LORD, which was in front of the vestibule of the LORD. ⁹ Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who were living as guests with them. For large numbers had come over to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD, his God, was with him. ¹⁰ They assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa’s reign. ¹¹ On that day they offered seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep as sacrifices to the LORD out of the plunder that they had brought. ¹² They entered into a covenant to turn to the LORD, the God of their fathers, with all their hearts and with all their souls. ¹³ Anyone, whether small or great and whether man or woman, who would not turn to the LORD, the God of Israel, was to be put to death. ¹⁴ They made an oath to the LORD with loud shouting and with the blowing of trumpets and horns. ¹⁵ All Judah rejoiced about the oath, because they had sworn it with all their hearts. When they took full delight in looking for Him, He let them find Him and the LORD gave them peace on every side. ¹⁶ King Asa even deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother because she had made a disgraceful image as an Asherah-pole. Asa cut down her disgraceful image, crushed it and burned it in the Kidron Valley. ¹⁷ Although the high places were not removed from Israel, Asa’s heart was nevertheless fully loyal all his life. ¹⁸ He brought into the Temple of God the silver and gold and the articles that his father and he himself had dedicated as sacred gifts. ¹⁹ There was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa’s reign.

16

The war between Asa of Judah and Baasha of Israel and the condemnation of an alliance with Aram — 1 Kings 15:16-22

¹ In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha, the king of Israel, went up against Judah and built up Ramah, to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa, the king of Judah. ² Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the Temple of the LORD and the king’s palace and sent them to Ben-Hadad, the king of Aram, who lived in Damascus. He said: ³ “There is a treaty between you me, as there was between my father and your father. Look! I have sent you silver and gold. Come! Cancel your treaty with Baasha, the king of Israel, that he may

withdraw from me!”

⁴ Ben-Hadad consented to King Asa’s request and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. They conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-Maim and all the storage cities of Naphtali. ⁵ When Baasha heard about it, he stopped building up Ramah and stopped his work on it. ⁶ Then King Asa took along all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been fortifying Ramah, and he used them to fortify Geba and Mizpah.

⁷ At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa, the king of Judah, and told him: “Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the LORD, your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped from your hands. ⁸ Were not the Cushites and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horses? Nevertheless, when you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hands. ⁹ For the eyes of the LORD move back and forth throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. You have acted foolishly in this matter. Instead, from now on you will have wars.”

¹⁰ Then Asa became angry with the seer and put him in the stocks. For he was fiercely angry with him because of this. Asa also treated some other people cruelly at that time.

The sickness and death of King Asa of Judah — 1 Kings 15:23-24

¹¹ Indeed, the acts of Asa, from the first to the last, have been recorded in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ¹² In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even when he was diseased he did not try to obtain help from the LORD but from the physicians. ¹³ Asa went to rest with his fathers when he died in the forty-first year of his reign. ¹⁴ They buried him in his own tomb, which he had cut out for himself in the City of David. They laid him on a bier that had been filled with spices and various kinds of blended perfumes and lit a very large fire in his honour.

17

The reign of Jehoshaphat as king of Judah

¹ Asa’s son Jehoshaphat succeeded him as king and strengthened himself against Israel. ² He stationed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah and put garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had captured. ³ The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his forefather David. He did not consult the Baals, ⁴ but was intent on the God of his father. He lived by His Commandments and not by the practices of Israel. ⁵ Therefore, the LORD established the kingdom under his control. All Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great wealth and honour. ⁶ His heart was devoted to the Ways of the LORD. Furthermore, he removed the high places and the Asherah-poles from Judah. ⁷ In the third year of his reign he sent his officers, Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechari-

ah, Nethanel and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. ⁸ The Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tob-Adonijah were with them, and the priests, Elishama and Jehoram, were also with these Levites. ⁹ They taught in Judah and they had with them the Book of the Law of the LORD. They went around through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people. ¹⁰ The fear of the LORD came on all the kingdoms of the other countries that were around Judah, and they did not wage war against Jehoshaphat. ¹¹ Some of the Philistines used to bring Jehoshaphat gifts and silver as tribute, and the Arabs also used to bring him flocks, seven thousand, seven hundred rams and seven thousand, seven hundred male goats. ¹² Jehoshaphat became increasingly powerful and built fortresses and storage cities in Judah. ¹³ He had large supplies in the cities of Judah and had a force of brave warriors in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ This was the register of them by paternal families: The commanders of units of a thousand for Judah were: Adnah the commander, with three hundred thousand brave soldiers. ¹⁵ Next to him was the commander Jehohanan and he had two hundred and eighty thousand with him. ¹⁶ Next to him was Amasiah, the son of Zichri, who had volunteered to serve the LORD and he had two hundred thousand brave soldiers with him. ¹⁷ From Benjamin there was Eliada, a brave soldier, and he had with him two hundred thousand men armed with bows and shields. ¹⁸ Next to him there was Jehozabad and he had with him one hundred and eighty thousand men armed for battle. ¹⁹ These were the men who used to serve the king, besides those whom the king had stationed in the fortified cities throughout Judah.

18

The deception of Ahab by false prophets and Micaiah's prophecy against Ahab — 1 Kings 22:1-28

¹ Jehoshaphat was very wealthy and renowned and allied himself with Ahab by marriage. ² After some years he went down to Ahab in Samaria. Ahab slaughtered many sheep and cattle for him and for the people who were with him and urged him to go up against Ramoth-Gilead. ³ Ahab, the king of Israel asked Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, "Will you come with me to Ramoth-Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat answered him: "I am like you. My people are like your people. We shall join you in the war."

⁴ Jehoshaphat also told the king of Israel, "Please inquire first what the LORD says!"

⁵ Then the king of Israel gathered four hundred prophets together and asked them, "Shall we go to war against Ramoth-Gilead or shall I refrain?"

They said, "Go up, that God may put it in the hands of the king!"

⁶ However, Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here any longer, that we may inquire of him?"

⁷ The king of Israel told Jehoshaphat: "There is still one man from whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I myself hate him. For he never prophesies anything good concerning me but always evil."

Jehoshaphat replied, "The king should not say that!"

⁸ Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring Micaiah, the son of Imlah, at once!"

⁹ Both the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, were sitting on their thrones, dressed in their robes. They were sitting at the threshing floor at the entrance of the city-gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹⁰ Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, had made iron horns for himself. He said: "This is what the LORD has said: 'You will gore the Arameans with these until they are destroyed.'"

¹¹ All the other prophets were prophesying in this way, saying, "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and be successful, that the LORD may put it in the hands of the king!"

¹² The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah told him: "Please look here! The prophets are in full agreement in predicting success to the king. Please speak like one of them and speak favourably!"

¹³ However, Micaiah said, "As surely as the LORD lives, I shall speak what my God says."

¹⁴ When he had come to the king, the king asked him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-Gilead to fight or shall we refrain?"

He answered him, "Go up and be successful, that they may be delivered into your control!"

¹⁵ However, the king asked him, "How many times must I personally make you swear that you will tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"

¹⁶ Micaiah answered: "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, **like sheep without a shepherd**. The LORD said, 'These people have no masters. Let each one return to his home in peace!'"

¹⁷ The king of Israel told Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything good about me but evil?"

¹⁸ Micaiah said: "Therefore, hear the Word of the LORD! I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, with all the host of heaven standing on His right hand and on His left. ¹⁹ The LORD asked, 'Who will deceive Ahab, the king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?' One said one thing, and another said something else. ²⁰ Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, 'I shall deceive him.' The LORD asked him, 'What will you use to do it?' ²¹ The spirit said, 'I shall go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all His prophets.' He said, 'You will deceive him and be successful. Go out and do it!' ²² Now therefore, be aware! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of these prophets of yours. The LORD has also decreed calamity for you."

²³ Then Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, went closer, struck Micaiah on the cheek and asked, “Which way did the Spirit of the LORD go when He left me here to speak to you?”

²⁴ Micaiah replied, “Look! You will find out on the day when you go into an inner room to hide.”

²⁵ The king of Israel ordered: “Seize Micaiah and take him back to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, the king’s son! ²⁶ Say, ‘This is what the king has said: “Put this fellow in prison and feed him with scanty rations of bread and water until I return safely!””

²⁷ Micaiah said, “If you really do come back safely, the LORD has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Pay attention to this, all you people!”

The death of Ahab, the king of Israel, in battle — 1 Kings 22:29-40

²⁸ So, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-Gilead. ²⁹ The king of Israel told Jehoshaphat: “I shall disguise myself when I go into battle. However, you should wear your robes!”

So, the king of Israel disguised himself when he went into battle. ³⁰ The king of Aram had given orders to the captains of his chariots: “You shall not fight with anyone, small or great but only with the king of Israel!”

³¹ When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, “Surely this is the king of Israel!”

They turned around to fight against Jehoshaphat. When he cried out, the LORD helped him. God lured them away from him. ³² When the captains of the chariots saw that he was not the king of Israel, they turned away and stopped pursuing him. ³³ However, a certain man drew his bow without aiming and struck the king of Israel between the scales of his body-armor. The king told the driver of his chariot: “Turn around and carry me away from the battlefield! For I have been wounded.”

³⁴ The battle continued that day, while the king was propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans, until the evening. Then at sunset he died.

19

¹ Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem. ² However, Jehu the seer, the son of Hanani, went out to meet King Jehoshaphat and asked him: “Should you help the wicked person and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, wrath has come against you from the LORD.

³ Nevertheless, some good things have been found in you. For you have rid the land of the Asherah-poles and have wholeheartedly dedicated your life to looking for God.”

The arrangement of the administration of Judah by King Jehoshaphat

⁴ Jehoshaphat lived at Jerusalem. He went out again among the people, from Beer-Sheba to the hill-country of Ephraim and brought the people back to the LORD, the God of their fathers. ⁵ He appointed judges in the land in each and every fortified city of

Judah. ⁶ He told the judges: “Consider what you are doing! For you are not judging for human beings but for the LORD. He is with you when you deliver a verdict. ⁷ Now therefore, may the fear of the LORD be on you! Be careful what you do! For the LORD, our God, is not unjust. He has no favourites and does not accept bribes.”

⁸ In Jerusalem Jehoshaphat also appointed some of the Levites, priests and heads of paternal families of Israel, to deliver Decisions of the LORD and to decide disputed cases when they returned to Jerusalem. ⁹ He ordered them: “You shall do this in the fear of the LORD, faithfully and wholeheartedly! ¹⁰ Whenever a case comes to you from your fellow-Israelites who live in their cities, concerning bloodshed, matters of the Law or a Commandment, Prescriptions or other Decisions, then you shall warn them, that they may not become guilty before the LORD and that His wrath may not come on you and your fellow-Israelites! This is what you shall do! Then you will not become guilty. ¹¹ Look! Amariah, the Chief Priest, will be in charge of you in any matter concerning the LORD. Zebadiah, the son of Ishmael, the governor of the family of Judah, will be in charge of any matter concerning the king. The Levites will also serve you as officers. Act courageously, and may the LORD be with the man who is upright!”

20

The invasion by Moabites and Ammonites during the reign of Jehoshaphat — 1 Kings 22:41-50

¹ After this, the Moabites, Ammonites and others with them besides the Ammonites came to fight against Jehoshaphat. ² Some men came and told Jehoshaphat: “A vast army is coming against you from the other side of the sea, from Aram. You should know that they are at Hazazon-Tamar” (that is, En-Gedi). ³ Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and resolved to inquire of the LORD. He proclaimed a fast throughout Judah. ⁴ Judah assembled to ask for help from the LORD. Indeed, they came from all the cities of Judah to be intent on the LORD.

The prayer of Jehoshaphat and victory over the Ammonites and Moabites

⁵ Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the Temple of the LORD, in front of the new court. ⁶ He said: “LORD, God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in Your hand, and there is no one who can withstand You. ⁷ O our God, did You not drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Your **friend Abraham** for ever? ⁸ They have been living in it and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, ⁹ ‘If calamity comes on us, the sword, judgment, pestilence or famine, we shall stand before this Temple and before You, because Your name is in this Temple, that we may cry out to You in our affliction, that You may hear us and

save us.’¹⁰ Now therefore, here they are, the Ammonites, Moabites and the people of Mount Seir. You did not allow Israel to invade them when they came from the land of Egypt, but they turned away from them and did not destroy them.¹¹ See that they are repaying us by coming to drive us out of Your possession, which You have given to us to inherit!¹² O our God, will You not punish them? For we have no power to face this vast army, which is attacking us. We do not know what to do but are looking to You.”

¹³ All the men of Judah, with their little ones, their wives and their children, were standing before the LORD.¹⁴ Then the Spirit of the LORD came on Jahaziel, the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite, and one of the descendants of Asaph, while he was in the assembly.¹⁵ He said: “Pay attention, all Judah, you who are living in Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat! This is what the LORD has told you, ‘You yourselves, do not be afraid or dismayed because of this vast army! For the battle is not yours but God’s.’¹⁶ Go down against them tomorrow! Look! They will be coming up by the ascent of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the gorge, which faces the wilderness of Jeruel.¹⁷ You will not need to fight in this battle. Take up your positions, stand firm and watch, as the LORD, who is with you, saves you, O Judah and Jerusalem!’ Do not be afraid or dismayed! Go out against them tomorrow! The LORD will be with you.”

¹⁸ Then Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the people who were living in Jerusalem fell before the LORD, to worship the LORD.¹⁹ The Levites who were descended from Kohath and Korah stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, very loudly.²⁰ They rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. When they were going out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said: “Listen to me, Judah and you people who are living in Jerusalem! Trust in the LORD, your God! Then you will be secure. Believe His prophets! Then you will be successful.”

²¹ After he had consulted the army, he appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise Him in His holy splendour while they were going out in front of the armed soldiers. They were saying: “Give thanks to the LORD! For His faithful love endures for ever.”

²² When they began joyful music and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the Ammonites, the Moabites and the people of Mount Seir, who were invading Judah, so that they were defeated.²³ The Ammonites and Moabites attacked the men who lived in Mount Seir. They devoted them to destruction and annihilated them. When they had finished killing the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.²⁴ When Judah came to the place that overlooks the wilderness and looked toward the vast army, they saw the dead bodies there lying on the ground. No one

had escaped.²⁵ When Jehoshaphat and his army came to carry off their plunder, they found a great amount of equipment, corpses and valuable articles among them. They stripped off plunder for themselves until they could not carry any more. They kept stripping off plunder for three days, because there was so much of it.²⁶ On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah. Because they blessed the LORD there, that place has been named “The Valley of Beracah” to this day.²⁷ Then, with Jehoshaphat leading them, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem joyfully returned to Jerusalem. For the LORD had brought them joy over their enemies.²⁸ They entered Jerusalem and went to the Temple of the LORD with harps, lyres and trumpets.²⁹ The fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the other countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel.³⁰ The kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace. His God had given him rest on every side.

The end of the reign of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah — 1 Kings 22:41-50

³¹ Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother’s name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.³² He lived in the way of his father Asa and did not turn away from it. He did what the LORD considered right.³³ However, the high places were not removed. The people had not yet set their hearts on the God of their fathers.³⁴ The rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from the first to the last, have indeed been recorded in the annals of Jehu, the son of Hanani, which have been included in the Book of the Kings of Israel.³⁵ After this, Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, made an alliance with Ahaziah, the king of Israel, who acted wickedly.³⁶ He joined him in building ships to go to Tarshish. After they had built ships in Ezion-Geber,³⁷ Eliezer, the son of Dodavahu from Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat: “Because you have made an alliance with Ahaziah, the LORD will break down what you have made.”

The ships were wrecked and could not go to Tarshish.

21

¹ Jehoshaphat went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David, and his son Jehoram succeeded him as king.

The reign of Jehoram as king of Judah — 1 Kings 22:50, 2 Kings 8:16-19

² He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael and Shephatiah. All these were the sons of Jehoshaphat, the king of Israel.³ Their father had given them many gifts of silver, gold and other precious things, together with fortified cities in Judah but had given the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the first-born.⁴ When Jehoram had assumed his father’s kingdom and established himself, he killed all his brothers with the sword and some of the other princes of Israel.

⁵ Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king and reigned in Jerusalem for eight years. ⁶ He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the family of Ahab had been doing, because he had married Ahab's daughter. He did what the LORD considered evil. ⁷ Nevertheless, the LORD was not willing to destroy the family of David, because of the Covenant that He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and to his descendants for ever.

The independence of Edom from Judah — 2 Kings 8:20-22

⁸ In his days Edom rebelled against the control of Judah and set up a king of their own. ⁹ Jehoram went across there with his commanders and all his chariots. He rose up by night and struck down the Edomites who were surrounding him and his chariot-commanders. ¹⁰ However, Edom has been in rebellion against the control of Judah to this day. At that same time Libnah also rebelled against his control, because he had forsaken the LORD, the God of his fathers.

The letter from Elijah to Jehoram

¹¹ He had also made high places in the hill-country of Judah, had caused the people living in Jerusalem to be unfaithful and had driven Judah astray. ¹² A letter came to him from the prophet Elijah: "This is what the LORD, the God of your father David has said: 'Because you have not been walking in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or in the ways of Asa, the king of Judah, ¹³ but have been walking in the ways of the kings of Israel and have been leading Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem into prostitution, as the family of Ahab has been doing to people, and because you have also killed your brothers, your own father's family, who were better men than yourself, ¹⁴ look! The LORD is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and all your property, with a heavy blow. ¹⁵ You yourself will be very ill with severe diseases in your intestines, until your intestines come out day after day because of the disease.'"

The consequences of Jehoram's unfaithfulness — 2 Kings 8:23-24

¹⁶ The LORD aroused against Jehoram the hostility of the Philistines and of the Arabians who were near the Cushites. ¹⁷ They attacked Judah, stormed through it and carried off all the property that could be found in the king's palace as well as his sons and his wives. He had no son left to him except his youngest son Jehoahaz.*¹¹⁴

¹⁸ After all this, the LORD struck him with an incurable disease in his intestines. ¹⁹ In the course of time, at the end of two years, his intestines came out because of his disease, and he died because of the serious illnesses. His people did not light any fire in his honour, as they had lit fires for his ancestors. ²⁰ He was thirty-two years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for eight years. No one felt regret when he passed away. They buried him in the City of David

but not in the tombs of the kings.

22

The reign of King Ahaziah of Judah — 2 Kings 8:24b-29, 9:14-16

¹ The people who were living in Jerusalem made his youngest son Ahaziah king in his place. For the band of raiders that had come with the Arabians to the camp had killed all the elder sons. So, Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, the king of Judah, began to reign.

² Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for one year. His mother's name was Athaliah, the granddaughter of Omri. ³ Ahaziah also lived in the ways of the family of Ahab. For his mother gave him advice in doing wrong. ⁴ He did what the LORD considered evil, as the family of Ahab had been doing. For they were his advisers after the death of his father, so as to cause his destruction. ⁵ He even followed their advice and actually went with Jehoram, the son of Ahab, the king of Israel, to make war against Hazael, the king of Aram, at Ramoth-Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram, ⁶ and he returned to recover in Jezreel from the wounds that he had received at Ramah, while he was fighting against Hazael, the king of Aram. Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, the king of Judah, went down to visit Jehoram, the son of Ahab, in Jezreel, because he had been wounded.

The slaughter of King Jehoram and King Ahaziah by Jehu — 2 Kings 9:21-29

⁷ God brought about the downfall of Ahaziah through his visit to Jehoram. When he arrived there, he went out with Jehoram to meet Jehu, the grandson of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to destroy the family of Ahab. ⁸ When Jehu was carrying out justice on the family of Ahab, he met the princes of Judah and the nephews of Ahaziah, who were attending Ahaziah and killed them. ⁹ He searched for Ahaziah, and they captured him while he was hiding in Samaria. They brought him to Jehu and put him to death. They buried him, for they said, "He was the grandson of Jehoshaphat, who was intent on the LORD with all his heart." Then the family of Ahaziah had no one who could rule the kingdom.

The usurpation of the throne of Judah by Athaliah — 2 Kings 11:1-8

¹⁰ When Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy all the royal household of the family of Judah. ¹¹ However, Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons, who were about to be put to death, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Because Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, who was the wife of the priest Jehoiada, was a sister of Ahaziah, she hid the child from Athaliah, so that Athaliah did not put him to death. ¹² Joash remained in hiding with them in the Temple of God for six years while Athaliah was ruling over the land.

23

¹¹⁴ Jehoahaz was also called Ahaziah. Both mean, "The Lord has seized."

The opposition to Athaliah by Jehoiada — 2 Kings 11:9-21

¹ However, in the seventh year Jehoiada reinforced himself and summoned the commanders of units of a hundred, Azariah, the son of Jeroham, Ishmael, the son of Jehohanan, Azariah, the son of Obed, Maaseiah, the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat, the son of Zichri. ² They went around in Judah, gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah and the heads of paternal families of Israel and then came to Jerusalem. ³ The whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the Temple of God. Jehoiada told them: "Look at the king's son! Let him reign, as the LORD promised concerning the sons of David!" ⁴ This is what you must do. One third of you priests and Levites who come on duty on the Sabbath shall be gatekeepers at the thresholds! ⁵ Another third shall be at the king's palace, and the other third at the Foundation Gate! All the people shall be in the courts of the Temple of the LORD! ⁶ No one should enter the Temple of the LORD except the priests and Levites who are ministering! They may enter, for they are holy. All the rest of the people shall observe their obligations to the LORD! ⁷ The Levites shall form a circle around the king! Everyone shall have his weapons in his hands! Whoever enters the Temple shall be put to death! Stay close to the king wherever he goes!"

The crowning of the young King Joash — 2 Kings 11:12

⁸ The Levites and all Judah did exactly as the priest Jehoiada had commanded. Each one brought his men, who were to come on duty on the Sabbath, together with those who were about to go off duty on the Sabbath. For the priest Jehoiada had not dismissed any of the divisions. ⁹ The priest Jehoiada supplied the captains of units of a hundred with the spears, the large shields and small round shields that had belonged to King David, which were in the Temple of God. ¹⁰ He stationed all the troops around the king, every man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the Temple to the left side of the Temple, around the altar and the Temple. ¹¹ Then they brought out the king's son and placed the crown on him. They gave him the Testimony and made him king. Then Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said, "Long live the king!"

The death of Athaliah — 2 Kings 11:13-20

¹² When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and cheering the king, she went into the Temple of the LORD, where the people were. ¹³ When she looked, she saw the king standing beside his pillar at the entrance. The captains and the trumpeters were beside the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. The singers with their musical instruments were expressing praise. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Treason! Treason!"

¹⁴ Then the priest Jehoiada brought out the captains of units of a hundred who were in charge of the army. He told them: "Bring her outside between the ranks! Anyone who follows her shall be put to death with the

sword!"

For the priest had said, "You shall not put her to death in the Temple of the LORD!"

¹⁵ So, they arrested her when she went into the entrance of the royal palace at the Horse Gate and put her to death there.

The suppression of idolatry — 2 Kings 11:17-21

¹⁶ Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, all the people and the king, that they would be the people of the LORD. ¹⁷ Then all the people went to the temple of Baal and tore it down. They broke his altars and his images in pieces and killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars. ¹⁸ Jehoiada assigned responsibility for the Temple of the LORD to the priests, who were descendants of Levi, and whom David had organised to be in charge of the Temple of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as Scripture has said in the Law of Moses, and with rejoicing and singing, as David had directed. ¹⁹ He stationed the gatekeepers at the gates of the Temple of the LORD to prevent anyone who was unclean in any way from entering. ²⁰ He took the captains of units of a hundred, the nobles, the governors of the people and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the Temple of the LORD. They entered the king's palace through the Upper Gate and set the king on the throne of the kingdom. ²¹ All the people of the land were glad, and the city was at peace after they had put Athaliah to death with the sword.

24

The repairs to the Temple under Joash, the king of Judah - 2 Kings 11:21-12:16

¹ Joash was seven years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for forty years. His mother's name was Zibiah from Beer-Sheba. ² Joash did what the LORD considered right while the priest Jehoiada was alive. ³ Jehoiada chose two wives for him, and he had sons and daughters.

The Repair of the Temple by Joash

⁴ Afterwards, Joash planned to restore the Temple of the LORD. ⁵ He gathered the priests and the Levites and told them: "Go out to the cities of Judah and gather enough money every year from all Israel to repair the Temple of your God! See that you attend to the matter quickly yourselves!"

However, the Levites did not do it quickly. ⁶ So, the king summoned the Chief Priest Jehoiada and asked him: "Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax for the tent of the Testimony levied by Moses, the servant of the LORD, and by the congregation of Israel?"

⁷ For the sons of that wicked woman Athaliah had broken into the Temple of God and had also used all the holy things of the Temple of the LORD for the Baals. ⁸ The king gave a command, and they made a chest and placed it outside the gate of the Temple of the LORD. ⁹ People made a proclamation throughout

Judah and Jerusalem to bring in for the LORD the tax that Moses, the servant of God, had imposed on Israel in the wilderness. ¹⁰ All the princes and all the people gladly brought in the money and dropped it into the chest until they had finished. ¹¹ Whenever the chest was brought to the king's officers by the Levites, when they saw that there was a large amount of money in it, the king's secretary and the officer of the Chief Priest used to come and empty out the chest. Then they took it away and returned it to its place. They did this day after day and collected a large amount of money. ¹² The king and Jehoiada gave it to the men who were carrying out the work required for the Temple of the LORD. They used it to hire masons and carpenters to restore the Temple of the LORD and workers in iron and bronze to repair the Temple of the LORD. ¹³ Those who were engaged in the work laboured, and the repairs progressed under them. They restored the Temple of God according to its specifications and reinforced it. ¹⁴ When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada and used it to make articles for the Temple of the LORD, articles for the service and for the burnt offerings, dishes and other articles of gold and silver. They used to sacrifice burnt offerings regularly in the Temple of the LORD all Jehoiada's life. ¹⁵ Jehoiada became old and full of days and died. He was a hundred and thirty years old when he died. ¹⁶ They buried him in the City of David among the kings, because of the good he had done in Israel and for God and His Temple.

The apostasy of Joash — 2 Kings 12:17-21

¹⁷ After Jehoiada died, the officials of Judah came and bowed down before the king, and the king listened to them. ¹⁸ They forsook the Temple of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and worshipped the Asherah-poles and idols. God's anger came on Judah and Jerusalem because of this guilt of theirs. ¹⁹ However, He sent prophets among them to bring them back to the LORD. Although the prophets testified against them, they did not listen. ²⁰ Then the Spirit of God took possession of Zechariah, the son of the priest Jehoiada. He stood before the people and told them: "This is what God has asked: 'Why are you transgressing the Commandments of the LORD? You will not prosper. Because you have forsaken the LORD, He has forsaken you.'"

²¹ However, they plotted against Zechariah and, at the king's command, they stoned him to death in the court of the Temple of the LORD. ²² King Joash did not remember how kind Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had been to him but killed his son. When he was dying, he said, "May the LORD see this and call it to account!"

The invasion of Judah by Arameans and the assassination of King Joash — 2 Kings 12:17-21

²³ When the year had passed, the army of the Arameans came up against Joash. They invaded Judah and Jerusalem, killed all the leading men among the peo-

ple and sent all the plunder that they took from them to the king of Damascus. ²⁴ Although the army of the Arameans had come with only a few men, the LORD delivered a very large army into their hands. Because Judah had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers, they carried out justice on Joash.

²⁵ When the Arameans withdrew from him, they left him suffering from many wounds. Then his servants plotted against him because of the murder of the sons of the priest Jehoiada and killed him on his bed. After he died, they buried him in the City of David. However, they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings.

²⁶ Those who conspired against him were Zabad, the son of the Ammonitess Shimeath, and Jehozabad, the son of Shimrith, a Moabite woman. ²⁷ Records about his sons, about the many prophecies against him and about the rebuilding of the Temple of God have been written down in the Annotation on the Book of the Kings. His son Amaziah succeeded him as king.

25

The reign of Amaziah as king of Judah — 2 Kings 14:1-6

¹ Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem. ² He did what the LORD considered right but not with all his heart. ³ After the kingdom was firmly in his control, he killed his officials who had struck down his father, the king. ⁴ However, he did not put their children to death, as Scripture has said in the Law, in the Book of Moses, where the LORD commanded: "Fathers shall not die because of their children, and children shall not die because of their fathers! Rather, anyone shall die only for his own sin!"

The slaughter of the Edomites — 2 Kings 14:7

⁵ Amaziah assembled the men of Judah and assigned them by paternal families under commanders of units of a thousand and units of a hundred for all Judah and Benjamin. He mustered those who were twenty years and older and found that there were three hundred thousand picked troops, fit for war, who could handle a spear and a shield. ⁶ He also hired one hundred thousand fighting men from Israel for three thousand, five hundred kilograms of silver. ⁷ However, a man of God came to him and said: "O king, the army of Israel must not go with you! For the LORD is not with Israel. He is not with any of the descendants of Ephraim.

⁸ Nevertheless, go yourself, act and be strong for the battle! Otherwise God may overthrow you before the enemy. For God has the power to help or to overthrow."

⁹ Amaziah asked the man of God, "What, then, shall we do about the three thousand, five hundred kilograms that I have given to the raiding band from Israel?"

The man of God answered, "The LORD can give you much more than this."

¹⁰ Then Amaziah discharged the raiding band that had

come to him from Ephraim so that they went back to their places. They became very angry with Judah and returned home in fierce anger.

¹¹ However, Amaziah took courage, led out his army, went to the Valley of Salt and struck down ten thousand men of Seir. ¹² The men of Judah captured another ten thousand alive, took them to the top of a rock and threw them down from the top of the rock, so that they were all dashed to pieces. ¹³ However, the men of the raiding party that Amaziah had sent back without letting them go with him to battle raided the cities of Judah, from Samaria to Beth-Horon. They struck down three thousand of the people and carried off large quantities of plunder.

¹⁴ After Amaziah had come back from striking down the Edomites, he brought the gods of the men of Seir, set them up as his own gods, worshipped before them and burnt offerings to them. ¹⁵ The anger of the LORD burned against Amaziah, and He sent a prophet to him, who asked him: "Why have you been trying to get advice from the gods of these people? They did not deliver their own people from your hands!"

¹⁶ While he was speaking to him, the king asked him: "Have we made you a royal counsellor? Stop! Why should you be struck down?"

The prophet stopped but said, "I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my advice."

The defeat of Judah by Israel — 2 Kings 14:8-14

¹⁷ After Amaziah, the king of Judah, had taken other advice, he sent a message to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, the king of Israel: "Come! Let us meet face to face!"

¹⁸ Joash, the king of Israel, sent a reply to Amaziah, the king of Judah: "A thorn-bush in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar on Lebanon: 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife!' but a wild animal in Lebanon came along and trampled down the thorn-bush. ¹⁹ You have said: 'Look! I have struck down Edom,' and your heart has lifted you up and made you boastful. Now stay at home! Why should you provoke calamity for yourself so that you fall and so that Judah falls with you?"

²⁰ However, Amaziah would not listen. For God had made this happen, that He might deliver them into the hands of their enemies, because they had been trying to get advice from the gods of Edom. ²¹ So, Joash, the king of Israel, attacked, and he and Amaziah, the king of Judah, faced one another in battle at Beth-Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. ²² Israel defeated Judah, and every man fled to his home. ²³ Joash, the king of Israel, seized Amaziah, the king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-Shemesh. Then Joash brought him to Jerusalem and broke down two hundred metres of the wall of Jerusalem, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. ²⁴ He seized all the gold and silver and all the vessels that he found in the Temple of God in the care of Obed-Edom. He also

seized the treasures in the king's palace. He also took hostages and then returned to Samaria.

The death of King Amaziah of Judah — 2 Kings 14:17-20

²⁵ Amaziah, the son of Joash, the king of Judah, lived for fifteen years after Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the king of Israel, died. ²⁶ As for the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, from the first to the last, have they not been recorded in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel?

²⁷ After the time when Amaziah turned away from the LORD, some men made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. However, they sent to Lachish after him and put him to death there.

²⁸ People brought him back on horses and buried him with his fathers in the City of David.

26

The reign of Uzziah (also called Azariah) as king of Judah — 2 Kings 14:21-22, 15:1-3

¹ Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah. ² He was the one who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah, after the previous king had gone to rest with his fathers. ³ Uzziah was sixteen years old when he began to reign and reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah from Jerusalem. ⁴ He did what the LORD considered right, exactly as his father Amaziah had been doing. ⁵ He used to try to obtain advice from God in the days of Zechariah, who imparted insight about seeing visions of God. While he was looking to the LORD for advice God gave him success. ⁶ He went out, made war against the Philistines and broke through the walls of Gath, Jabneh and Ashdod. He built cities near Ashdod and elsewhere among the Philistines. ⁷ God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabians who lived in Gur-Baal and against the Meunites. ⁸ The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread as far as the border of Egypt, because he had become very powerful. ⁹ Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate and at the Angle and fortified them.

¹⁰ He built towers in the wilderness and dug out many cisterns. For he had much livestock, both in the foothills and on the plain. He also had farmers and vineyard workers in the hills and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil. ¹¹ Uzziah also had an army of soldiers, whose divisions went out to war according to the numbers mustered by the secretary, Jeiel, and Maaseiah, the officer. Hananiah, one of the king's officials, commanded them. ¹² The total number of the leaders of paternal families over the fighting men was two thousand, six hundred. ¹³ They had under their command an army of three hundred and seven thousand, five hundred men, who could wage war as a powerful force to support the king against the enemy.

¹⁴ Uzziah provided shields, spears, helmets, coats of armour, bows and sling-stones for the entire army.

¹⁵ In Jerusalem he made defensive siege-machines,

designed by skilful men, to be on the towers and the corners, to shoot arrows and hurl large stones. His fame spread widely, for he was supported wonderfully until he became powerful.

The pride of King Uzziah and his punishment with a skin-disease — 2 Kings 15:4-7

¹⁶ However, after Uzziah became powerful, he became proud, and his pride ruined him. He was unfaithful to the LORD, his God and entered the Temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.

¹⁷ The priest Azariah with eighty other courageous priests of the LORD went in after him. ¹⁸ They confronted King Uzziah and told him: “You, Uzziah, are not authorised to burn incense to the LORD. Rather, that is for the priests descended from Aaron, who have been consecrated to burn incense. Leave the sanctuary! For you have acted unfaithfully. This will bring you no honour from the LORD God.”

¹⁹ Then Uzziah became angry. While he had a censer in his hand to burn incense and was angry with the priests, an infectious skin-disease broke out on his forehead in the presence of the priests beside the altar of incense in the Temple of the LORD. ²⁰ When the Chief Priest, Azariah, and all the priests looked at him, they saw that he was infected with a skin-disease on his forehead! They hurried him out. He himself wanted to get out quickly, because the LORD had afflicted him.

²¹ King Uzziah had an infectious skin-disease until the day he died. He lived in an isolated house as a person with an infectious skin-disease. He was, indeed, excluded from the Temple of the LORD. His son Jotham was in charge of the king’s palace and governed the people of the land. ²² The prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, has recorded the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from the first to the last. ²³ Uzziah went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in a cemetery that belonged to the kings. For people said, “He was infected with a skin-disease.”

His son Jotham succeeded him as king.

27

The reign of Jotham as king of Judah — 2 Kings 15:32-38

¹ Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. His mother’s name was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

² He did what the LORD considered right, exactly as his father Uzziah had been doing, except that he did not enter the Temple of the LORD. However, the people still followed corrupt practices. ³ He rebuilt the Upper Gate of the Temple of the LORD and built extensively on the wall at Ophel. ⁴ He also built cities in the hill-country of Judah and forts and towers in the forest areas. ⁵ He fought with the king of the Ammonites and conquered them. That year the Ammonites gave him three thousand, five hundred kilograms of silver, two hundred and seventy-eight tonnes of wheat and two hundred and seventy-eight tonnes of barley.

The Ammonites brought him the same amount in the second and the third years. ⁶ Jotham became powerful, because he established his ways before the LORD, his God. ⁷ The rest of the acts of Jotham, all his wars and his ways, have indeed been recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. ⁸ He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. ⁹ Jotham went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. His son Ahaz succeeded him as king.

28

The reign of Ahaz as king of Judah — 2 Kings 16:1-4

¹ Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He did not do what the LORD considered right, as his father David had done. ² He lived in the ways of the kings of Israel. He even made metal images for the Baals. ³ He burned sacrifices in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom and burned his own sons in the fire, copying the detestable practices of the nations that the LORD had driven out ahead of the Israelites. ⁴ He sacrificed and burnt offerings on the high places, on the hills and under every leafy tree.

The defeat of Judah by Aram and Israel — 2 Kings 16:5-6, Isaiah 7:1

⁵ Therefore, the LORD, his God, handed him over to the king of Aram, who defeated him, took many of his people captive and brought them to Damascus. He also handed him over to the king of Israel, who defeated him with heavy casualties. ⁶ Pekah, the son of Remaliah, killed one hundred and twenty thousand men in Judah in one day, all of them brave soldiers, because they had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers. ⁷ Zichri, a warrior from Ephraim, killed Maaseiah, the king’s son, Azrikam, who was the officer in charge of the palace, and Elkanah, the next in authority to the king.

The intervention of the prophet Oded on behalf of Judah

⁸ The Israelites took captive two hundred thousand of their relatives, women, sons and daughters. They also took a great deal of plunder from them and carried the plunder back to Samaria. ⁹ However, a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded. He went out to meet the army that was entering Samaria and told them: “Look! Because the LORD, the God of your fathers, has been angry with Judah, He has given them into your hands. However, you have killed them in a rage that has reached up to heaven. ¹⁰ Now you intend to subjugate the people of Judah and Jerusalem as your male and female slaves. However, are not you yourselves guilty, together with them, of sins against the LORD, your God? ¹¹ Now therefore, listen to me and send back the captives whom you have taken from your fellow-Israelites! For the LORD is fiercely angry with you.”

¹² Then some of the leaders of the men of Ephraim, Azariah, the son of Johanan, Berechiah, the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah, the son of Shallum, and

Amasa, the son of Hadlai, also confronted those who were arriving back from the war. ¹³ They told them: “You shall not bring the captives in here! For you intend to make us guilty of this wrong against the LORD to add to our sins and guilt. For our guilt is already great, and He is fiercely angry with Israel.”

¹⁴ So, the armed men left the captives and the plunder in front of the princes and the whole assembly. ¹⁵ The men who have been mentioned by name began to act, took the captives and used the plunder to clothe all who were naked among them. They clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink and put lotions on them. They transported on donkeys all those among them who were staggering and brought them back to their own people at Jericho, the city of palm-trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

A series of defeats for Judah under King Ahaz — 2 Kings 16:7-9

¹⁶ At that time King Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria to help him. ¹⁷ For the Edomites had invaded Judah again, defeated them and carried people away as captives. ¹⁸ The Philistines had also been making raids on the cities in the foothills and the Negev of Judah. They had captured Beth-Shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth and Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages and Gimzo with its villages and had settled in them. ¹⁹ For the LORD had humbled Judah because of Ahaz, the king of Israel. For he had been promoting wickedness in Judah and had been very unfaithful to the LORD. ²⁰ Tillegath-Pilneser, the king of Assyria, came against him and gave him trouble instead of help. ²¹ For, although Ahaz had taken some of the things from the Temple of the LORD, from the royal palace and from the princes and had given them to the king of Assyria, it did not help him.

The apostasy and death of Ahaz, the king of Judah — 2 Kings 16:12-20

²² In his time of trouble, this King Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the LORD. ²³ He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that had defeated him. He thought: “Because the gods of the kings of Aram have been helping them, I shall sacrifice to them, that they may help me.”

However, they caused his downfall and the downfall of all Israel. ²⁴ Ahaz gathered together the articles from the Temple of God, removed these articles from the Temple of God, closed the doors of the Temple of the LORD and made altars for himself at every corner in Jerusalem. ²⁵ He made high places in every single city of Judah to burn offerings to other gods and so he provoked the LORD, the God of his fathers, to anger. ²⁶ The rest of his acts and all his ways, from the first to the last, have indeed been recorded in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷ Ahaz went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem. Indeed, they did not take him into the burial places of the kings of Israel. His son Hezekiah succeeded him as king.

The reign of Hezekiah as king of Judah — 2 Kings 18:1-3

¹ Hezekiah began to reign when he was twenty-five years old and reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years. His mother’s name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. ² He did what the LORD considered right, exactly as his forefather David had done.

The cleansing and rededication of the Temple by Hezekiah

³ In the first month of the first year of his reign, he opened the doors of the Temple of the LORD and repaired them. ⁴ He brought in the priests and the Levites and assembled them in the square on the eastern side. ⁵ He told them: “Listen to me, Levites! Consecrate yourselves now! Consecrate the Temple of the LORD, the God of your fathers, and remove all the defilement from the Holy Place! ⁶ For our fathers have been unfaithful and have been doing what the LORD, our God, has considered evil. They have been forsaking Him, have been turning their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD and have been turning their backs to Him. ⁷ They have even shut the doors of the porch and snuffed out the lamps. They have not been burning incense or sacrificing burnt offerings to the God of Israel in the Holy Place. ⁸ That is why the wrath of the LORD has come on Judah and Jerusalem, and He has made them an object of horror, of desolation and of derision, as you see with your own eyes. ⁹ You see that our fathers have fallen by the sword and our sons, our daughters and our wives are in captivity because of this. ¹⁰ Now I intend to make a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, that He may stop being fiercely angry with us. ¹¹ My sons, do not be negligent now! For the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, to minister to Him, to be His ministers and to burn offerings.”

¹² Then the Levites acted. The descendants of Kohath were Mahath, the son of Amasai, and Joel, the son of Azariah. The descendants of Merari were Kish, the son of Abdi, and Azariah, the son of Jehallelel. The descendants of Gershon were Joah, the son of Zimamah, and Eden, the son of Joah. ¹³ The descendants of Elizaphan were Shimri and Jeuel. The descendants of Asaph were Zechariah and Mattaniah. ¹⁴ The descendants of Heman were Jehiel and Shimei, and the descendants of Jeduthun were Shemaiah and Uzziel. ¹⁵ They gathered their relatives, consecrated themselves and went in to cleanse the Temple of the LORD, as the king had commanded, in accordance with the Words of the LORD. ¹⁶ The priests went into the inner part of the Temple of the LORD to cleanse it and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the Temple of the LORD into the court of the Temple of the LORD. Then the Levites took it and carried it out to the Kidron Valley. ¹⁷ They began to consecrate on the first day of the first month and on the eighth day of the month they came to the porch of the LORD. Then for eight more days they consecrated the Temple of the LORD and finished on the sixteenth day of the first month. ¹⁸ Then they went in to King

Hezekiah and said: “We have cleansed all the Temple of the LORD, the altar of burnt offering, all its utensils and the table for setting out the consecrated bread, with all its utensils. ¹⁹ We have prepared and consecrated all the utensils that King Ahaz unfaithfully discarded during his reign, and there they are in front of the altar of the LORD.”

The restoration of Temple-worship under Hezekiah

²⁰ Early the next morning King Hezekiah gathered the leaders of the city and went up to the Temple of the LORD. ²¹ They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs and seven male goats for a sin-offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary and for Judah. The king commanded the priests, who were descendants from Aaron, to offer them for the altar of the LORD. ²² So, they slaughtered the bulls, and the priests received the blood and poured it out against the altar. Then they slaughtered the rams and poured out their blood against the altar. Then they slaughtered the lambs and poured out their blood against the altar. ²³ Then they brought the male goats for the sin-offering before the king and the assembly and laid their hands on them. ²⁴ The priests slaughtered them and made a sin-offering with their blood for the altar, to make atonement for all Israel. For the king had commanded that the burnt offering and the sin-offering should be made for all Israel. ²⁵ He stationed the Levites in the Temple of the LORD with cymbals, harps and lyres, as David, Gad, the king’s seer, and the prophet Nathan had prescribed. For the LORD had commanded this through His prophets. ²⁶ The Levites stood with the instruments of David and the priests with the trumpets. ²⁷ Then Hezekiah commanded that the burnt offering should be sacrificed for the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song to the LORD, also began, accompanied by the trumpets and the instruments of David, the king of Israel. ²⁸ The whole assembly bowed in worship, while the singers sang and the trumpeters played. All this continued until the burnt offering was completed. ²⁹ When the offerings were completed, the king and all who were present with him knelt and worshipped. ³⁰ Then King Hezekiah and the leaders told the Levites to sing praises to the LORD, using the Words of David and of the seer Asaph. They joyfully sang praises, bowed down and worshipped. ³¹ Then Hezekiah said: “You have now consecrated yourselves to the LORD. Come closer and bring sacrifices and thank offerings for the Temple of the LORD!”

The assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and all whose hearts were willing brought burnt offerings. ³² The number of the burnt offerings that the assembly brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams and two hundred lambs. All these were used as a burnt offering to the LORD. ³³ The consecrated animals were six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep. ³⁴ However, there were too few priests and they could

not skin all the burnt offerings. So, until other priests had consecrated themselves, their relatives, the Levites, helped them, until the work was finished. For the Levites had been more diligent in consecrating themselves than the priests had been. ³⁵ Besides the great number of burnt offerings, there was the fat of the peace-offerings and there were the drink offerings for the burnt offerings. So, the service in the Temple of the LORD was restored. ³⁶ Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because of what God had brought about for the people. For the event took place suddenly.

30

The celebration of the Passover at the time of Hezekiah

¹ Hezekiah sent messages to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, inviting them to come to the Temple of the LORD at Jerusalem to keep the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel. ² The king, his officials and the whole assembly in Jerusalem had decided to celebrate the Passover in the second month. ³ For they could not observe it at the regular time, because not enough priests had consecrated themselves, and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem. ⁴ The king and the whole congregation considered that what they planned was right. ⁵ So, they decided to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-Sheba to Dan, that the people should come and celebrate the Passover to the LORD, the God of Israel, at Jerusalem. For they had not been celebrating it in large numbers, as Scripture had prescribed. ⁶ Couriers went all through Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officials, as the king had commanded. They said: “People of Israel, return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, that He may return to the remnant of you, who have escaped from the hands of the kings of Assyria! ⁷ Do not be like your fathers and your relatives, who have been unfaithful to the LORD, the God of their fathers, so that He has made them an object of horror, as you see! ⁸ Do not be stubborn now as your fathers have been! Submit to the LORD and come to His sanctuary, which He has consecrated for ever, and serve the LORD, your God, that He may stop being fiercely angry with you! ⁹ For when you return to the LORD, those who have captured your relatives and your children will be compassionate to them, so that they will return to this land. For the LORD, your God, is gracious and merciful and will not turn away His face from you if you return to Him.”

¹⁰ The couriers kept going from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as Zebulun. However, the people scorned and ridiculed them.

¹¹ Nevertheless, some men from Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.

¹² The hand of God was also on Judah, so that He made them single-minded about doing what the king and the officials had commanded according to the

Word of the LORD. ¹³ Many people gathered in a very great assembly at Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month. ¹⁴ Then the people acted and removed the altars that were in Jerusalem. They also removed all the altars for burning incense and threw them into the Kidron Valley. ¹⁵ They slaughtered the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and the Levites were put to shame, so that they consecrated themselves. Then they brought burnt offerings to the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁶ They took their regular positions as the Law of Moses, the man of God, had arranged for them. The priests poured out the blood that they received from the hands of the Levites. ¹⁷ For there were many in the assembly who had not consecrated themselves. So, the Levites had to kill the Passover lambs for everyone who was not ceremonially clean, to consecrate them to the LORD. ¹⁸ For, although a majority of the people, many of them from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, they ate the Passover differently from what had been prescribed. For Hezekiah had prayed for them, saying: “May the LORD, who is good, make an atonement for everyone ¹⁹ who has set his heart on looking for God, the LORD, the God of his fathers, even though not according to the rules of the Holy Place for ceremonial cleanness.” ²⁰ The LORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people. ²¹ The Israelites who were present at Jerusalem celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great rejoicing, and the Levites and the priests kept praising the LORD day by day, singing to the LORD to the accompaniment of loud instruments. ²² Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who had shown good insight in the service of the LORD. They ate the food of the festival for the seven days, sacrificing peace-offerings and making confession to the LORD, the God of their fathers. ²³ Then the whole assembly agreed to celebrate the feast for another seven days. So, they celebrated it joyfully for another seven days. ²⁴ For Hezekiah, the king of Judah, had provided the assembly with one thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep as offerings, and the officials had provided the assembly one thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep as offerings. A large number of priests consecrated themselves. ²⁵ The whole assembly of Judah rejoiced, together with the priests, the Levites, the whole assembly that had come out of Israel, the resident-foreigners who had come out of the land of Israel and the foreigners who were living in Judah. ²⁶ There was great joy in Jerusalem. For there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem since the time of Solomon, the son of David, the king of Israel. ²⁷ Then the priests, who were descendants from Levi, arose and blessed the people. God heard their voice, and their prayer came to His holy dwelling place in heaven.

31

The destruction of pagan shrines at the time of Hezekiah, the king of Judah — 2 Kings 18:4

¹ When all this had been finished, all the Israelites who were present went out to the cities of Judah, broke in pieces the stone pillars, cut down the Asherah-poles and broke down the high places and the altars throughout Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the Israelites returned to their cities, every man to his own property.

The contributions for worship at Jerusalem — 2 Kings 18:5-7

² Hezekiah assigned the priests and the Levites to their separate divisions. Each priest and Levite was put in a division according to the service that he had to do: to sacrifice burnt offerings and peace-offerings, to minister, to give thanks and to sing praises inside the gates of the camp of the LORD. ³ The king contributed from his own possessions for the burnt offerings: the burnt offerings in the mornings and evenings and the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths, the New Moons and the appointed feasts, as Scripture had said in the Law of the LORD. ⁴ He also commanded the people who were living in Jerusalem to give the portion due to the priests and the Levites, that they might be earnestly committed to the Law of the LORD. ⁵ As soon as the king’s command spread around, the Israelites brought plenty of the first-fruits of grain, wine, fresh olive-oil, honey and all other produce of the field. They brought in the tithe of everything in large quantities. ⁶ The people of Israel and Judah who were living in the cities of Judah also brought in the tithe of cattle and sheep and the tithe of the holy things that had been dedicated to the LORD, their God, and piled them in heaps. ⁷ In the third month they began to put the heaps in place and finished in the seventh month. ⁸ When Hezekiah and the officials came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and His people Israel. ⁹ Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites about the heaps. ¹⁰ The Chief Priest, Azariah, who belonged to the family of Zadok, answered him: “Since they began to bring the contributions into the Temple of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and have plenty left over. For the LORD has been blessing His people, and this great amount is what is left over.”

The reorganisation of the priests and Levites under Hezekiah

¹¹ Then Hezekiah commanded them to prepare store-rooms in the Temple of the LORD, and they prepared them. ¹² They faithfully brought in the contributions, the tithes and the dedicated things. Conaniah, a Levite, was the chief officer in charge of these things, and his brother Shimei was next in rank. ¹³ Jehiel, Azariah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath and Benaiah were supervisors under Conaniah and his brother Shimei, by the appointment of King Hezekiah and Azariah, the official in charge of the Temple of God. ¹⁴ Kore, the son of Imnah the Levite, the keeper of the East Gate, was in

charge of the freewill offerings made to God and distributed the contributions made to the LORD and the most holy gifts. ¹⁵ Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah and Shecaniah were faithfully assisting him in the cities of the priests and made a distribution to their relatives, old and young alike, in their various divisions. ¹⁶ In addition, they distributed to the males who were three years old and more and who had registered themselves in family records, to all who would enter the Temple of the LORD to perform the daily duties for which each division was responsible. ¹⁷ They also distributed to the priests who had registered themselves by their paternal families and to the Levites who were twenty years old and more, according to their responsibilities in their various divisions. ¹⁸ They distributed to the whole community that had enrolled in the genealogical records with all their little ones, their wives, their sons and their daughters. For they faithfully consecrated themselves and kept themselves holy. ¹⁹ Men were designated by name in every city to distribute portions to every male among the priests, who were descendants of Aaron and who lived in the pasturelands around their cities. They also distributed portions to all who had registered themselves among the Levites in the family-records. ²⁰ This is what Hezekiah did throughout Judah. He did what was good, right and faithful before the LORD, his God. ²¹ He was intent on his God in every work that he undertook in the service of the Temple of God and in accordance with the Law and the Commandments. He did it with all his heart and was successful.

32

The invasion of Judah by the Assyrians under Sennacherib and God's deliverance of Judah from them — 2 Kings 18:17-35, 19:1-34, Isaiah 36:2-20

¹ After these things, which Hezekiah had done so faithfully, Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, came and invaded Judah. He besieged the fortified cities, intending to storm through them and win them. ² When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to make war on Jerusalem, ³ he consulted with his officials and his capable soldiers about blocking off the water from the springs that were outside the city, and they helped him to do it. ⁴ Many people assembled and blocked off all the springs and the brook that flooded through the land. They asked, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find plenty of water?"

⁵ Hezekiah rallied his strength and built up the entire wall that had been broken down and raised it to the level of the towers. He also built another wall outside it and reinforced the supporting terraces of the City of David. He also made large numbers of weapons and shields. ⁶ He appointed military commanders over the soldiers, assembled them before him in the square at the gate of the city and encouraged them with these words: ⁷ "Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid

or dismayed because of the king of Assyria and the entire horde that is with him! For there is more with us than there is with him. ⁸ With him there is an arm of flesh, but with us there is the LORD, our God, to help us and to fight our battles."

The people gained confidence from what Hezekiah, the king of Judah, had said. ⁹ After this, Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, who was besieging Lachish with all his forces, sent his officials to Hezekiah, the king of Judah, at Jerusalem and to all the people of Judah who were in Jerusalem, to say, ¹⁰ "This is what Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, has asked: 'On what are you trusting, that you are living in Jerusalem under siege?' ¹¹ Is not Hezekiah misleading you, that he may give you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, 'The LORD, our God, will deliver us from the power of the king of Assyria'?" ¹² Has not Hezekiah himself removed His high places and His altars and told Judah and Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before one altar and burn sacrifices on it!'" ¹³ Do you not know what my fathers and I have done to all the peoples of the other countries? Were the gods of those other countries able at all to deliver their countries from my hand? ¹⁴ Who was there among all the gods of these nations, which my fathers have devoted to destruction, who could deliver his people from my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand? ¹⁵ Now therefore, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you like this! Do not believe him! For no god of any other nation or kingdom has been able to deliver his people from my hand or from the hands of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you from my hand!"

¹⁶ Sennacherib's officers said still more against the LORD God and against His servant Hezekiah. ¹⁷ The king also wrote letters to insult the LORD, the God of Israel, and to oppose Him by saying: "Like the gods of the nations of the other lands who have not delivered their people from my hands, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver His people from my hand."

¹⁸ They shouted loudly in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem, who were on the wall, to intimidate and terrify them, that they might capture the city. ¹⁹ They spoke about the God of Jerusalem as they spoke about the gods of the other peoples of the earth, which human hands had made.

The defeat of the king of Assyria at Jerusalem — 2 Kings 19:35-37, Isaiah 37:36-38

²⁰ King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, prayed about this and cried out to heaven.

²¹ Then the LORD sent an angel, who destroyed all the brave soldiers, commanders and other officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So, he returned shame-faced to his own country. When he went into the temple of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword. ²² So, the LORD saved Hezekiah and the people living in Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria and

from the hand of all others. He gave them rest on every side. ²³ Many people kept bringing offerings to the LORD at Jerusalem and precious gifts to Hezekiah, the king of Judah. From then on, all the other nations highly respected him.

The cure of Hezekiah's illness — 2 Kings 20:1-11, Isaiah 37:14-38, 38:1-8, 21-22

²⁴ In those days Hezekiah became ill and was about to die. He prayed to the LORD, and He answered him and gave him a miraculous sign. ²⁵ However, Hezekiah did not repay the kindness shown to him, but his heart became proud. Therefore, God was angry with him and with Judah and Jerusalem.

Other events during the reign of Hezekiah — 2 Kings 20:12-21

²⁶ However, Hezekiah humbled himself because he had been proud in heart, and those who were living in Jerusalem also did the same. So, the wrath of the LORD did not come on them during the time of Hezekiah.

The prosperity and achievements of Hezekiah — 2 Kings 20:12-19

²⁷ Hezekiah had very great riches and honour and made for himself treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, perfumes, shields and for all other kinds of precious articles. ²⁸ He also made storehouses for the yield of grain, wine and olive-oil, stalls for all kinds of cattle and stalls for the flocks. ²⁹ He also provided cities for himself with many sheep and cattle. For God had given him very much property. ³⁰ Hezekiah was the one who blocked off the upper outlet of the water of the Gihon spring and channelled the water underground to the western side of the City of David. Hezekiah was successful in everything he did.

The permission for the envoys from Babylon to inspect the treasures in Jerusalem — Isaiah 39:1-8

³¹ Therefore, in the matter of the ambassadors who had been sent to him by the princes of Babylon to inquire about the miraculous sign that had occurred in the land, God left him to himself, to test him and to find out all that was in his heart.

The death of Hezekiah — 2 Kings 20:20-21

³² The rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his good deeds have indeed been recorded in the vision of the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, and in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ³³ Hezekiah went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him in the part sloping up to the tombs of the sons of David. All Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour when he died. His son Manasseh succeeded him as king.

33

The reign of Manasseh as king of Judah — 2 Kings 21:1-9

¹ Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-five years. ² He did what the LORD regarded as evil, following the detestable practices of the nations that the LORD had driven out ahead of the Israelites. ³ He rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had broken down, erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah-poles. He worshipped all the starry host of the sky and served them. ⁴ He kept building altars in the Temple

of the LORD, about which the LORD had said: "My name will be in Jerusalem for ever." ⁵ He built altars for the whole starry host of the sky in the two courts of the Temple of the LORD. ⁶ He burned his own sons in the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, kept practising sorcery, observing omens, engaged in witchcraft and consulted spirits of the dead and familiar spirits. He did much that the LORD considered evil, so that he provoked Him to anger. ⁷ He placed a carved image, the idol that he had made, in the Temple of God, about which God told David and his son Solomon: "In this Temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I shall put My name for ever, ⁸ and shall not again make the feet of the Israelites leave the land that I have appointed for your fathers, if only they carefully put into practice all that I have commanded them, all the Law, the Statutes and the Decisions given through Moses."

⁹ Manasseh led Judah and the people living in Jerusalem astray, so that they did more evil than the nations that the LORD had destroyed before the Israelites. ¹⁰ Although the LORD spoke to Manasseh and to his people, they paid no attention.

The restoration of Manasseh after repentance

¹¹ Therefore, the LORD brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who captured Manasseh, put hooks in his nose, tied him up with bronze fetters and took him to Babylon. ¹² When he was in distress, he was intent on the favour of the LORD, his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. ¹³ He prayed to Him, and God was moved by his entreaty, heard his plea and brought him back into his kingdom at Jerusalem. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God. ¹⁴ After this, he built the outer wall of the City of David west of the Gihon spring, in the valley, as far as the entrance of the Fish Gate. He made it go around Ophel and made it much higher. He also stationed military commanders in all the fortified cities in Judah. ¹⁵ He removed the foreign gods and the idol from the Temple of the LORD and all the altars that he had built on the mountain of the Temple of the LORD and in Jerusalem and threw them outside of the city. ¹⁶ He also rebuilt the altar of the LORD, sacrificed peace-offerings and thank-offerings on it and told Judah to serve the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁷ Nevertheless, the people still kept sacrificing on the high places, although only to the LORD, their God.

The death of Manasseh — 2 Kings 21:17-18

¹⁸ The rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God and the Words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, have indeed been recorded in the Annals of the Kings of Israel. ¹⁹ His prayer and how God was moved by his entreaty, all his sin and his unfaithfulness and the sites on which he built high places and set up the Asherah-poles and the images, before he humbled himself, have indeed been recorded in the Chronicles of Hozai.

²⁰ Manasseh went to rest with his fathers, and they buried him at his palace. His son Amon succeeded him as king.

The reign of Amon as king of Judah — 2 Kings 21:19-26

²¹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for two years. ²² He did what the LORD considered evil, as his father Manasseh had been doing. Amon offered sacrifices to all the images that his father Manasseh had made and served them. ²³ He did not humble himself before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself but this Amon incurred more guilt. ²⁴ Amon's officials formed a conspiracy against him and killed him in his own palace. ²⁵ However, the people of the land struck down all those who had conspired against King Amon. The people of the land made his son Josiah king to succeed him.

34

The reign of Josiah as king of Judah — 2 Kings 22:1-2

¹ Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-one years. ² He did what the LORD considered right and walked in all the ways of his father David. He did not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. ³ In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still a boy, he began to be intent on the God of his father David and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherah-poles, the carved idols and cast images. ⁴ People tore down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and he cut down the incense stands that stood above them. He broke in pieces the Asherah-poles, the carved idols and cast images. He ground them to powder and scattered it over the graves of those who had been sacrificing to them. ⁵ He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶ In the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim and Simeon and as far as Naphtali and in the ruins around them, ⁷ he broke down the altars and the Asherah-poles, crushed the idols to powder and cut down all the incense stands throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

The discovery of the book of the Law — 2 Kings 22:3-20

⁸ In the eighteenth year of his reign, to cleanse the land and the Temple, he sent Shaphan, the son of Azaliah, Maaseiah, the governor of the city, and Joah, the son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the Temple of the LORD, his God. ⁹ They came to Hilkiah, the High Priest, and gave him the money that had been brought into the Temple of God, which the Levites, who were the keepers of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh, Ephraim, all who were left in Israel, from all Judah and Benjamin and from those who were living in Jerusalem. ¹⁰ They gave it to the men who had been appointed to carry out the work in the Temple of the LORD. These men paid the workers who were repairing and restoring the Temple. ¹¹ They also gave it to the carpenters and the builders to buy

quarried stone, timber for ties and beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had allowed to fall into ruin. ¹² The men did the work conscientiously under the supervision of Jahath and Obadiah, who were Levites who belonged to the descendants of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, who belonged to the descendants of Kohath. All the Levites, who were skilled in playing instruments of music, ¹³ were also in charge of men who were carrying loads and supervised all who were working in any kind of service. Some of the Levites were also secretaries, administrative officers and gatekeepers.

¹⁴ While they were bringing out the money that had been taken into the Temple of the LORD, the priest Hilkiah found the Book of the Law of the LORD that had come from the hand of Moses. ¹⁵ Then Hilkiah informed Shaphan, the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the Temple of the LORD."

Then Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. ¹⁶ Shaphan took the book to the king and made the additional report to the king: "Your servants are doing everything that has been assigned to them. ¹⁷ Your servants have paid out the money that was available in the Temple of the LORD and have given it to the supervisors and to those who are doing the work."

¹⁸ Shaphan, the secretary, also told the king, "The priest, Hilkiah, has given me a book."

Then Shaphan read from it before the king. ¹⁹ When the king heard what the Law said, he tore his clothes.

²⁰ The king gave these orders to Hilkiah, Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, Abdon, the son of Micah, Shaphan, the secretary, and Asaiah, the king's minister: ²¹ "Go and try to obtain information from the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, about the Words of the book that has been found! For the wrath of the LORD that has been poured out on us is great. For our fathers have not been keeping the Word of the LORD and not doing exactly as has been written in this book."

The consultation with the prophetess Huldah

²² So, Hilkiah and the others whom the king had appointed went to the prophetess Huldah, the wife of Shallum, the son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, the keeper of the wardrobe. Huldah was living in the Second District of Jerusalem. They told her about this.

²³ She answered them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: 'Tell the man who has sent you to me, ²⁴ "This is what the LORD has said, 'Look! I shall bring calamity on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that have been written in the book that they have read before the king of Judah. ²⁵ Because they have forsaken Me and have been burning offerings to other gods, so that they have been provoking Me to anger with all that they have been making with their hands, My wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched.'"

²⁶ "However, this is what you shall tell the king of Judah, who has sent you to inquire of the LORD:

‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: “Concerning the Words that you have heard, ²⁷ because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His Words against this place and against its inhabitants, because you humbled yourself before Me, have torn your clothes and have wept before Me, I also have heard you,” declares the LORD.’ ²⁸ Look! I shall gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in your grave in peace. Your own eyes will not see all the calamity that I shall bring on this place and its inhabitants.”

So, they reported this to the king.

The renewal of the Covenant at the time of King Josiah — 2 Kings 23:1-20

²⁹ Then the king sent a message and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ³⁰ The king, all the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the Levites and all the people, both great and small, went up to the Temple of the LORD. While they listened, he read all the Words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the Temple of the LORD. ³¹ The king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His Commandments, His Testimonies and His Prescriptions, with all his heart and all his soul, to put into practice the Words of the Covenant that had been written in this book. ³² Then he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin stand by it. The inhabitants of Jerusalem acted in accordance with the Covenant of God, the God of their fathers. ³³ Josiah removed all the detestable idols from all the territories that belonged to the Israelites and made all who were present in Israel serve the LORD, their God. All his life they did not turn away from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.

35

The celebration of the Passover at the time of Josiah — 2 Kings 23:21-23

¹ Josiah celebrated the Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month. ² He assigned the priests to their duties and encouraged them in the service at the Temple of the LORD. ³ He told the Levites who used to teach all Israel and who were holy to the LORD: “Put the Holy Ark in the Temple that Solomon, the son of David, the king of Israel, has built! It is not to be carried about on your shoulders! Now serve the LORD, your God, and His people Israel! ⁴ Prepare yourselves in your divisions according to your paternal families, as has been prescribed in the document of David, the king of Israel, and the document of his son Solomon! ⁵ Stand in the Holy Place according to the subdivisions of the paternal families of your fellow-Israelites, the lay people and according to the divisions of the paternal families of the Levites! ⁶ Slaughter the Passover lamb, consecrate yourselves and prepare it for your fellow-Israelites, by following what the LORD has said through Moses!”

⁷ Then Josiah contributed to the lay people, as Pass-

over offerings for all who were present, a total of thirty thousand lambs and young goats from the flock and three thousand bulls. These came from the king’s own property. ⁸ His officials also contributed willingly to the people, to the priests and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah and Jehiel, the chief officers of the Temple of God, gave two thousand, six hundred Passover lambs and three hundred bulls to the priests for the Passover offerings. ⁹ Conaniah, his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel and Hashabiah, Jeiel and Jozabad, the leaders of the Levites, also contributed five thousand lambs and young goats and five hundred bulls to the Levites as the Passover offerings. ¹⁰ When the service had been prepared, the priests stood in their places and the Levites stood in their divisions as the king had commanded. ¹¹ They slaughtered the Passover lambs, the priests poured out the blood that was handed to them and the Levites removed the skins. ¹² They set aside the burnt offerings that they might distribute them to the subdivisions of the paternal families of the lay people, that they might present them to the LORD, as had been written in the Book of Moses. They did the same with the cattle. ¹³ They roasted the Passover lambs in fire as had been prescribed. They boiled the holy offerings in pots, cauldrons and pans and carried them quickly to all the lay people. ¹⁴ After this, they prepared for themselves and for the priests. For the priests, the descendants of Aaron, were offering the burnt offerings and the fat portions until night. So, the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, the descendants of Aaron. ¹⁵ The singers, the descendants of Asaph, were in their positions as David, Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun, the king’s seer, had prescribed. The gatekeepers were also at each gate. They did not need to interrupt their service, for their relatives, the Levites, prepared for them. ¹⁶ So, the whole service of the LORD was carried out on that day, so that the Passover was celebrated and burnt offerings were made on the altar of the LORD, as King Josiah had commanded. ¹⁷ The Israelites who were present celebrated the Passover at that time, as well as the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. ¹⁸ No Passover like it had been celebrated in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel. None of the other kings of Israel had celebrated a Passover like the one celebrated by Josiah, the priests, the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present and those who were living in Jerusalem.

The defeat of Judah by Pharaoh-Neco and the death of Josiah — 2 Kings 23:28-30

²⁰ After all this, after Josiah had set the Temple in order, Neco, the king of Egypt, went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to confront him. ²¹ However, Neco sent messengers to him, to say: “What is your quarrel with me, king of Judah? I am not attacking you yourself today but the dynasty with which I am at war. God has commanded me to act quickly. So, stop opposing God, who is with

me, and let Him not destroy you!”

²² Nevertheless, Josiah did not turn away from him but disguised himself to fight with him. He did not listen to what Neco said at God’s command but went to fight in the valley of Megiddo. ²³ When the archers shot King Josiah, the king told his officials, “Take me away! For I have been badly wounded.”

²⁴ His officials took him out of the chariot, carried him in the second chariot that he had and brought him to Jerusalem. He died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. ²⁵ Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah. All the singing men and singing women have also been mentioning Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these songs traditional in Israel. Indeed, they have been recorded in the Laments. ²⁶ The rest of the acts of Josiah, including his deeds of faithful love, which were in keeping with what had been written in the Law of the LORD, ²⁷ and his other deeds, the first and the last, have indeed been recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

36

The reign of Jehoahaz as king of Judah — 2 Kings 23:31-33

¹ Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah and made him king to succeed his father in Jerusalem. ² Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for three months. ³ The king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and levied a fine of three thousand, five hundred kilograms of silver and thirty-five kilograms of gold on the country. ⁴ The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem and changed his name to Jehoiakim.¹¹⁵ Neco took Eliakim’s brother, Jehoahaz, and brought him to Egypt.

The reign of Jehoiakim as king of Judah and his captivity — 2 Kings 23:34-24:7

⁵ Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years. He did what the LORD, his God, considered evil. ⁶ Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came up against him and tied him up with bronze shackles to take him to Babylon. ⁷ Nebuchadnezzar also took some articles from the Temple of the LORD to Babylon and put them in his temple in Babylon. ⁸ The rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, the detestable things that he did and what was found against him have indeed been written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. His son Jehoiachin succeeded him as king.

The reign of Jehoiachin as king of Judah and his captivity — 2 Kings 24:8-17

⁹ Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king and reigned in Jerusalem for three months and ten days. He did what the LORD regarded as evil. ¹⁰ In the spring of that year King Nebuchadnezzar sent men to fetch him to Babylon, together with the precious

articles from the Temple of the LORD and made his relative, Zedekiah, king over Judah and Jerusalem.

The reign of Zedekiah as king of Judah — 2 Kings 24:18-20, Jeremiah 52:1-3

¹¹ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign and reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years. ¹² He did what the LORD, his God, regarded as evil. He did not humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah, who spoke the Word of the LORD. ¹³ He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear an oath by God. He became stubborn and hardened his heart against turning back to the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁴ All the leaders of the priests and also the people became increasingly unfaithful, following all the detestable practices of the other nations. They polluted the Temple of the LORD, which He had consecrated at Jerusalem.

The fall of Jerusalem — 2 Kings 25:1-21, Jeremiah 52:3-30

¹⁵ The LORD, the God of their fathers, had been sending Word to them repeatedly through His messengers, because He took pity on His people and on His dwelling place. ¹⁶ However, they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising His Words and scoffing at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD rose against His people, until there was no remedy.

¹⁷ Therefore, He brought up the king of the Chaldeans against them. He killed their young men with the sword in the Temple that was their shrine. He took no pity on young men or virgins, old men or decrepit people. God put them all in his hands. ¹⁸ He carried to Babylon all the vessels of the Temple of God, great and small and the treasures of the Temple of the LORD, as well as the treasures of the king and of his officials. He took them all to Babylon. ¹⁹ They burned the Temple of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned down all its palaces and destroyed all its precious articles. ²⁰ He took those who had escaped from the sword into exile in Babylon, and they became his servants and the servants of his own sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. ²¹ This happened to fulfil the Word of the LORD spoken through Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbath rests. All the time during which it lay desolate it rested, to fulfil seventy years.

The permission from King Cyrus for the Jews to return from Babylon — Ezra 1:1-4

²² In the first year of Cyrus, the king of Persia, that the Word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus, the king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout his kingdom and put it in writing: ²³ “This is what Cyrus, the king of Persia has said: ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the world and has given me the responsibility of building a Temple for Him at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you out of all His people, may the LORD, his God, be with him! He should go up!’”

¹¹⁵ Eliakim means, “God raises up,” and Jehoiakim means, “The LORD raises up.”

EZRA

1

The end of the Babylonian captivity — 2 Chronicles 36:22-23

¹ In the first year of Cyrus, the king of Persia, that the Word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus, the king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout his kingdom and put it in writing:

The letter of Cyrus

² “This is what Cyrus, the king of Persia has said: ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the world and has given me the responsibility of building a Temple for Him at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³ Whoever there is among you out of all His people, may his God be with him! He should go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the Temple of the LORD, the God of Israel! He is the God who is in Jerusalem. ⁴ The men of any place where any survivor is living as a foreigner should assist him with silver, gold, goods and livestock, together with freewill offerings for the Temple of God at Jerusalem!’”

⁵ Then the leaders of the paternal families of Judah and Benjamin, the priests, the Levites and everyone else whose heart God had moved prepared to go up to rebuild the Temple of the LORD at Jerusalem. ⁶ All who were living around them supported them with articles of silver, with gold, with goods, with livestock and with precious gifts, in addition to all that they gave as freewill offerings. ⁷ King Cyrus also brought out the articles belonging to the Temple of the LORD that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and had placed in the temple of his god. ⁸ Cyrus, the king of Persia had these brought out under the supervision of Mithredath, the treasurer, and he made a catalogue of them for Sheshbazzar, the leading man of Judah. ⁹ This was the inventory of them: thirty golden basins, one thousand silver basins, twenty-nine knives, ¹⁰ thirty golden bowls, four hundred and ten matching silver bowls and one thousand other articles. ¹¹ In all, there were five thousand, four hundred golden and silver articles. Sheshbazzar took all these up with him when the exiles were led up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

2

A list of the people who returned from exile to Jerusalem — Nehemiah 7:6-73

¹ These were the people of the province who returned from the place where the exiles had been taken as captives after Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had carried them away to Babylon as captives. They returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own city. ² Those who came with Zerub-Babel were Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum and Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel was as follows: ³ the

descendants of Parosh: two thousand, one hundred and seventy-two; ⁴ The descendants of Shephatiah, three hundred and seventy-two; ⁵ the descendants of Arah, seven hundred and seventy-five; ⁶ the descendants of Pahath-Moab, namely the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand, eight hundred and twelve; ⁷ the descendants of Elam, one thousand, two hundred and fifty-four; ⁸ the descendants of Zattu, nine hundred and forty-five; ⁹ the descendants of Zaccai, seven hundred and sixty; ¹⁰ the descendants of Bani, six hundred and forty-two; ¹¹ the descendants of Bebai, six hundred and twenty-three; ¹² the descendants of Azgad, one thousand, two hundred and twenty-two; ¹³ the descendants of Adonikam, six hundred and sixty-six; ¹⁴ the descendants of Bigvai, two thousand and fifty-six; ¹⁵ the descendants of Adin, four hundred and fifty-four; ¹⁶ the descendants of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, ninety-eight; ¹⁷ the descendants of Bezai, three hundred and twenty-three; ¹⁸ the descendants of Jorah, one hundred and twelve; ¹⁹ the descendants of Hashum, two hundred and twenty-three; ²⁰ the descendants of Gibbar, ninety-five; ²¹ the descendants of Bethlehem, one hundred and twenty-three; ²² the men of Netophah, fifty-six; ²³ the men of Anathoth, one hundred and twenty-eight; ²⁴ the descendants of Azmaveth, forty-two; ²⁵ the descendants of Kiriath-Arim,^{*116} Chephirah and Beeroth, seven hundred and forty-three; ²⁶ the descendants of Ramah and Geba, six hundred and twenty-one; ²⁷ the men of Michmas, one hundred and twenty-two; ²⁸ the men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred and twenty-three; ²⁹ the descendants of Nebo, fifty-two; ³⁰ the descendants of Magbish, one hundred and fifty-six; ³¹ the descendants of the other Elam, one thousand, two hundred and fifty-four; ³² the descendants of Harim, three hundred and twenty; ³³ the descendants of Lod, Hadid and Ono, seven hundred and twenty-five; ³⁴ the descendants of Jericho, three hundred and forty-five; ³⁵ and the descendants of Senaah, three thousand, six hundred and thirty. ³⁶ The priests were as follows: the descendants of Jedaiah, belonging to the family of Jeshua,^{*117} nine hundred and seventy-three; ³⁷ the descendants of Immer, one thousand and fifty-two; ³⁸ the descendants of Pashhur, one thousand, two hundred and forty-seven; ³⁹ and the descendants of Harim, one thousand and seventeen.

⁴⁰ The Levites were as follows: the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, belonging to the descendants of Hodaviah, seventy-four.

⁴¹ The singers were as follows: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred and twenty-eight.

¹¹⁶ Kiriath-Arim is a variant of Kiriath-Jearim (Neh 7:29), “city of woods.”

¹¹⁷ Jeshua is a late variant of “Joshua,” meaning, “The LORD saves,” and the Hebrew origin of the New Testament name “Jesus.”

⁴² The descendants of the gatekeepers were as follows: the descendants of Shallum, the descendants of Ater, the descendants of Talmon, the descendants of Akkub, the descendants of Hatita and the descendants of Shobai, in all one hundred and thirty-nine.

⁴³ The Temple servants were as follows: the descendants of Ziha, the descendants of Hasupha, the descendants of Tabbaoth, ⁴⁴ the descendants of Keros, the descendants of Siaha, the descendants of Padon, ⁴⁵ the descendants of Lebanah, the descendants of Hagabah, the descendants of Akkub, ⁴⁶ the descendants of Hagab, the descendants of Shamlai, the descendants of Hanan, ⁴⁷ the descendants of Giddel, the descendants of Gahar, the descendants of Reaiah, ⁴⁸ the descendants of Rezin, the descendants of Nekoda, the descendants of Gazzam, ⁴⁹ the descendants of Uzza, the descendants of Paseah, the descendants of Besai, ⁵⁰ the descendants of Asnah, the descendants of Meunim, the descendants of Nephisim, ⁵¹ the descendants of Bakbuk, the descendants of Hakupha, the descendants of Harhur, ⁵² the descendants of Bazluth, the descendants of Mehida, the descendants of Harsha, ⁵³ the descendants of Barkos, the descendants of Sisera, the descendants of Temah, ⁵⁴ the descendants of Neziah and the descendants of Hatipha.

⁵⁵ The descendants of Solomon's servants were as follows: the descendants of Sotai, the descendants of Has-Sophereth, the descendants of Peruda, ⁵⁶ the descendants of Jaalah, the descendants of Darkon, the descendants of Giddel, ⁵⁷ the descendants of Shephatiah, the descendants of Hattil, the descendants of Pochereth-Hazzebaim and the descendants of Ami. ⁵⁸ All the Temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants numbered three hundred and ninety-two.

⁵⁹ The following were those who came up from Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Cherub, Addan and Immer, although they could not prove their paternal families or their descent, whether they belonged to Israel: ⁶⁰ the descendants of Delaiah, the descendants of Tobiah and the descendants of Nekoda, six hundred and fifty-two. ⁶¹ There were also the following, who belonged to the descendants of the priests: the descendants of Habaiah, the descendants of Hakkoz and the descendants of Barzillai, a man who had married one of the daughters of Barzillai from Gilead and had taken their name. ⁶² These tried to enrol themselves in the family-register together with the others who were enrolled in the genealogies but were not found there and so they were excluded from the priesthood as ceremonially polluted. ⁶³ The governor told them that they were not to eat any of the most holy food, until there should be a priest to consult the Urim and the Thummim.

⁶⁴ The total of the whole assembly was forty-two

thousand, three hundred and sixty, ⁶⁵ besides their male and female servants, of whom there were seven thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven. They also had two hundred male and female singers.

⁶⁶ They had seven hundred and thirty-six horses, two hundred and forty-five mules, ⁶⁷ four hundred and thirty-five camels and six thousand, seven hundred and twenty donkeys.

⁶⁸ When some of the heads of paternal families came to the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, they made freewill offerings toward the rebuilding of the Temple of God on its site. ⁶⁹ According to their ability they gave sixty-one thousand drachmas of gold, two thousand, five hundred kilograms of silver and one hundred priests' garments to the treasury for this work.

⁷⁰ The priests, the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers and the Temple servants lived in their own cities. All the rest of Israel also lived in their own cities.

3

The resumption of worship in Jerusalem

¹ When the seventh month had come and when the Israelites were in the cities, the people assembled as one man in Jerusalem. ² Then Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and his relatives, the priests and Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, and his relatives, acted and built the altar of the God of Israel, to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what has been written in the Law of Moses, the man of God. ³ They built the altar on its foundations although they had become terrified of the peoples of the neighbouring countries. Then they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening burnt offerings. ⁴ They celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, as Scripture had prescribed. They also sacrificed the required number of daily burnt offerings, as had been prescribed for each day. ⁵ After that, they presented the regular burnt offerings, the offerings at the New Moon and at all the holy appointed feasts of the LORD, as well as the freewill offerings that anyone made to the LORD. ⁶ They began to make burnt offerings to the LORD from the first day of the seventh month, although the foundation of the Temple of the LORD had not yet been laid.

The beginning of work on the Temple

⁷ Then they paid money to the masons and the carpenters and supplied food, drink and olive-oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs by sea from Lebanon to Joppa, as Cyrus, the king of Persia, had permitted them to do.

The laying of the foundation of the Temple

⁸ In the second month of the second year after they had arrived at the site of the Temple of God at Jerusalem, Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, together with the rest of their fellow-countrymen, the priests, the Levites and all the others who had come from the exile to Jerusalem, made a

beginning. They appointed the Levites who were twenty years of age and older to supervise the work on the Temple of the LORD. ⁹ Jeshua with his sons and his brothers and Kadmiel with his sons, who were descendants of Judah, along with the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers, who were Levites, joined together to supervise those who were working on the Temple of God. ¹⁰ When the builders had laid the foundation of the Temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments took their positions with trumpets, together with the Levites, the descendants of Asaph, who had cymbals, to praise the LORD, as David, the king of Israel, had directed. ¹¹ They sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD: "For He is good, for His faithful love endures for ever toward Israel."

All the people shouted very loudly when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the Temple of the LORD had been laid. ¹² However, many of the priests and Levites and the old men who were the heads of paternal families and who had seen the former Temple, were weeping aloud when they saw the foundation of this Temple being laid, although many others were shouting aloud for joy. ¹³ Consequently the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shouting from the sound of the weeping of the people. For the people were shouting very loudly and the sound could be heard far away.

4

The opposition by the Samaritans to the rebuilding of the Temple

¹ When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people who had been in exile were building a Temple to the LORD, the God of Israel, ² they approached Zerub-Babel and the heads of paternal families and asked them: "Let us build with you! For we worship your God as you do. We have been sacrificing to Him ever since the time of Esarhaddon, the king of Assyria, who brought us here."

³ Zerub-Babel, Jeshua and the rest of the heads of paternal families in Israel told them: "You have no role together with us in building a Temple to our God. Rather, we ourselves alone shall build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, has commanded us."

⁴ Then the people of the country kept discouraging the people of Judah and making them afraid to continue building. ⁵ They bribed counsellors against them to frustrate their plans during the whole time of Cyrus, the king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius, the king of Persia.

The explanation given by the opposition

⁶ During the reign of Xerxes, in the year of his accession, they wrote an accusation against the people who were living in Judah and Jerusalem. ⁷ During the time of Artaxerxes also, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and the rest of their associates wrote to Artaxerxes, the king of Persia. The letter was written in Aramaic

script and translated into the Aramaic language. ⁸ Rehum, the chief government officer, and Shimshai, the scribe, wrote this letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes. ⁹ At that time Rehum, the chief government officer, Shimshai, the scribe, and the rest of their associates, the judges, the governors, the officials, the Persian officers, the people of Erech, the Babylonians, the people of Susa, that is, the Elamites, ¹⁰ and the rest of the nations whom the great and honourable Assurbanipal deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the province west of the Euphrates River, wrote. Now, ¹¹ this is a copy of the letter that they sent: "To King Artaxerxes, from your servants, the men of the province west of the Euphrates. ¹² Let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you to us have travelled to Jerusalem! They are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city. They are completing the walls and are repairing the foundations. ¹³ Now be it known to the king that, if this city is rebuilt and the walls are finished, they will not pay tax, tribute or duty and the royal revenue will suffer loss! ¹⁴ Now, since we are under obligation to the palace and it is not fitting for us to witness the king's dishonour, we have sent a message about this and have informed the king, ¹⁵ that a search may be made in the book of the records of your fathers. You will find in the book of the records and come to understand, that this city is a rebellious city, causing damage to kings and provinces, and that there has been rebellious behaviour in it from long ago. That was why this city was laid waste. ¹⁶ We are informing the king that, if this city is rebuilt and its walls are finished, you will not be able to retain this province west of the Euphrates."

¹⁷ The king sent this reply: "To Rehum, the chief government officer, Shimshai, the scribe, the rest of their associates who are living in Samaria and to the others who are west of the Euphrates: Greetings! Now therefore, ¹⁸ the official letter that you have sent to us has been plainly read in my presence. ¹⁹ I have made a decree, a search has been made and it has been found that this city has from long ago been rising up against kings and that rebellion and sedition have been occurring in it. ²⁰ There have been powerful kings in Jerusalem, who have ruled over everything west of the Euphrates, and tax, tribute and duty used to be paid to them. ²¹ Now issue a decree that these men must stop work and that this city must not be rebuilt, until I issue another decree! ²² Be careful not to neglect this! Why should damage increase so that royal interests are harmed?"

²³ When the copy of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read before Rehum and Shimshai, the scribe, and their associates, they went at once to the Jews at Jerusalem and used force and power to make them stop work. ²⁴ Then the work on the Temple of God in Jerusalem came to a standstill and discontinued until the second

year of the reign of Darius, the king of Persia.

5

The challenge about the right to build the Temple

¹ Then the prophet Haggai and the prophet Zechariah, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. ² Then Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, acted and began to rebuild the Temple of God in Jerusalem and the prophets of God were with them and supported them. ³ At the same time Tattenai, the governor west of the Euphrates River, Shethar-Bozenai and their associates came to them and asked them, “Who gave you a decree to build this Temple and to restore this structure?”

⁴ Then we told them the names of the men who were constructing this building. ⁵ However, the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they were not stopped until the report could reach Darius. Then they received an official letter about this. ⁶ This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai, the governor west of the Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai and his associates, the officials who were west of the Euphrates River, sent to Darius the king. ⁷ The report that they sent to him had this written in it: “To King Darius, peace in every respect! ⁸ Let it be known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the Temple of the great God! It is being rebuilt with large stone blocks and timber is being laid in the walls. This work is being carried out diligently, and they are making rapid progress. ⁹ Then we questioned those elders and asked them, ‘Who gave you a decree to rebuild this Temple and to restore this structure?’ ¹⁰ We also asked them their names, that we might write down the names of their leaders, to inform you. ¹¹ This is the reply that they gave us: ‘We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and are rebuilding the Temple that was built many years ago, one that a great king of Israel finished building. ¹² However, because our fathers had angered the God of heaven, He handed them over to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this Temple and deported the people to Babylon. ¹³ Nevertheless, in the first year of Cyrus, the king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree that this Temple of God should be rebuilt. ¹⁴ King Cyrus also took out of the temple of Babylon the golden and silver articles of the Temple of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had removed from the Temple that used to be in Jerusalem and which he had lodged in the temple of Babylon. King Cyrus took these from the temple at Babylon and delivered them to a man called Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor. ¹⁵ He told him, ‘Take these vessels and go and deposit them in the Temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its former site!’ ¹⁶ Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and from that time until now it has been

under construction but is not yet finished.’

¹⁷ Therefore, if the king thinks it right, let a search be made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether King Cyrus did in fact issue a decree that this Temple of God in Jerusalem should be rebuilt! Let the king send us his decision about this matter!”

6

The search of the archives ordered by Darius

¹ Then Darius the king made a decree, and some people made a search in the archives at Babylon where the documents were stored. ² Then a scroll was found in the citadel of Ecbatana, which is in the province of Media, on which this was written: “A record. ³ In the first year of King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued a decree about the Temple of God at Jerusalem. Let the Temple be rebuilt as a place where sacrifices may be offered! Let its foundations be laid! It shall be thirty metres high and thirty metres wide, ⁴ with three layers of stone blocks and one layer of timber! The expenses shall be paid from the royal treasury! ⁵ The golden and silver articles of the Temple of God that Nebuchadnezzar has taken out of the Temple in Jerusalem and has brought to Babylon shall also be returned! They shall be taken back to their places in the Temple in Jerusalem! You shall deposit them in the Temple of God!”

The decree of Darius, giving permission to continue the rebuilding of the Temple

⁶ “Now, Tattenai, the governor west of the Euphrates, Shethar-Bozenai and your associates, the officials who are west of the river, stay away from there! ⁷ Let the work on that Temple of God alone! Let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild that Temple of God on its site! ⁸ Moreover, I have issued a decree about what you shall do for these elders of the Jews as they rebuild this Temple of God. The expenses shall be paid in full to these men from the royal revenue, the taxes west of the Euphrates, that the work may not cease. ⁹ Whatever is needed — young bulls, young rams or male lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine or oil, as the priests at Jerusalem may request — shall be given to them day by day so that nothing is neglected, ¹⁰ that they may sacrifice incense offerings to the God of heaven and pray for the lives of the king and his sons! ¹¹ I have also issued a decree that, if anyone alters this edict, a beam shall be pulled out of his house, he shall be executed by being impaled on it, and his house shall be turned into a pile of rubble because he has done this! ¹² May the God who has caused His name to dwell there overthrow any king or people who puts out a hand to alter this or to destroy this Temple of God in Jerusalem! I, Darius, have issued a decree. Let it be carried out with diligence!”

The resumption of work on the Temple, its completion and its rededication — Haggai 1:1, Zechariah 1:1

¹³ Then, because of what King Darius had sent, Tattenai, the governor west of the Euphrates, Shethar-

Bozenai and their associates carried this out diligently. ¹⁴ The elders of the Jews kept making progress in the building through the prophesying of the prophet Haggai and of Zechariah, the son of Iddo. They finished building as the God of Israel had commanded, and as Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes, the kings of Persia, had commanded. ¹⁵ This Temple was completed on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. ¹⁶ The people of Israel, the priests, the Levites and the others who had come back from the exile joyfully celebrated the dedication of this Temple of God. ¹⁷ For the dedication of this Temple of God they offered one hundred bulls, two hundred young rams, four hundred male lambs and twelve male goats as a sin-offering for all Israel, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁸ They assigned the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their work-groups, for the service of God at Jerusalem, as Scripture had prescribed in the Book of Moses.

The celebration of the Passover — compare Deuteronomy 16:1-8

¹⁹ Those who had come back from exile celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. ²⁰ For the priests and the Levites had all purified themselves. All of them were ceremonially clean. They slaughtered the Passover lamb for all the people who had returned from the exile, for their relatives the priests and for themselves. ²¹ The Israelites who had returned from the exile ate it, together with all who had separated themselves from the ceremonial uncleanness of the non-Jews in the country, to be intent on the LORD, the God of Israel. ²² Then they joyfully celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. For the LORD had made them joyful and had changed the attitude of the king of Assyria towards them, so that he assisted them in the work on the Temple of God, the God of Israel.

7

The bringing of more exiles to Jerusalem by Ezra

¹ Later, in the reign of Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, ² the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, ³ the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, ⁴ the son of Zerariah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, ⁵ the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of the Chief Priest Aaron — ⁶ this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe who was skilled in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the God of Israel had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD, his God, was on him. ⁷ Some of the Israelites, including priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers and Temple servants, also went up to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. ⁸ Ezra arrived at Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king. ⁹ For he had begun his journey from Babylon on the first day of the first month and arrived

at Jerusalem on the first day of the fifth month. For the good hand of his God was on him. ¹⁰ For Ezra had devoted himself to the study of the Law of the LORD, to the observance of it and to teaching its Prescriptions and Decisions in Israel.

The letter of Artaxerxes to Ezra

¹¹ This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes had given to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a man learned in matters of the Commandments of the LORD and His Statutes for Israel: ¹² “Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, greetings! ¹³ I have made a decree that any of the Israelites in my kingdom, including their priests and Levites, who volunteer to go with you to Jerusalem, may go. ¹⁴ Therefore, you are being sent by the king and his seven advisers to make inquiries about Judah and Jerusalem according to the Law of your God, which is in your hand. ¹⁵ You shall also take the silver and gold that the king and his advisers have freely given to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem! ¹⁶ Take also all the silver and gold that you may find in the whole province of Babylon, together with the freewill offerings of the people and the priests that are donated for the Temple of their God in Jerusalem! ¹⁷ As a result, you shall be sure to use this money to buy bulls, young rams and male lambs, with their grain-offerings and their drink-offerings and you shall offer them on the altar of the Temple of your God that is in Jerusalem! ¹⁸ You and your relatives may do whatever seems best to do with the rest of the silver and gold, as your God wishes. ¹⁹ You shall deliver the vessels that have been entrusted to you for the service of the Temple of your God, in the presence of the God of Jerusalem! ²⁰ You may provide out of the king’s treasury whatever else is needed for the Temple of your God and whatever is your duty to provide. ²¹ I, King Artaxerxes, have made a decree to all the treasurers west of the Euphrates: Whatever Ezra, the priest, the scribe of the Law of the God of heaven, requires of you shall be provided diligently, ²² up to three thousand, five hundred kilograms of silver, sixteen and two-thirds tonnes of wheat, four thousand litres of wine, four thousand litres of olive-oil and an unlimited amount of salt! ²³ Whatever the God of heaven has commanded must be carried out exactly for the Temple of the God of heaven! Why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and of his sons? ²⁴ You are also informed that it is not authorised for tax, tribute or toll to be imposed on any of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the doorkeepers, the Temple servants or other workers at this Temple of God. ²⁵ You, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God, which you possess, shall also appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice to all the people west of the Euphrates, that is, all who know the Laws of your God! You shall also teach anyone who does not know them! ²⁶ Judgment shall certainly be

carried out on anyone who does not obey the Law of your God and the law of the king, whether it be by death, corporal punishment, confiscation of his property or imprisonment!"

²⁷ Blessed be the LORD, the God of our fathers! He has put a thing like this into the heart of the king, to beautify the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem. ²⁸ He has extended His faithful love to me before the king, his advisers and all the king's powerful officials. I myself took courage, for the hand of the LORD, my God, was on me. So, I gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me.

8

The list of the leaders of families who came from Babylon to Jerusalem with Ezra

¹ These are the heads of their paternal families, and this is the registration by families of those who went up with me from Babylon during the reign of King Artaxerxes: ² There were Gershom from the descendants of Phinehas, Daniel from the descendants of Ithamar, Hattush from the descendants of David, ³ and Zechariah from the descendants of Shecaniah, who belonged to the descendants of Parosh. One hundred and fifty men enrolled themselves with him in the family register. ⁴ There was Eliehoenai, the son of Zerachiah and two hundred men with him who were descendants of Pahath-Moab. ⁵ There was Shechaniah, the son of Jahaziel, and three hundred men with him who were descendants of Zattu. ⁶ There was Ebed, the son of Jonathan and fifty men with him who were descendants of Adin. ⁷ There was Jeshaiiah, son of Athaliah, and seventy men with him who were descendants of Elam. ⁸ There was Zebadiah, the son of Michael and eighty men with him who were descendants of Shephatiah. ⁹ There was Obadiah, the son of Jehiel, and two hundred and eighteen men with him who were descendants of Joab. ¹⁰ There was Shelomith, the son of Josiphiah, and one hundred and sixty men with him who were descendants of Bani. ¹¹ There was Zechariah, the son of Bebai, and twenty-eight men with him who were descendants of Bebai. ¹² There was Johanan, the son of Hakkatan, and one hundred and ten men with him who were descendants of Azgad. ¹³ There were descendants of Adonikam, who came later, and their names were Eliphelet, Jeiel and Shemaiah, and there were sixty men with them. ¹⁴ There were Uthai and Zaccur and seventy men with them, who were descendants of Bigvai.

Ezra's preparations to leave from Babylon and his assembling of servants for the Temple

¹⁵ I gathered them at the river that flows to Ahava, and we camped there for three days. When I reviewed the people and the priests, I did not find any of the descendants of Levi there. ¹⁶ Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah and Meshullam, who were leading men and for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were men of insight.

¹⁷ Then I ordered them to go to Iddo, the leading man at the place, Casiphia. I told them what to say to Iddo and his relatives and the Temple servants at the place called Casiphia, that they might bring us ministers for the Temple of our God. ¹⁸ Because the kind hand of our God was on us, they brought us Sherebiah, a man of discretion, who was descended from Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel, and Sherebiah's sons and other relatives, who numbered eighteen men. ¹⁹ They also brought Hashabiah and with him Jeshaiiah, together with Jeshaiiah's brothers and their sons, who numbered twenty men. These were descendants of Merari. ²⁰ They also brought two hundred and twenty of the Temple servants, men whom David and his officials had appointed to assist the Levites. These were all registered by their names.

The fasting and prayer for protection before the departure for Jerusalem

²¹ Then I announced a fast there at the Ahava River, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to ask Him for a safe journey for ourselves, our women, children and all our possessions. ²² For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against any enemy on the road, since we had told the king: "The hand of our God is on all who look to Him to bring them good, but His power and His anger are against all who forsake Him."

²³ So, we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and He listened to our entreaty.

The gifts for use at the Temple

²⁴ Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah and Hashabiah, together with ten of their relatives. ²⁵ I weighed out to them the silver, the gold and the articles that the king, his advisers, his officials and all the Israelites who were present had donated as an offering for the Temple of our God. ²⁶ I weighed out into their hands twenty-two thousand, seven hundred and fifty kilograms of silver, silver articles weighing three thousand, five hundred kilograms, three thousand, five hundred kilograms of gold, ²⁷ twenty golden bowls weighing one thousand darics and two fine articles of gleaming red bronze as precious as gold. ²⁸ I told them: "You are holy to the LORD, the articles are holy, and the silver and gold are voluntary gifts to the LORD, the God of your fathers. ²⁹ Be watchful and guard them until you weigh them in the presence of the leaders of the priests, the Levites and the heads of the paternal families of Israel at Jerusalem, inside the rooms of the Temple of the LORD!"

³⁰ So, the priests and the Levites received the silver, the gold and the articles as they had been weighed out, that they might bring them to the Temple of our God at Jerusalem.

The arrival at Jerusalem of Ezra and his company

³¹ We set out from the Ahava River on the twelfth day of the first month, to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us, and He delivered us from any enemies and from any ambushes along the road. ³² When we

arrived at Jerusalem, we stayed there for three days. ³³ On the fourth day the silver, the gold and the articles were weighed out into the hands of the priest Meremoth, the son of Uriah, inside the Temple of our God. Eleazar, the son of Phinehas, was with him, and so were the Levites Jozabad, the son of Jeshua and Noadiah, the son of Binnui. ³⁴ It was all counted and weighed, and the weight of everything was recorded at that time. ³⁵ Those who had come back from captivity, the returned exiles, offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs and, as a sin-offering, twelve male goats. All this was a burnt offering to the LORD. ³⁶ They also delivered the king's decrees to the king's satraps and to the governors west of the Euphrates, who then gave assistance to the people and the Temple of God.

9

Ezra's denunciation of mixed marriages

¹ After these things had been done, the leaders approached me and said: "The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the peoples of foreign countries, with respect to their detestable practices, those of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians and the Amorites. ² For they and their sons have married some of their daughters, so that the holy race has intermixed itself with the peoples of the foreign countries. The leaders and officials have also been leading the way in this unfaithfulness."

³ When I heard this, I tore my tunic and my cloak, tore hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled.

⁴ Then all who trembled at the Words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of the unfaithfulness of the returned exiles. I kept sitting appalled until the evening sacrifice.

Ezra's confession of the sin of the people

⁵ At the evening sacrifice I rose from my mourning posture, with my tunic and my cloak torn. I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to the LORD, my God. ⁶ I said: "O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift my face to You, my God. For our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown as high as heaven. ⁷ From the days of our fathers to this day we have been very guilty. Because of our iniquities our kings, our priests and we have been handed over to the kings of foreign countries, to the sword, captivity, plunder and utter shame, as it still is today. ⁸ Now, however, for a brief moment the LORD, our God, has shown favour, so that He has left us a remnant and has given us security inside His Holy Place, so that our God gives light to our eyes and grants us a little relief in our slavery. ⁹ For we are slaves. Yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery but has extended His faithful love to us in the presence of the kings of Persia. He has granted us relief to

erect the Temple of our God and to repair its ruins and has given us a protecting wall in Judea and Jerusalem.

¹⁰ Now therefore, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your Commandments, ¹¹ which You ordered through Your servants, the prophets, when You said, 'The land that you are entering to possess is a land that is polluted with the impurity of the foreign peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. ¹² Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons and do not take their daughters for your sons! You shall never try to obtain their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance!' ¹³ After all that has happened to us because of the wicked things that we have done and because of our great guilt, although You, our God, have punished us less than we have deserved for our wrongdoing and although You have given us such a remnant as this, ¹⁴ shall we break Your Commandments again and intermarry with the peoples who commit these detestable practices? Will You not be angry with us until You consume us, so that there is no remnant and no survivor? ¹⁵ O LORD, God of Israel, You are just. For we have escaped as survivors. That is what we are today. Look! Here we are before You in our guilt. For no one can stand before You because of this!"

10

The confession of the people

¹ While Ezra was praying and making confession, weeping and casting himself down before the Temple of God, a very great assembly of men, women and children, gathered to him out of Israel. Indeed, the people wept very bitterly. ² Shecaniah, the son of Jehiel, one of the descendants of Elam, spoke up and told Ezra: "We ourselves have been unfaithful to our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, but even now there is hope for Israel despite this. ³ So now, let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these women and their children, as you, my master, advise and as those advise who tremble at the Commandment of our God! Let it be done according to the Law! ⁴ Arise! For this is your task. We are with you. Be strong and take action!"

⁵ Then Ezra stood up and made the leading priests, the Levites and all Israel take an oath that they would do as had been said. So, they swore an oath.

The rejection of foreign wives and their children

⁶ Then Ezra left the Temple of God and went into the room of Jehohanan, the descendant of Eliashib. When he went there, he did not eat any food or drink any water. For he continued to mourn over the unfaithfulness of the returned exiles. ⁷ Then some people issued a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem for all the returned exiles to assemble at Jerusalem. ⁸ If any-

one failed to come within three days, all his property would be utterly destroyed, as the officials and the elders had advised, and he himself would be expelled from the assembly of the returned exiles. ⁹ Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. All the people sat in the open space in front of the Temple of God, in great distress because of this matter and because of the showers of rain. ¹⁰ Then Ezra the priest stood up and told them: "You have been unfaithful. You have been marrying foreign women and so have added to the guilt of Israel. ¹¹ Now therefore, make confession to the LORD, the God of your fathers and do what He wants! Separate from the peoples of the land and from your foreign wives!"

¹² Then all the assembly answered loudly: "Yes! We must do as you have told us. ¹³ However, there are many people here, and it is the rainy season. We cannot stand in the open. This is also not a task for one day or for two. For we have been rebelling greatly because of this. ¹⁴ Please let our leaders represent the whole assembly! Then let all in our cities who have married foreign women come at appointed times, and let the elders and judges of every city come with them, until the fierce anger of our God in this matter is turned away from us!"

¹⁵ Only Jonathan, the son of Asahel, and Jahzeiah, the son of Tikvah, opposed this, and the Levites Meshullam and Shabbethai supported them. ¹⁶ The returned exiles did as was proposed. Ezra the priest selected men who were the heads of paternal families, according to their fathers' families and designated all of them by name. They sat down on the first day of the tenth month to investigate the matter. ¹⁷ By the first day of the first month they had finished dealing with all the men who had married foreign wives.

The list of men who had married foreign women

¹⁸ Among the descendants of the priests the following were found to have married foreign women: There were Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib and Gedaliah, who were descendants of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak and his

brothers. ¹⁹ They pledged themselves to put away their wives and for their guilt they each presented a ram from the flock as a guilt-offering. ²⁰ There were Hanani and Zebadiah, who were descendants of Immer. ²¹ There were Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel and Uzziyah, who were descendants of Harim. ²² There were Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad and Elasaah, who were descendants of Pashhur. ²³ Among the Levites there were Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah and Eliezer. ²⁴ Among the singers there was Eliashib. Among the gatekeepers there were Shallum, Telem and Uri. ²⁵ Among the rest of Israel there were Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah and Benaiah, who were descendants of Parosh. ²⁶ There were Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth and Elijah, who were descendants of Elam. ²⁷ There were Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad and Aziza, who were descendants of Zattu. ²⁸ There were Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai and Athlai, who were descendants of Bebai. ²⁹ There were Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiyah, Jashub, Sheal and Ramoth, who were descendants of Bani. ³⁰ There were Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui and Manasseh, who were descendants of Pahath-Moab. ³¹ From the descendants of Harim there were Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, ³² Benjamin, Malluch and Shemariah. ³³ There were Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh and Shimei, who were descendants of Hashum. ³⁴ Among the descendants of Bani there were Maadai, Amram, Uel, ³⁵ Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhu, ³⁶ Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, ³⁷ Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasai, ³⁸ Bani, Binnui, Shimei, ³⁹ Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiyah, ⁴⁰ Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, ⁴¹ Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, ⁴² Shallum, Amariah and Joseph. ⁴³ There were Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel and Benaiah, who were descendants of Nebo. ⁴⁴ All these had married foreign women, and some of them had had children by these wives.

NEHEMIAH

1

The bringing of a report about Jerusalem to Nehemiah

¹ These are Words of Nehemiah, the son of Hacaliah. It happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes that I was in the citadel at Susa.

² One of my brothers, Hanani, arrived with some other men from Judah, and I asked them about the remnant of the Jews who had escaped from the captivity and about Jerusalem. ³ They told me: “The remnant, who have escaped from the captivity and are there in the province, are in great distress and in disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been broken down, and its gates have been burnt down.”

The prayer of Nehemiah for God’s mercy to the Israelites

⁴ When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days. I continued to fast and pray before the God of heaven. ⁵ I said: “Please, O LORD, God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You keep Your Covenant and are merciful to those who love You and keep Your Commandments. ⁶ Please let Your ear be attentive, and let Your eyes be open to my prayer, which I, Your servant, am praying! I am praying before You now, day and night, for Your servants, the Israelites. I am confessing the sins of the Israelites, which we have committed against You. Yes, my father’s family and I have sinned. ⁷ We have done You a great wrong. We have not been keeping the Commandments, the Prescriptions and the Decisions that You commanded Your servant Moses. ⁸ Please remember what You told Your servant Moses to say, ‘If you are unfaithful, I shall scatter you among the nations. ⁹ However, if you return to Me and keep My Commandments and put them into practice, although your people have been driven to the farthest skies, I shall gather them from there and bring them to the place where I have chosen for My name to dwell!’

¹⁰ These are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand. ¹¹ O Lord, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight in respecting Your name! Please also give success to me, Your servant, today and grant that this man may be compassionate to me!” For I was the king’s cup-bearer.

2

The journey of Nehemiah to Jerusalem

¹ In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. I had not previously been sad in his presence. ² The king asked me: “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can only be heartfelt worry about something.”

Then I was extremely afraid. ³ I said to the king:

“May Your Majesty live for ever! Why should I not look sad, when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

⁴ Then the king asked me, “What do you request?”

So, I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ Then I answered the king: “If it pleases Your Majesty and, if you are kindly disposed to me, your servant, I ask you to send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried, that I may rebuild it.”

⁶ The queen was sitting beside the king when he asked me, “How long would your journey take, and how long would it be before you return?”

The king consented to send me when I had given him a definite date. ⁷ I also asked the king: “If Your Majesty approves, let letters be given to me for the governors west of the Euphrates, telling them to provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah! ⁸ May I also be given a letter to Asaph, the keeper of Your Majesty’s land-reserve, telling him to give me timber to place beams in the gates of the citadel beside the Temple, for the wall of the city and for the house that I shall occupy!”

The king also granted these to me, since the kind hand of my God was on me. ⁹ When I came to the governors west of the Euphrates I gave them the king’s letters. The king had also sent some officers of the army and horsemen with me. ¹⁰ However, when Sanballat from Horon and Tobiah, the Ammonite official, heard this, they were very annoyed that someone should have come to promote the welfare of the Israelites.

Nehemiah’s inspection of the walls of Jerusalem

¹¹ When I arrived at Jerusalem I stayed there for three days. ¹² Then I set out during the night with a few men. I had not told anyone about the purpose that my God was laying on my heart to do for Jerusalem. The only animal I took was the one I was riding. ¹³ By night I went out through the Valley Gate to the Dragon Spring and to the gate to the rubbish tip and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire. ¹⁴ Then I went on to the Fountain-Gate and to the King’s Pool, but there was no room for the animal that I was riding to pass through. ¹⁵ I went up the valley by night and inspected the wall. Then I turned around and re-entered through the Valley Gate. ¹⁶ The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing. As yet I had said nothing to the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials and the rest who would be doing the work.

The decision to restore the walls

¹⁷ Then I told them: “You see the trouble we are in, that Jerusalem is lying in ruins with its gates burnt down. Come! Let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be in disgrace!”

¹⁸ I told them that the kind hand of my God had been on me and about what the king had said to me. Then they said, "Let us start building!"

So, they encouraged one another about this good work. ¹⁹ However, when Sanballat from Horon, Tobiah, the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they ridiculed and despised us and asked, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"

²⁰ I answered them by saying: "The God of heaven will give us success. We, His servants, shall start rebuilding. You, however, have no share, legal right or claim to a possession in Jerusalem."

3

The building of the northern wall

¹ The High Priest, Eliashib, and his relatives, the priests, began by building the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set its doors in place. They consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred and as far as the Tower of Hananel. ² The men of Jericho rebuilt next to Eliashib and Zaccur, the son of Imri, rebuilt next to them. ³ The sons of Hassenaah rebuilt the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and set up its doors, with its bolts and bars. ⁴ Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, repaired the section next to them. Meshullam, the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel, repaired the section next to them. Zadok, the son of Baana, repaired the section next to them. ⁵ The men from Tekoa repaired the section next to them, but their nobles would not condescend to work under their superiors.

The building of the western wall

⁶ Joiada, the son of Paseah and Meshullam, the son of Besodeiah, repaired the gate of the Old City. They laid its beams and set up its doors, with its bolts and bars. ⁷ Next to them Melatiah from Gibeon and Jadon from Meronoth, who were men from Gibeon and Mizpah, places under the authority of the governor west of the Euphrates, repaired the wall. ⁸ Uzziel, the son of Harhaiah, one of the craftsmen in precious metals, repaired the next section. Hananiah, one of the perfume-makers, made repairs next to Uzziel, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.

⁹ Rephaiah, the son of Hur, the ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem, made repairs next to them. ¹⁰ Next to them Jedaiah, the son of Harumaph, made repairs opposite his own home and Hattush, the son of Hashabneiah, made repairs next to him. ¹¹ Malchijah, the son of Harim and Hasshub, the son of Pahath-Moab, repaired another section, as well as the Tower of the Ovens. ¹² Shallum, the son of Hallohesh, a ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem, made repairs next to him with the help of his daughters.

The building of the southern wall

¹³ Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They rebuilt it and set up its doors, with its bolts and its bars. They also repaired five hundred

metres of the wall as far as the gate to the rubbish tip.

¹⁴ Malchijah, the son of Rechab, the ruler of the district of Beth-Hakkerem, repaired the gate to the rubbish tip. He rebuilt it and set up its doors, with its bolts and its bars.

The building of the south-eastern wall

¹⁵ Shallun, the son of Col-Hozeh, the ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain-Gate. He rebuilt it, covered it with a roof and set up its doors, with its bolts and its bars. He rebuilt the wall near the Pool of the water-channel beside the King's Garden, as far as the steps that go down from the City of David.

¹⁶ After him Nehemiah, the son of Azbuk, the ruler of half the district of Beth-Zur, made repairs to a point opposite the tombs of David, as far as the artificial pool and the soldiers' barracks. ¹⁷ The Levites, including Rehum, the son of Bani, made the repairs next to him. Next to him Hashabiah, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, carried out repairs for his district.

¹⁸ Next to him their relatives, including Bavvai, the son of Henadad, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, carried out the repairs. ¹⁹ Next to him Ezer, the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armoury at the Angle.

²⁰ Next to him Baruch, the son of Zakkai, carefully repaired another section from the Angle to the door of the house of the High Priest, Eliashib. ²¹ Next to him Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of Eliashib's house. ²² After him the priests, men who lived in the Circular District, made the repairs. ²³ After them Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their own home. After them Azariah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs beside his own house. ²⁴ After him Binnui, the son of Henadad, repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the Angle and the corner. ²⁵ Palal, the son of Uzai, repaired opposite the Angle and the tower that projects from the upper palace of the king to the prison court. After him Pedaiah, the son of Parosh, made repairs. ²⁶ The Temple servants were living on Ophel and made repairs to a point opposite the Water Gate on the eastern side and opposite the projecting tower. ²⁷ After them the men from Tekoa repaired another section, from opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

The building of the north-eastern wall

²⁸ The priests made the repairs above the Horse Gate, each one opposite his own house. ²⁹ After them Zadok, the son of Immer, made repairs opposite his own house. After him Shemaiah, the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs. ³⁰ After him Hananiah, the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam, the son of Berechiah, repaired opposite his apartment. ³¹ After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the Temple servants and of the merchants, opposite the

Inspection Gate and as far as the upper room at the corner. ³² The goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs between the upper room at the corner and the Sheep Gate.

4

The thwarting of Sanballat

¹ When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he was angry and very indignant and ridiculed the Jews. ² He asked, in the presence of his relatives and the army of Samaria: “What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish it in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, even after they have been burnt?”

³ Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him and said, “Even if a fox were to walk up on their stone wall, which they are building, he would break it down!”

The prayer of Nehemiah

⁴ “Hear, O our God! For we have been despised. Turn their scorn back on their own heads and give them over as plunder in a land where they are captives! ⁵ Do not cover their guilt, and let their sin not be blotted out from Your sight! For they have provoked You to anger in the presence of these builders.”

The restoration of the walls of Jerusalem

⁶ So, we rebuilt the wall. The entire wall was joined together to half its height. The people worked eagerly. ⁷ However, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the people in Ashdod heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was progressing and that the gaps were beginning to be closed, they became very angry. ⁸ They all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to stir up trouble in it. ⁹ However, because of them we prayed to our God and set a guard day and night to protect ourselves from them. ¹⁰ Then the people of Judah said: “The strength of the labourers who are carrying the loads has failed. There is too much rubble. We ourselves cannot rebuild the wall.”

¹¹ Our enemies also said, “Before they know it or see us, we shall come among them, kill them and stop the work.”

¹² Then the Jews who were living near our enemies told us ten times, “They will attack us from whatever direction you are facing.”

¹³ Therefore, I stationed the people according to their families at the exposed places behind the lowest parts of the wall, with their swords, spears and bows.

¹⁴ After I inspected them, I proceeded to tell the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: “Do not be afraid of them! Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your homes!”

¹⁵ When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plans and that God had caused them to fail, we all returned to the wall, each one to his own work.

¹⁶ From that day on, half of my men used to do the

work, and the other half equipped themselves with the spears, shields, bows and body-armour. The leaders also supported the whole family of Judah, ¹⁷ who were building on the wall. The labourers who were carrying the loads kept doing the work with one hand while the other hand was holding a weapon. ¹⁸ Each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he was building. The man who blew the trumpet stayed beside me. ¹⁹ I told the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: “The work is so extensive and spread out that we are widely separated from each other on the wall. ²⁰ Rally to us wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet! Our God will fight for us!”

²¹ So, we kept doing the work with half of the men holding spears from early dawn until the stars came out. ²² I also told the people at that time: “Every man and his servant should spend the night inside Jerusalem, that they may be our guard by night and a working party during the day!”

²³ None of us, I, my brothers, my servants or the guards who followed me took off our clothes. Each kept his weapon when he went for water.

5

Nehemiah's assistance to poor people

¹ Then some of the people, men and women, complained loudly about their Jewish relatives. ² Some were saying: “There are many of us with our sons and our daughters. We must get grain to eat and to stay alive.”

³ There were others who were saying, “We are mortgaging our fields, vineyards and houses to get grain during the famine.”

⁴ There were others who were saying: “We have borrowed money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards. ⁵ Now therefore, our bodies are like the bodies of our relatives. Our children are like their children. However, look! We are forcing our sons and our daughters to become slaves, and some of our daughters have already been enslaved. However, we are powerless because other men possess our fields and our vineyards.”

⁶ I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these complaints. ⁷ I considered this carefully and then accused the nobles and the officials. I told them, “Each of you is loaning money at interest to his fellow-countryman!”

I called together a large meeting to deal with them. ⁸ I told them: “We ourselves, as much as we can, have repurchased our Jewish relatives, who had been sold to the other nations. However, even you yourselves are selling your own relatives, so that we have to buy them back!”

They were silent and could not say anything. ⁹ Then I said: “What you are doing is not right. Should you not be living in the fear of our God, to prevent the ridicule of the other nations, who are our enemies? ¹⁰ I too, my relatives and my servants, are lending the people

money and grain. Please let us abandon this charging of interest for loans! ¹¹ Please return to them immediately their fields, vineyards, olive orchards and houses and the interest on money, grain, wine and oil, which you have been charging them on loans!”

¹² Then they said: “We shall restore these and shall not try to get them from them. We shall do as you say.”

Then I summoned the priests and made them swear to do what they had promised. ¹³ I also shook out the loose folds of my garment and said: “May God shake out from his house and from the property that he has acquired every man who does not keep this promise! May he be shaken out and emptied!”

All the assembly said “Amen” and praised the LORD. Then the people did this as they had promised.

The generosity of Nehemiah

¹⁴ Furthermore, from the time when I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, for twelve years, my relatives and I did not accept the food allowance of the governor. ¹⁵ The former governors, who had been before me, had imposed heavy burdens on the people by taking four hundred and eighty grams of silver in addition to food and wine. Even their servants were domineering over the people. However, I myself did not act like that, because I feared God. ¹⁶ I also devoted myself to the work on this wall. We did not acquire any land. All my servants kept assembling there for the work. ¹⁷ Moreover, one hundred and fifty Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the other nations around us, were at my table. ¹⁸ Each day one ox, six choice sheep and fowls were prepared for me, and once every ten days there was a plentiful supply of all kinds of wine. For all this, I did not demand the governor’s food allowance. For the labour imposed on this people was burdensome. ¹⁹ Remember all that I have done for this people, O my God and treat me kindly.

6

The foiling of a plot against Nehemiah

¹ When Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem, the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall and that no gaps were left in it, although up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates, ² Sanballat and Geshem sent a message to me, “Come! Let us meet together at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono!”

However, they were planning to harm me. ³ I sent messengers to tell them: “I am doing an important work and cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?”

⁴ They sent a message like this to me four times, and I gave them the same reply. ⁵ Then for the fifth time Sanballat sent his servant to me with an unsealed letter in his hand. ⁶ The writing in it said: “It has been reported among the nations, and Geshem is also say-

ing, that you and the Jews are intending to rebel. That is why you are building the wall. According to these reports you wish to become their king. ⁷ You have even appointed prophets to proclaim about yourself in Jerusalem, ‘There is a king in Judah.’ Now therefore, the king will hear about these reports. Now therefore, come, and let us have a conference together!”

⁸ I sent him this reply: “Nothing like what you are saying has happened. Indeed, you are inventing these things out of your own head.”

⁹ For they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, “Their hands will hang limp, so that the work will stop and will not be completed.”

However, I prayed, “Now strengthen my hands!”

¹⁰ When I went to the home of Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home, he said: “Let us meet together in the house of God, inside the Temple! Let us close the doors of the Temple! For they are coming to kill you. They are coming to kill you tonight.”

¹¹ However, I said: “Should a man like me run away? What man like me would go into the Temple to save his life? I will not go in there!”

¹² I recognised that God had indeed not sent him, but that he had pronounced this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. ¹³ He had been hired to intimidate me and make me sin by acting in this way. They would then have had a compromising story to discredit me.

¹⁴ Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, because of what they have done! Remember also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who have been trying to frighten me!

The completion of the wall

¹⁵ The wall was finished in fifty-two days, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul. ¹⁶ When all our enemies heard about it and all the nations around us saw these things, their self-confidence fell considerably. They realised that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. ¹⁷ In those days the nobles of Judah also kept sending many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah’s letters kept coming to them. ¹⁸ For many in Judah had promised by oath to support Tobiah. For he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah, the son of Arah. His son Jehohanan had also married the daughter of Meshullam, the son of Berechiah. ¹⁹ They also kept speaking about his good deeds in my presence and reporting what I said to him. Tobiah had been sending letters to make me afraid.

7

The guarding of Jerusalem

¹ When the wall had been rebuilt, and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers and the Levites were appointed, ² I put my brother, Hanani, and Hananiah, the governor of the citadel, in charge over Jerusalem, because Hananiah was a reliable man and feared God more than many others did. ³ I told them:

“The gates of Jerusalem shall not be opened until the sun is hot! Men shall shut and fasten the doors while they are still standing guard! Appoint some residents of Jerusalem as guards! Some should be at their stations, and others should be near their own homes!”

⁴ Although the city was wide and large, there were few people in it and the houses had not yet been rebuilt.

The list of the first exiles who had returned — Ezra 2:1-70

⁵ Then my God induced me to assemble the nobles, the officials and the common people to have themselves registered on family tables. I had found the registry book of those who had come up the first time, and this is what I found written there: ⁶ These were the people of the province who came back from the captivity, out of those whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon had taken into exile. Each of them returned to his own city, Jerusalem or in the rest of Judah. ⁷ They came with Zerub-Babel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum and Baanah.

The list of families by their ancestors — Ezra 2:3-20

The list of the Israelite men was as follows: ⁸ There were two thousand, one hundred and seventy-two descendants of Parosh. ⁹ There were three hundred and seventy-two descendants of Shephatiah. ¹⁰ There were six hundred and fifty-two descendants of Arah. ¹¹ There were two thousand, eight hundred and eighteen descendants of Pahath-Moab, through the line of Jeshua and Joab. ¹² There were one thousand, two hundred and fifty-four descendants of Elam. ¹³ There were eight hundred and forty-five descendants of Zattu. ¹⁴ There were seven hundred and sixty descendants of Zaccai. ¹⁵ There were six hundred and forty-eight descendants of Binnui. ¹⁶ There were six hundred and twenty-eight descendants of Bebai. ¹⁷ There were two thousand, three hundred and twenty-two descendants of Azgad. ¹⁸ There were six hundred and sixty-seven descendants of Adonikam. ¹⁹ There were two thousand and sixty-seven descendants of Bigvai. ²⁰ There were six hundred and fifty-five descendants of Adin. ²¹ There were ninety-eight descendants of Ater (through Hezekiah). ²² There were three hundred and twenty-eight descendants of Hashum. ²³ There were three hundred and twenty-eight descendants of Bezai. ²⁴ There were one hundred and twelve descendants of Hariph. ²⁵ There were ninety-five descendants of Gibeon.

The list of families by cities — Ezra 2:21-35

²⁶ There were one hundred and eighty-eight men of Bethlehem and Netophah. ²⁷ There were one hundred and twenty-eight men of Anathoth. ²⁸ There were forty-two men of Beth-Azmaveth. ²⁹ There were seven hundred and forty-three men of Kiriath-Jearim, Chephirah and Beeroth. ³⁰ There were six hundred and twenty-one men of Ramah and Geba. ³¹ There were one hundred and twenty-two men of Michmas.

³² There were one hundred and twenty-three men of Bethel and Ai. ³³ There were fifty-two men of the other Nebo. ³⁴ There were one thousand, two hundred and fifty-four descendants of the other Elam. ³⁵ There were three hundred and twenty descendants of Harim. ³⁶ There were three hundred and forty-five men of Jericho. ³⁷ There were seven hundred and twenty-one men of Lod, Hadid and Ono. ³⁸ There were three thousand, nine hundred and thirty descendants of Senaah.

The list of priests — Ezra 2:36-39

³⁹ Of the priests there were nine hundred and seventy-three, of the family of Jeshua, descended from Jedai-ah. ⁴⁰ There were one thousand and fifty-two descendants of Immer. ⁴¹ There were one thousand, two hundred and forty-seven descendants of Pashhur. ⁴² There were one thousand and seventeen descendants of Harim.

⁴³ Of the Levites there were seventy-four descendants of Jeshua (through Kadmiel and through the line of Hodevah).

The list of Levites — Ezra 2:40-42

⁴⁴ Of the singers there were one hundred and forty-eight descendants of Asaph. ⁴⁵ Of the gatekeepers there were one hundred and thirty-eight descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita and Shobai.

The list of Temple servants — Ezra 2:43-54

⁴⁶ Of the Temple servants, there were descendants from Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, ⁴⁷ Keros, Sia, Padon, ⁴⁸ Lebana, Hagaba, Shalmi, ⁴⁹ Hanan, Giddel, Gahar, ⁵⁰ Reaiah, Rezin, Nekoda, ⁵¹ Gazzam, Uzza, Paseah, ⁵² Besai, Meunim, Nephishesim, ⁵³ Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur, ⁵⁴ Bazlith, Mehida, Harsha, ⁵⁵ Barkos, Sisera, Temah, ⁵⁶ Neziah and Hatipha.

⁵⁷ Of the descendants of the servants of Solomon there were those who had descended from Sotai, Sophereth, Perida, ⁵⁸ Jaala, Darkon, Giddel, ⁵⁹ Shephatiah, Hattil, Pochereth-Hazzebaim and Amon. ⁶⁰ The total of the Temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants was three hundred and ninety-two.

The record of doubtful ancestry — Ezra 2:59-63

⁶¹ The following were those who came up from Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Cherub, Addon and Immer. However, they had been unable to prove their paternal families or their descent, whether they belonged to Israel: ⁶² There were six hundred and forty-two who were descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah and Nekoda. ⁶³ Of the priests there were also descendants of Hobaiah, Hakkoz and Barzillai. Barzillai had married one of the daughters of Barzillai from Gilead and taken their name. ⁶⁴ These tried to have their names written in the genealogical record, but their claim was not authenticated. They were excluded from the priesthood as ceremonially unclean. ⁶⁵ The governor ordered them not to eat any of the most holy food until there should be a priest ministering with the Urim and

Thummim.

The total of people and animals returning from exile — Ezra 2:64-67

⁶⁶ The grand total of the whole company was forty-two thousand, three hundred and sixty, ⁶⁷ besides their male and female servants, who numbered seven thousand, three hundred and thirty-seven. They also had two hundred and forty-five men and women singers. [68] ¹¹⁸⁶⁹ They had four hundred and thirty-five camels and six thousand, seven hundred and twenty donkeys.

gifts for the Temple — Ezra 2:68-70

⁷⁰ The heads of some of the divisions of paternal families also contributed towards the work. The governor contributed to the treasury four kilograms and three hundred and twenty grams of gold in drachmas, fifty bowls used for pouring and five hundred and thirty garments for the priests. ⁷¹ Some of the heads of paternal families contributed to the treasury for the work six hundred and forty kilograms of gold in drachmas and one thousand, two hundred and fifty-four kilograms of silver in minas. ⁷² The rest of the people contributed six hundred and forty kilograms of gold in drachmas, one thousand, one hundred and forty kilograms of silver in minas and sixty-seven garments for the priests. ⁷³ The priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the Temple servants and all the rest of the Israelites lived in their own cities. When the seventh month had come, the Israelites had settled in their own cities.

8

The reading of the Law to the people by Ezra

¹ All the people gathered like one man in the square in front of the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to fetch the scroll of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel to follow. ² Then Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which included men and women and all the others who could understand what they heard. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read aloud from it as he faced the square that is in front of the Water Gate from daybreak until noon in the presence of the men and the women and others who could understand. All the people listened to the scroll of the Law. ⁴ The scribe Ezra stood on a high wooden platform that they had made for this purpose. Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiiah, Uriah, Hilkiyah and Maaseiah stood beside him at his right side, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchiah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah and Meshullam were at his left. ⁵ When Ezra opened the book, all the people could see him, because he was standing higher than all the other people were. When he opened it, all the people stood. ⁶ Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen! Amen!" as they raised their hands. Then they bowed down with

their faces to the ground and worshipped the LORD.

⁷ Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan and Pelaiah, who were Levites, also kept explaining the Law to the people while they were standing there.

⁸ They read the scroll of the Law of God clearly, giving the meaning, and so the people understood what was being read. ⁹ Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra, the priest and scribe, and the Levites, who were instructing the people, told all the people: "This day is holy to the LORD, your God. Do not mourn and do not weep!"

For all the people were weeping while they were listening to the Words of the Law. ¹⁰ Then Nehemiah told them: "Go, eat fat meat, drink sweet drinks and send portions of food to anyone who has nothing prepared! For this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be distressed! For the joy that you have in the LORD is your fortress."

¹¹ So, the Levites kept telling all the people to be silent, saying: "Be quiet! For this day is holy. Do not be distressed!"

¹² Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy. For they had understood the Words that had been explained to them.

The celebration of the Festival of Booths — compare Leviticus 23:33-43

¹³ On the second day the leaders of the paternal families of all the people gathered around the scribe Ezra, together with the priests and the Levites, to give attention to the Words of the Law. ¹⁴ They found it written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded through Moses that the Israelites should dwell in booths during the feast in the seventh month, ¹⁵ and that they should proclaim it and spread the message about it throughout their cities and Jerusalem: "Go out into the hill-country and fetch back leafy branches of olive trees, wild olives, myrtle shrubs, palms and other leafy trees to make booths, as it has been written!"

¹⁶ So, the people went out, brought them back and made booths for themselves, some on their own roofs, others in their courtyards, in the courts of the Temple of God, in the square at the Water Gate and in the square beside the Gate of Ephraim. ¹⁷ The whole company that had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths. Indeed, from the days of Jeshua, the son of Nun, to that day the Israelites had not been doing it like this. There was very great rejoicing. ¹⁸ Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God day after day, from the first day to the last day. They celebrated the feast for seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, as had been prescribed.

9

The confession and prayer of the Israelites

¹ On the twenty-fourth day of this month the Israelites gathered together, fasting, wearing sackcloth and with

¹¹⁸ Hebrew lacks 7:68. Greek versions insert Ezra 2:66 "They had seven hundred and thirty-six horses, two hundred and forty-five mules."

dust on their heads. ² Those who were descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, stood up and confessed their own sins and the offences of their fathers. ³ They stood up in their places and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD, their God, for a quarter of the day. Then for another quarter of it they made confession and worshipped the LORD, their God. ⁴ Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out aloud to the LORD, their God. ⁵ Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah and Pethahiah, said, "Stand up and bless the LORD, your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting!" and, "Let people bless Your glorious name, and may it be lifted up above all blessing and praise! ⁶ You are the LORD, You alone. **You have made heaven**, the heaven of heavens, with all their starry host, **the earth** and all that is on it and **the seas and all that is in them**. You also give life to them all, and the army of heaven worships You. ⁷ You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram,^{*119} brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name 'Abraham.'^{*120} ⁸ You found his heart faithful to You and made the Covenant with him to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites and the Girgashites. You have kept Your promises, for You are righteous. ⁹ You also saw what our forefathers suffered in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea. ¹⁰ You performed miraculous signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and against all the people of his land. For You knew that they had been acting arrogantly against our fathers. You made a name for Yourself, which You still have today. ¹¹ You divided the sea before them, so that they went through the middle of the sea on dry land and You threw those who were pursuing them into the watery depths, like a stone into mighty waters. ¹² You led them by a pillar of cloud during the day and by a pillar of fire during the night to light up for them the way on which they were to go. ¹³ You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke to them from heaven and gave them right Decisions, true Laws and good Statutes and Commandments. ¹⁴ You also made known to them Your holy Sabbath and You prescribed for them Commandments, Statutes and a Law through Your servant Moses. ¹⁵ You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and You brought water for them out of the rock for their thirst. You told them to go in to take possession of the land that You had sworn with uplifted hand to give them. ¹⁶ However, they and our forefathers, acted arrogantly, became stubborn and did not obey Your Commandments. ¹⁷ They refused to listen and failed to remember the wonders that You performed among them. They be-

came stubborn and in their rebellion appointed a leader to return to their slavery. However, You are a God ready to forgive, gracious, merciful, slow to become angry and abounding in faithful love and You did not forsake them. ¹⁸ Even when they had made for themselves a calf of cast metal and said, 'This is your God, who has brought you up out of Egypt,' and had committed great insults, ¹⁹ You in Your great compassion did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud that led them on the way did not leave them during the day, and the pillar of fire that lit for them the way on which they were to go did not leave them during the night. ²⁰ You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not keep Your manna back from their mouths and You gave them water for their thirst. ²¹ You provided for them for forty years in the wilderness, and they did not lack anything. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not become swollen. ²² You gave them kingdoms and nations. You also allotted a frontier region to them. They took possession of the land of Sihon, the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og, the king of Bashan. ²³ You made their children as numerous as the stars in the sky and brought them into the land that You had told their fathers to enter and possess. ²⁴ Their children went in and took possession of the land. You also subdued before them the people living in the land, the Canaanites, and You handed the Canaanites over to them, with their kings and the peoples of the land, to deal with them as they pleased. ²⁵ They captured fortified cities and fertile land and took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already hewn out, vineyards, olive orchards and plenty of fruit trees. So, they ate and were filled, became fat and revelled in Your great goodness. ²⁶ Nevertheless, they became disobedient, rebelled against You, cast Your Law behind their backs and killed Your prophets, who had admonished them to turn them back to You. They also committed great blasphemies. ²⁷ Therefore, You handed them over to their enemies, who oppressed them. In the times when they were being oppressed they cried out to You. You Yourself heard them from heaven and in Your great compassion You gave them deliverers, who rescued them from the hands of their enemies. ²⁸ However, after they had some relief, they again did evil before You. Then You abandoned them to the hands of their enemies, so that they controlled them. Yet when they turned and cried out to You, You Yourself heard from heaven and, in Your compassion, You delivered them many times. ²⁹ You admonished them to bring them back to Your Law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not obey Your Commandments but sinned against Your Decisions, by which **a human being will live if he puts them into practice**. They stubbornly turned their backs on You, stiffened their necks and refused to listen. ³⁰ You were patient with them for many years and admonished them by Your

¹¹⁹ Abram means "High father."

¹²⁰ Abraham means "Father of many."

Spirit through Your prophets. Yet they would not listen. Therefore, You handed them over to the peoples of the other lands. ³¹ Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not put an end to them or forsake them. For You are a gracious and compassionate God. ³² Now therefore, our God, You great, mighty and awesome God, You who keep the Covenant and faithful love, do not regard as trifling all the hardship that has come on us, on our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers and all Your people, from the time of the kings of Assyria until today! ³³ Yet You have been just in all that has come on us. For You have been acting faithfully, and we have been acting wickedly. ³⁴ Our kings, our princes, our priests and our fathers have not been putting Your Law into practice. They have not been paying attention to Your Commandments and Your Admonitions, which You have given them. ³⁵ Even while they were in their own kingdom, enjoying Your great goodness, which You bestowed on them, and while they were in the large and fertile land that You had set before them, they did not serve You or turn away from their wicked deeds. ³⁶ Look! We are slaves today. Look! We are slaves in the land that You gave to our fathers to eat its fruit and the good things that it produces. ³⁷ Its abundant harvest goes to the kings whom You have placed over us because of our sins. They also rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please, and we are in great distress. ³⁸ Because of all this we are making a binding written agreement, and the names of our princes, our Levites and our priests are on the seal.”

10

The names on the binding written agreement

¹ On the seals were the names of Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah, ² Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, ³ Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, ⁴ Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, ⁵ Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, ⁶ Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, ⁷ Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, ⁸ Maaziah, Bilgai and Shemaiah. These were the priests. ⁹ The Levites were Jeshua, the son of Azaniah, Binnui, one of the sons of Henadad and Kadmiel. ¹⁰ Their relatives were Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, ¹¹ Micha, Rehob, Hashabiah, ¹² Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, ¹³ Hodijah, Bani and Beninu. ¹⁴ The leaders of the people were Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, ¹⁵ Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, ¹⁶ Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, ¹⁷ Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, ¹⁸ Hodijah, Hashum, Bezai, ¹⁹ Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, ²⁰ Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, ²¹ Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, ²² Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, ²³ Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, ²⁴ Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, ²⁵ Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, ²⁶ Ahijah, Hanan, Anan, ²⁷ Malluch, Harim and Baanah.

The requirement that the Jews must remain holy

²⁸ The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Temple servants and all the others who had separated themselves from neighbouring peoples to follow the Law of God, their wives, their sons, their daughters, all who had knowledge and understanding, ²⁹ joined with their relatives, their nobles, and bound themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God, which had been given by Moses, the servant of God, and carefully to put into practice all the Commandments of the LORD, our Lord, His Decisions and His Prescriptions. ³⁰ “We shall not give our daughters in marriage to the neighbouring peoples or take their daughters for our sons to marry. ³¹ If the neighbouring peoples bring merchandise or any grain to sell on the Sabbath, we shall not buy it from them on the Sabbath or on another holy day. We shall let the land lie idle in the seventh year and cancel loans on interest to any person. ³² We shall also impose on ourselves obligations to give four grams of silver each year for the service of the Temple of our God, ³³ and to contribute the bread that is set out in rows, the regular grain-offerings, for the regular burnt offerings, the offerings on the Sabbaths, the New Moons and the appointed feasts, the holy offerings, the sin-offerings to make atonement for Israel and all the other service in the Temple of our God. ³⁴ We, the priests, the Levites and the lay-people, have also cast lots to determine when each of our paternal families should bring the wood offering into the Temple of our God, at appointed times every year, to burn on the altar of the LORD, our God, as has been written in the Law. ³⁵ We have also promised to bring each year to the Temple of the LORD the first-fruits of our ground and the first-fruits of all the fruit of every tree. ³⁶ We have also promised to bring the first-born of our sons and of our cattle and the first-born of our herds and of our flocks, to the Temple of our God, to the priests who are ministering in the Temple of our God, as has been written in the Law. ³⁷ We have also promised to bring the first of our coarse meal and our other contributions, the fruit of every tree, the wine and the olive-oil, to the priests, to the rooms of the Temple of our God and to bring to the Levites the tithes from our ground, that the Levites may receive the tithes in all the cities where we work. ³⁸ A priest descended from Aaron shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive the tithes! The Levites shall bring a tenth of the tithes up to the storerooms of the treasury in the Temple of our God! ³⁹ For the Israelites, including the Levites, shall bring the contribution of grain, wine and olive-oil to the storerooms, where the articles for the sanctuary are, where the priests who minister are and the gatekeepers and the singers are! We will not neglect the Temple of our God!”

11

A record of the leading people who settled in Jerusalem

¹ The leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem. The rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of every ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while nine out of ten remained in the other cities. ² The people commended all the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem. ³ These are the leaders of the province who lived in Jerusalem. However, the other Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the Temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants all lived on their own properties in their own cities in Judah. ⁴ Some of the descendants of Judah and of Benjamin also lived in Jerusalem. From the descendants of Judah there was Athaiah, the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel. He was one of the descendants of Perez. ⁵ There was Maaseiah, the son of Baruch, the son of Col-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah. He belonged to the clan of Shiloh. ⁶ The descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem totalled four hundred and sixty-eight able men. ⁷ The following were the descendants of Benjamin. There was Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Koliaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiiah, ⁸ and, after him, Gabbai and Sallai. There were nine hundred and twenty-eight men. ⁹ Joel, the son of Zichri, was their chief officer and Judah, the son of Hassenuah, was the second in command over the city. ¹⁰ Among the priests there was Jedaiah, the son of Joiarib and Jachin. ¹¹ There was Seraiah, the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub. He was the supervisor in the Temple of God. ¹² Their relatives, who did the work at the Temple, numbered eight hundred and twenty-two. There was also Adaiyah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah. ¹³ There were also his relatives, the heads of paternal families, who numbered two hundred and forty-two. There was also Amashsai, the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer. ¹⁴ His relatives, who were able men, numbered one hundred and twenty-eight. Their chief officer was Zabdiel, the son of Haggadolim. ¹⁵ Among the Levites there was Shemaiah, the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni. ¹⁶ There were also Shabbethai and Jozabad, who were two of the chiefs of the Levites and who were in charge of the work on the exterior of the Temple of God. ¹⁷ There was also Mattaniah, the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who was the leader to begin the thanksgiving. There was also Bakbukiah, the second in rank among his relatives. There was also Abda, the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. ¹⁸ All the Levites in the holy city numbered two hundred and eighty-four. ¹⁹ The gatekeepers were Akkub, Talmon and their

relatives. They used to keep watch at the gates and numbered one hundred and seventy-two. ²⁰ All the rest of the Israelites, the priests and the Levites, were on their inherited properties in all the other cities of Judah. ²¹ However, the Temple servants lived on Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of the Temple servants. ²² The chief officer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi, the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica. Uzzi was one of the descendants of Asaph, who were the singers who led the service at the Temple of God. ²³ For the king had issued a command about them, which regulated the daily activity of the singers. ²⁴ Pethahiah, the son of Meshezabel, one of the descendants of Zerah, the son of Judah, was the king's agent in all affairs relating to the people.

The people in the other cities outside of Jerusalem

²⁵ As for the villages, with their fields, some of the people of Judah lived in Kiriath-Arba and its surrounding villages, in Dibon and its surrounding villages, in Jekabzeel and its villages, ²⁶ in Jeshua, Moladah and Beth-Pelet, ²⁷ in Hazar-Shual, in Beer-Sheba and its surrounding villages, ²⁸ in Ziklag, in Meconah and its surrounding villages, ²⁹ in En-Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth, ³⁰ Zanoah, Adullam and their villages, Lachish and its fields and Azekah and its surrounding villages. So, they settled down in the country from Beer-Sheba to the Valley of Hinnom. ³¹ The descendants of Benjamin from Geba also lived at Michmash, Aija, Bethel and its surrounding villages, ³² Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, ³³ Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, ³⁴ Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, ³⁵ Lod and Ono, the Valley of Craftsmen. ³⁶ Some of the divisions of the Levites of Judah were assigned to Benjamin.

12

The leading priests and Levites who returned to Jerusalem with Zerub-Babel—compare Ezra 2:36-40

¹ These were the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, and with Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, ² Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, ³ Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, ⁴ Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, ⁵ Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, ⁶ Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, ⁷ Sallu, Amok, Hilkiyah and Jedaiah. These were the leaders of the priests and of their relatives in the time of Jeshua.

⁸ The Levites were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah and Mattaniah, who, together with his relatives, was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving.

⁹ Bakbukiah and Unni, their relatives, stood opposite them in their places of service. ¹⁰ Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim was the father of Eliashib, Eliashib was the father of Joiada, ¹¹ Joiada was the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan was the father of Jaddua.

¹² At the time of Joiakim the priests who were the leaders of their paternal families were: of Seraiah's

family, Meraiah: of Jeremiah's family, Hananiah; ¹³ of Ezra's family, Meshullam; of Amariah's family, Jehohanan; ¹⁴ of Malluchi's family, Jonathan; of Shebaniah's family, Joseph; ¹⁵ of Harim's family, Adna; of Meraioth's family, Helkai; ¹⁶ of Iddo's family, Zechariah; of Ginnethon's family, Meshullam; ¹⁷ of Abijah's family, Zichri; the son of Miniamin; and of Moadiah's family, Piltai; ¹⁸ of Bilgah's family, Shammua; of Shemaiah's family, Jehonathan; ¹⁹ of Joiarib's family, Mattenai; of Jedaiah's family, Uzzi; ²⁰ of Sallu's family, Kallai; of Amok's family, Eber; ²¹ of Hilkiah's family, Hashabiah; and, of Jedaiah's family, Nethanel.

²² A record of the leaders of the paternal families of Levites was made at the time of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan and Jaddua. A record of the priests was also made during the reign of Darius the Persian. ²³ The leaders of the paternal families of the descendants of Levi were recorded in the annals until the time of Johanan, the son of Eliashib. ²⁴ The leaders of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah and Jeshua, the son of Kadmiel, together with their relatives, who stood opposite them, to praise and to give thanks. Each division of service was opposite the other, as David, the man of God, had commanded. ²⁵ Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon and Akkub were gatekeepers. They stood guard at the storerooms beside the gates. ²⁶ These served at the time of Joiakim, the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, at the time of Nehemiah, the governor, and of Ezra, the priest and scribe.

The dedication of the walls of Jerusalem

²⁷ When the wall of Jerusalem was dedicated, a search was made for the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication joyfully, with songs of thanksgiving and with cymbals, harps and lyres. ²⁸ The groups of singers gathered together from the region around Jerusalem and from the villages belonging to Netophah, ²⁹ from Beth-Gilgal and from the countryside near Geba and Azmaveth. For the singers had built villages for themselves around Jerusalem. ³⁰ The priests and the Levites purified themselves and then they purified the people, the gates and the wall. ³¹ Then I brought the leaders of Judah up on top of the wall and assigned two large choirs to give thanks. One went in procession to the south on top of the wall towards the gate to the rubbish tip. ³² Hoshaiiah and half of the leaders of Judah followed them, ³³ together with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, ³⁴ Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah and Jeremiah, ³⁵ as well as some of the young priests with trumpets, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph, ³⁶ and his relatives, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah and Hanani. They had the musical instruments of David, the man of God. Ezra the scribe

went in front of them. ³⁷ At the Fountain-Gate they went straight on up the stairs to the city of David, where the wall goes up above the palace of David and then to the Water Gate on the east. ³⁸ The second thanksgiving choir went in the opposite direction. I followed them with the other half of the people, on the wall, above the Tower of the Ovens, as far as the Broad Wall. ³⁹ Then they went over the Gate of Ephraim, over the Gate of the Old City, over the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate. They came to a halt at Prison Gate. ⁴⁰ Then the two thanksgiving choirs took their places in the Temple of God. I did also, together with half of the officials. ⁴¹ The priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah and Hananiah were also there with trumpets. ⁴² So were Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam and Ezer. The singers sang loudly under the direction of Jezrahiah. ⁴³ They offered many sacrifices that day and were glad. For God had given them great joy. The women and children also rejoiced. The sound of rejoicing at Jerusalem could be heard far away.

The responsibilities at the Temple

⁴⁴ On that day men were put in charge over the treasury-rooms for the contributions, the first-fruits and the tithes. They were to collect into them from the fields around the cities the portions required by the Law for the priests and for the Levites. For the people of Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites who were in office. ⁴⁵ They performed the service of their God and the service of purification. The singers and the gatekeepers also did, as David and his son Solomon had commanded. ⁴⁶ Long ago at the time of David and Asaph there had been directors for the singers, and there had been songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. ⁴⁷ In the time of Zerub-Babel and in the time of Nehemiah all the Israelites used to contribute daily portions of food for the singers and the gatekeepers. They also used to set aside holy portions for the other Levites, and the Levites used to set aside holy portions for the descendants of Aaron.

13

The exclusion of foreigners — compare Numbers 22:1-24:25

¹ On that day the book of Moses was read while the people were listening. In it the permanent prohibition was found written for any Ammonite or Moabite to enter the assembly of God. ² For they had not met the Israelites with bread and water but had hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God had turned the curse into a blessing. ³ When the people had heard the Law, they separated everyone who was of mixed race from Israel.

The reforms of Nehemiah in the use of Temple storerooms and the eviction of Tobiah

⁴ Even before this, the priest Eliashib had been put in charge of the open room in the temple of our God. He

was related to Tobiah. ⁵ He had prepared for Tobiah a large open room where people had previously been storing the grain-offering, the frankincense, the vessels and the tithes of grain, new wine and olive-oil, which had been commanded to be given to the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers, as well as the contributions for the priests. ⁶ While all this was taking place, I was not in Jerusalem. For in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes, the king of Babylon, I had gone back to the king. At the end of that time I had asked for the king's permission to return. ⁷ When I came back to Jerusalem, I learned about the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by providing a room for him in the courts of the Temple of God. ⁸ I was very annoyed about that and threw all of Tobiah's household goods out of the room. ⁹ Then I gave orders, and they purified the rooms. I also brought back the vessels of the Temple of God, the grain-offering and the frankincense.

Nehemiah's arrangement for the Levites to receive their portion of the offerings

¹⁰ I also found out that the portions due to the Levites had not been given to them, so that the Levites and the singers, who had carried out the service, had all run off to their own fields. ¹¹ I challenged the officials and asked, "Why has the Temple of God been abandoned?"

Then I gathered them together and made them resume their assigned places. ¹² Then all Judah brought the tithes of the grain, new wine and olive-oil to the store-rooms. ¹³ I appointed the priest, Shelemiah, the scribe, Zadok and Pedaiah, one of the Levites, as treasurers over the storehouses. I also appointed Hanan, the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah, as their assistant, because these men were considered reliable. It was their duty to distribute supplies to their relatives. ¹⁴ Remember me for this, O my God, and do not wipe out the things that I have done in faithful love for the Temple of my God and for the things that are done to serve it!

The Sabbath reforms

¹⁵ In those days I saw people in Judah treading wine-presses on the Sabbath. I also saw people bringing in piles of grain and loading them on donkeys. I also saw wine, grapes, figs and every other kind of load, which they were bringing into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. I warned them against selling food on that day. ¹⁶ People from Tyre who lived in Jerusalem were bringing in fish and all kinds of goods and were selling them on the Sabbath to the people of Judah, even in Jerusalem. ¹⁷ Then I confronted the nobles of Judah and asked them: "What is this wicked thing that you are doing, defiling the Sabbath day?" ¹⁸ Did not your

fathers act in this way and did not our God bring this entire calamity on us and on this city? You are bringing more wrath on Israel by defiling the Sabbath."

¹⁹ As soon as it began to grow dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut. I also commanded that people should not open them until after the Sabbath. I stationed some of my servants at the gates, that no load might be brought in on the Sabbath day. ²⁰ The merchants and sellers of all kinds of goods spent the night outside Jerusalem once or twice. ²¹ However, I warned them and asked them: "Why are you spending the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I shall arrest you."

From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath any longer. ²² Then I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the gates, to keep the Sabbath day holy. Remember me for this also, O my God, and spare me according to Your great mercy!

The dissolution of marriages with foreigners — compare Ezra 9:1-4

²³ In those days also I saw the Jews who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon and Moab. ²⁴ Half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod or the language of one of the other peoples and could not speak the language of Judah. ²⁵ I confronted them, cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair. I made them take an oath in the name of God and said: "You shall certainly not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take any of their daughters for your sons or for yourselves!" ²⁶ Did not Solomon, the king of Israel, sin because of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and his God loved him and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless, those foreign women led even him into sin. ²⁷ Must we then listen to you, commit all this great wickedness and act unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?"

²⁸ One of the sons of Joiada, the son of the High Priest, Eliashib, was the son-in-law of Sanballat from Horon. I drove him away from me. ²⁹ Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the Covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites! ³⁰ So, I cleansed the priests from everything foreign and established the duties of the priests and Levites, so that each one had his own task. ³¹ I also arranged for contributions of wood at regular times and for the first-fruits. Remember me, O my God and be kind to me!

ESTHER

1

The banquet given by Xerxes (or Ahasuerus)

¹ This is what happened during the time of Xerxes. He was the Xerxes who ruled over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to northern Sudan. ² In those days, when King Xerxes sat on his royal throne in the citadel of Susa, ³ in the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. The army of the Persians and Medes and the nobles and the governors of the provinces were before him. ⁴ For a long time, for one hundred and eighty days, he displayed the wealth of his glorious kingdom and his costly splendour and magnificence. ⁵ When these days were over, the king gave a banquet, lasting for seven days, in the enclosed garden of the king's palace, for all the people, from the least to the greatest, who were present in the citadel of Susa. ⁶ There were white fine linen and purple wool curtains fastened by cords of fine white linen and purple material to silver curtain rings on marble pillars. There were golden and silver couches on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl and other precious stones. ⁷ Drinks were served in golden vessels, each vessel being different from the other. There was plenty of royal wine, in keeping with the king's generosity. ⁸ The drinking was under this command: "You may drink as you please."

For the king had instructed all the palace-officials that they should do what each man wanted. ⁹ Queen Vashti also gave a banquet for the women in the royal palace of King Xerxes.

The disobedience of Queen Vashti

¹⁰ On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who waited on him, Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, ¹¹ to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown. He wanted to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was very attractive. ¹² However, when the eunuchs delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious, and his anger burned inside him. ¹³ Then the king spoke to the wise men who understood the times. For it was the king's procedure to consult all experts in law and justice. ¹⁴ The men who were closest to the king were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena and Memucan, the seven princes of the Persians and Medes. They had access to the king's presence and had the highest places in the kingdom. ¹⁵ He asked them: "According to the law, what must be done to Queen Vashti, because she has not obeyed the command of King Xerxes, which the eunuchs have delivered to her?"

¹⁶ Then Memucan replied in the presence of the king and the nobles: "Queen Vashti has done wrong, not

only against Your Majesty but also against all the nobles and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Xerxes. ¹⁷ For the queen's conduct will become known to all the women, so that it will cause them to despise their husbands. They will say, 'King Xerxes commanded men to bring Queen Vashti before him, but she did not come.' ¹⁸ Today the noble women of Persia and Media who have heard about the queen's conduct will say the same to all Your Majesty's nobles. There will be plenty of disrespect and discord. ¹⁹ If Your Majesty agrees, let the king issue a royal order, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes that it may not be repealed, that Vashti shall never enter the presence of King Xerxes again! Your Majesty should also give her royal position to someone else, who is better than she is! ²⁰ Then, when the decree, which Your Majesty issues, is heard throughout his entire kingdom, vast as it is, all the wives will give honour to their husbands, from the least to the greatest."

The deposing of Queen Vashti

²¹ The king and the nobles approved of this advice, and the king did as Memucan had proposed. ²² He sent letters to the royal provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, that every husband should act as the ruler in his own household and speak the language of his own people.

2

The search for another Queen

¹ After this, when the anger of King Xerxes had subsided, he remembered Vashti, what she had done and what had been decreed against her. ² Then the king's personal staff said: "People should search for beautiful young virgins for the king! ³ Your Majesty should appoint officials in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the beautiful young virgins to the women's quarters at the citadel in Susa, under the supervision of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women! Then let their beauty-treatments be given to them! ⁴ Then let the young woman who pleases Your Majesty be the queen instead of Vashti!"

The king approved of the advice and followed it.

⁵ There was a Jew in the citadel at Susa whose name was Mordecai. He was the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a descendant of Benjamin. He had been brought into exile from Jerusalem with the others who had come into exile with Jeconiah, the king of Judah, when Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had brought them into exile. ⁷ Mordecai was bringing up Hadassah, also known as Esther, his uncle's daughter. For she had neither father nor mother. The young woman had a beautiful figure and was very attractive. Mordecai had adopted her as his own daughter when her father and mother had died.

⁸ People heard the king's order and edict, and many young women were gathered at the citadel of Susa

under the supervision of Hegai. Esther also was taken into the king's palace and placed under the supervision of Hegai, the custodian of the women. ⁹ The young woman pleased him and won his favour. He quickly provided her with her beauty-treatments and her share of food and assigned to her seven selected young women from the king's palace. He transferred her and her young women to the best place in the women's quarters. ¹⁰ Esther had not disclosed her nationality and family background, for Mordecai had forbidden her to disclose it. ¹¹ Every day Mordecai used to walk in front of the court of the women's palace to find out how Esther was and what was happening to her. ¹² Each girl had her turn to go to King Xerxes after she had undergone the prescribed treatment for women for twelve months. For this is how the time for their beauty-treatments was spent: six months using oil-of-myrrh and six months using perfumes and other beauty-treatments for women. ¹³ This is how the young woman used to go in to the king: she used to be given whatever she desired to take with her from the women's quarters to the king's palace. ¹⁴ She would go in the evening, and, in the morning, she would return to the second quarters for the women, under the supervision of the king's eunuch Shaashgaz, who was in charge of the concubines. She would not go in to the king again unless the king was pleased with her, and she was summoned by name.

The choice of Esther as queen

¹⁵ Esther was the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his own daughter. When her turn came to go in to the king, she did not ask for anything except what the king's eunuch Hegai, who had charge of the women, advised. Esther won the favour of everyone who saw her. ¹⁶ Esther was taken to King Xerxes in his royal palace in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in seventh year of his reign. ¹⁷ The king loved Esther more than all the other women and regarded her more favourably and kindly than all the other virgins. He put the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. ⁸ Then the king gave a great banquet in honour of Esther for all his nobles and officials. He also granted the provinces an exemption from taxes and distributed gifts with royal generosity.

The preservation of the king's life by Mordecai

¹⁹ When the virgins were assembled a second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate. ²⁰ Esther had not disclosed her family background or her nationality, as Mordecai had instructed her. For Esther did what Mordecai told her as she had done when he was bringing her up. ²¹ In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the doorway, became angry and plotted to assassinate King Xerxes. ²² However, Mordecai found out about it and informed Queen Esther. When Esther told the king, she gave the credit to Mordecai. ²³ When the report was

investigated and found to be true, the men were both hanged on a gallows. This was recorded in the account of daily events in the presence of the king.

3

The offence given to the Amalekite Haman by Mordecai

¹ After this, King Xerxes honoured Haman, the son of Hammedatha, a descendant of Agag, promoted him and gave him a seat higher than all the other nobles who were with him. ² All the king's officials who were at the king's gate bowed down and showed respect to Haman. For the king had commanded that this should be done to him. However, Mordecai would not bow down and show him respect. ³ The king's officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?"

⁴ Although they spoke to him day after day, he would not listen to them. So, they told Haman, to find out whether what Mordecai said would be a valid excuse. For he had told them that he was a Jew.

The plan of Haman to take revenge on Mordecai by destroying the Jews

⁵ When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down and show respect to him, Haman became very angry.

⁶ However, he thought that it was too trifling to hurt only Mordecai. For they had told him who Mordecai's people were. So, Haman tried to destroy all the Jews, who were Mordecai's people, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes. ⁷ In the first month, the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Xerxes, they cast Pur (that is, they cast lots) in Haman's presence for every day and for every month, and the lot fell on the twelfth month, the month of Adar. ⁸ Then Haman told King Xerxes: "There is a certain nationality dispersed and scattered among the nationalities in all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of every other nationality. They do not put Your Majesty's laws into practice, so that it is not appropriate for the king to tolerate them. ⁹ If Your Majesty approves, let an order be written to destroy them! I myself shall also pay three hundred and fifty thousand kilograms of silver to be deposited in the royal treasuries that it may be used by the men who carry out this business."

¹⁰ Then the king took his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman, the son of Hammedatha, who was a descendant of Agag, and who was the enemy of the Jews. ¹¹ The king told Haman: "You are given the money, and the people are given to you too, that you may do to them what you think is best."

¹² The king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month. They wrote to the king's satraps, to the governors over every province and to the nobles of each nationality, exactly as Haman instructed them. They wrote in the script of each province and to each nationality in its own language. The order was written in the name of King Xerxes and sealed with the king's signet ring. ¹³ Couriers were used to dispatch letters to all the king's provinces with

the instruction to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews, young and old, women and little children, in a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar. Their possessions were also to be plundered. ¹⁴ A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province. It was to be proclaimed to all the nationalities that they should be ready for that day. ¹⁵ The couriers went out quickly because the king had told them to hurry. The decree was also issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was bewildered.

4

Mordecai's request to Esther for help

¹ When Mordecai found out about everything that had been done, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. He went out in the middle of the city and cried out loudly and bitterly. ² He went only as far as the king's gate, because no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. ³ Wherever the king's command and decree arrived in every province, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and lamenting. Many lay down in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴ When Esther's servant-girls and eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed. She sent garments for Mordecai to put on, that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.

⁵ Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, whom the king had appointed to attend her. She ordered him to go to Mordecai to find out what this meant and why he was doing this. ⁶ Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city, which was in front of the king's gate. ⁷ Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries to destroy the Jews. ⁸ Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree that had been issued in Susa to destroy them, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her. His purpose was also to command her to go to the king to beg him for mercy and to plead in his presence on behalf of her people. ⁹ Hathach returned and told Esther what Mordecai had said. ¹⁰ When Esther had talked to Hathach, she commanded him to tell Mordecai: ¹¹ "All the king's officials and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king in the inner court without being summoned, there is only one law, that he must be put to death. The only exception is for the king to hold the golden sceptre out to him and spare his life. However, I myself have not been summoned to come in to the king for the past thirty days."

¹² So, Esther's servants told Mordecai what Esther had said. ¹³ Mordecai told them to take this reply back to Esther: "Do not think that because you are in the king's palace you of all the Jews will escape! ¹⁴ For if you remain completely silent at this time, freedom and

deliverance will arise for the Jews from somewhere else, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows whether you have become queen for such a time as this?"

¹⁵ Then Esther told them to take this reply to Mordecai: ¹⁶ "Go and assemble all the Jews who are in Susa and hold a fast on my behalf! Do not eat or drink, night or day, for three days! My servant girls and I shall also fast like you. In this way I shall go to the king, although it is against the law. Then if I perish, I perish."

¹⁷ Mordecai went away and did exactly as Esther had commanded him.

5

Esther's invitation to the king and Haman to prepare to make her request

¹ On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, in front of the king's quarters. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the royal palace facing the entrance of the palace. ² When the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he regarded her kindly and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. Then Esther went closer and touched the top of the sceptre.

³ The king asked her: "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? **It will be given you, even up to half of the kingdom.**"

⁴ Esther replied: "If Your Majesty approves, let Your Majesty and Haman come today to the dinner that I have prepared for the king!"

⁵ Then the king said, "Bring Haman at once, that we may do what Esther has asked!"

So, the king and Haman came to the dinner that Esther had prepared. ⁶ While they were drinking the wine, the king asked Esther: "What is your petition, that it may be granted to you? What is your request? Even if it is up to half of the kingdom, it will be carried out."

⁷ Then Esther answered: "My petition and my request is this: ⁸ If Your Majesty regards me kindly and, if Your Majesty is pleased to grant my petition and carry out my request, let Your Majesty and Haman come to the dinner that I shall prepare for them! Then tomorrow I shall do what Your Majesty has requested."

Haman's plans to have Mordecai hanged

⁹ When Haman went out that day he was happy and in high spirits. However, when Haman saw Mordecai at the king's gate and that he did not get up or show fear in his presence, Haman was filled with rage against Mordecai. ¹⁰ Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself, went home and asked his friends and his wife Zeresh to come to him. ¹¹ Haman recounted to them how very rich he was, how many sons he had, all the ways in which the king had been honouring him and how far he had advanced him above the king's other nobles and officials. ¹² Then Haman said: "Even Queen Esther did not invite anyone but me to come with the king to the dinner that she prepared. She is even inviting me together with the king for tomorrow.

¹³ Nevertheless, all this is not good enough for me, while I keep seeing the Jew Mordecai remaining seated at the king's gate!"

¹⁴ Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends told him: "Let a gallows be built, twenty-five metres high and, in the morning, ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it! Then go cheerfully with the king to the dinner!" Haman agreed with the suggestion and built the gallows.

6

The royal command that Haman should honour Mordecai

¹ That night the king could not sleep. He ordered someone to fetch in the official daily records, and they were read out in the king's presence. ² A record was found there that Mordecai had given information about Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who guarded the doorway, who had planned to assassinate King Xerxes. ³ Then the king asked, "What honour and recognition has Mordecai received for this?"

The king's attendants answered, "Nothing has been done for him."

⁴ The king asked, "Who is in the court?"

Haman was just entering the outer court of the king's palace to speak to the king about hanging Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. ⁵ The king's attendants told him: "Haman is standing here in the court."

The king said, "Let him come in!"

The disgrace of Haman in having to honour Mordecai

⁶ When Haman came in, the king asked him, "What should be done to the man whom the king is eager to honour?"

Haman thought, "Whom would the king be eager to honour more than me?"

⁷ Haman answered the king: "For the man whom the king is eager to honour, ⁸ men should bring a royal robe that the king has worn and a horse that the king has ridden, one that has a royal crest attached to its head! ⁹ Then the robe and the horse should be entrusted to one of the king's most noble officials! Men should put the robe on the man whom the king is eager to honour! They should lead him on the horse through the square of the city and proclaim ahead of him: 'This is what is done for the man whom the king is eager to honour!'"

¹⁰ Then the king told Haman: "Quickly, take the robe and the horse, as you have said, and do this to the Jew Mordecai, who sits at the king's gate! Do not omit anything that you have recommended!"

¹¹ Haman took the robe and the horse, put the robe on Mordecai, led him through the square of the city and proclaimed ahead of him, "This is what is done for the man whom the king is eager to honour."

¹² Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate. However, Haman hurried home with his head covered in grief. ¹³ Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his

friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and his wife Zeresh told him: "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, belongs to the Jewish people, you will not win out over him. You will certainly fall before him."

¹⁴ While they were still talking to him, the king's eunuchs arrived and made Haman move quickly to escort him to the dinner that Esther had prepared.

7

The denunciation of Haman by Esther

¹ So, the king and Haman went in to have dinner with Queen Esther. ² On that second day, while they were drinking the wine, the king again asked Esther: "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It will be granted you. What, then, is your request? It will be carried out if it is up to half of the kingdom."

³ Then Queen Esther answered: "If you regard me kindly, Your Majesty and, if Your Majesty approves, let my life be granted to me! This is my petition. Spare my people also! This is my request. ⁴ For my people and I have been sold, to be destroyed, to be killed and to be annihilated. If our men and women had merely been sold to be slaves, I would have remained silent. For it would not have been worth bothering Your Majesty about such distress."

⁵ Then King Xerxes asked Queen Esther: "Who is he? Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?"

⁶ Esther said, "Our adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman!"

The downfall of Haman

Then Haman was overtaken by sudden terror in the presence of the king and the queen. ⁷ In his anger the king got up from drinking wine and went into the palace garden. However, Haman stayed behind to beg for his life from Queen Esther. For he saw that the king had decided to bring calamity on him. ⁸ When the king came back from the palace garden to the room where they had been drinking wine, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was. Then the king asked, "Is he even going to molest the queen while she is with me in the palace?"

As soon as the word left the king's mouth some men covered Haman's face. ⁹ Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs who attended the king, said: "Look! It just happens that the gallows are there that Haman has built for Mordecai, who had spoken up to help the king. It is standing at Haman's house, twenty-five metres high."

The king said, "Hang him on it!"

¹⁰ So, they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's fury subsided.

8

The advancement of Mordecai

¹ On that day King Xerxes gave to Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. Mordecai came into the presence of the king, for Esther had disclosed how Mordecai was related to her. ² The king

took off his signet ring, which he had reclaimed from Haman, and presented it to Mordecai. Then Esther put Mordecai in charge of Haman's house.

The granting of permission to the Jews to defend themselves

³ Then Esther spoke to the king again. She fell at his feet, wept and pleaded with him to prevent the calamity that Haman, the descendant of Agag, had planned and the plot that he had devised against the Jews.

⁴ When the king held out the golden sceptre to Esther, Esther rose and stood before the king. ⁵ She said: "If Your Majesty approves, if he regards me kindly, if he thinks it is the right thing to do and, if he is pleased with me, let an order be written to cancel the letters that were devised by Haman, the descendant of Agag, the son of Hammedatha! He wrote the order to destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces. ⁶ For how can I bear to see the calamity that will come on my people? How can I bear to see the destruction of my relatives?"

⁷ King Xerxes told Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew: "Look! I have given Haman's house to Esther, and Haman has been hanged on the gallows, because he attacked the Jews. ⁸ However, you yourselves may write as you think best in the king's name concerning the Jews. Seal it with the king's signet ring! For a document written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked."

Mordecai's use of his position to save the Jews

⁹ The king's scribes were summoned at that time, on the twenty-third day of the third month, the month of Sivan. An edict was written, exactly as Mordecai directed, to the Jews and to the satraps, the governors and the nobles of the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to northern Sudan. It was written in the script of each province and the language of each nationality and to the Jews in their own script and language. ¹⁰ Mordecai wrote in the name of King Xerxes and sealed the letters with the king's signet ring. Then he sent the letters by couriers riding on the fast horses that were used in the king's service and had been bred from racing mares. ¹¹ They said: "The king has allowed the Jews who are in every city to assemble and defend their lives, to destroy, to kill and to annihilate any armed force of any nationality or province that might attack them, their women and their children and to plunder the property of such people. ¹² They may do this on one day in all the provinces of King Xerxes, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar."

¹³ A copy of what was written was to be issued as a decree in every province. It was to be promulgated to all the nationalities, and the Jews were to be ready on that day to take revenge on their enemies. ¹⁴ The couriers, riding on the fast horses that were used in the king's service, went out quickly, hurried on by the king's command. The decree was also issued in the citadel of Susa. ¹⁵ Mordecai left the king's presence wearing royal garments of purple and white, with a

large golden crown and a purple outer garment of fine linen. The city of Susa also cheered with delight and rejoiced. ¹⁶ The Jews had a cheerful, glad and joyful time, a time when people honoured them. ¹⁷ In every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict reached, there was gladness and joy among the Jews. They feasted and had a happy day. Then many people of other nationalities in the country said that they were Jews, because they had become afraid of the Jews.

9

The Jews' defence of themselves and the destruction of their enemies

¹ On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, the king's command and edict were to be carried out. On the day when the enemies of the Jews had hoped to gain power over them, the opposite happened. The Jews themselves gained power over those who hated them. ² The Jews assembled in their cities in all the provinces of King Xerxes to attack those who were planning to harm them. No one could resist them, for all the other nationalities had become afraid of them. ³ All the nobles of the provinces, the satraps, the governors and the other royal agents also helped the Jews, for they had become afraid of Mordecai. ⁴ For Mordecai was a prominent man in the king's palace. His reputation spread throughout the provinces. For the man Mordecai became increasingly prominent. ⁵ The Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them and did as they pleased to those who hated them. ⁶ In the citadel of Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men. ⁷ They also killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸ Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, ⁹ Pannashta, Arisai, Aridai and Vaizatha, ¹⁰ the ten sons of Haman, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. However, they did not plunder any of their possessions. ¹¹ The number of those killed in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king on that day. ¹² The king told Queen Esther: "The Jews have killed and destroyed five hundred men and the ten sons of Haman in the citadel of Susa. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? What, then, is your petition? **It will be granted you.** What is **your request?** It will also be carried out."

¹³ Esther answered: "If Your Majesty approves, let the Jews in Susa be allowed to carry out this day's edict tomorrow also! Let the ten sons of Haman also be hanged up on the gallows!"

¹⁴ The king commanded that this should be done. An edict was issued in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman were hanged up. ¹⁵ The Jews who were in Susa also assembled on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and killed three hundred men in Susa. However, they did not plunder any of their possessions.

¹⁶ The rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces had also assembled to defend their lives and get relief from their enemies. They had killed seventy-five

thousand of those who hated them. However, they had not plundered any of their possessions. ¹⁷ This had happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made that a day of feasting and joy.

¹⁸ However, the Jews who were in Susa had assembled on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth day, and rested on the fifteenth day and made that a day of feasting and joy. ¹⁹ That is why the Jews in the villages, who live in the unwallied towns, make the fourteenth day of the month of Adar a day for joy and feasting, a festive day and a day on which they send gifts of food to one another.

The institution of the feast of Purim by Esther and Mordecai

²⁰ Mordecai recorded these events and sent letters to all the Jews in all the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far. He obliged them to celebrate annually the fourteenth and the fifteenth days of the month Adar, ²² as the days on which the Jews had obtained relief from their enemies and as the month when their sorrow had been turned into joy and their mourning into a festive day. He obliged them to observe them as days when they would feast, rejoice, send gifts of food to one another and send gifts to the poor. ²³ So, the Jews agreed to continue what they had begun and to do what Mordecai had written to them. ²⁴ For Haman, the descendant of Agag, the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them and had cast Pur (which means a lot), to harass and to destroy them. ²⁵ However, when this had come before the king, he had given orders in writing that the wicked scheme that Haman had devised against the Jews should rebound on his own head and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. ²⁶ That is why they have called these days "Purim," after the word "Pur." Therefore, because of everything that had been written in this letter, because of what

they had faced in this matter and because of what had happened to them, ²⁷ the Jews willingly obligated themselves, their offspring and all who joined them, to observe these two days annually without fail according to the written instructions about them and at the time appointed for them. ²⁸ They agreed that these days should be remembered and observed in every generation, by every family, in every province and in every city, that these days of Purim should never fall into disuse among the Jews and that the commemoration of these days should not cease among their descendants. ²⁹ Then Queen Esther, the daughter of Abihail and Mordecai the Jew gave full written authority to confirm this second letter about Purim. ³⁰ Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Xerxes, as messages of peace and truth, ³¹ to confirm these days of Purim at their appointed times, as Mordecai, the Jew, and Queen Esther had obligated them and as they had obligated themselves and their descendants, about their fasting and their lamenting. ³² Esther's declaration confirmed these regulations about Purim and was written down in the records.

10

The high rank of Mordecai

¹ King Xerxes imposed a tax on the country including the coastlands of the sea. ² Are not all his acts of power and might and the full account of Mordecai's greatness, to which the king advanced him, recorded in the annals of the kings of the Medes and Persians? ³ For Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes. He was prominent among the Jews and highly esteemed by his many fellow-Jews. He tried to do what was good for his people and spoke in a friendly way to all their descendants.

JOB

1

The life of Job and his family

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright. He feared God and **kept away from evil**. ² Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. ³ He possessed seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys and very many servants. This man was the greatest among all the people of the east. ⁴ His sons used to go to each other's homes when each on an appointed day gave a feast. They also used to send an invitation to their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ When the days of the feasting had run their course, Job would send and sanctify them. He used to rise early in the morning and offer a burnt offering for each of them. For Job thought, "It may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts."

Job used to do this regularly.

Satan's challenge to God about Job

⁶ There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ⁷ The LORD asked Satan, "From where do you come?"

Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming around on the earth and from walking back and forth on it."

⁸ The LORD asked Satan: "Have you considered My servant Job? Indeed, there is no one like him on the earth. He is a blameless and upright man, who fears God and **keeps away from evil**."

⁹ Satan answered the LORD: "Does Job fear God without a reason? ¹⁰ Have You Yourself not protected him, his family and everything he has with a thorn hedge around him on every side? You have been blessing the work of his hands, so that his livestock have spread out over the land. ¹¹ However, I beg You, stretch out Your hand and strike everything that he has! Then he will certainly curse You to Your face."

¹² The LORD told Satan: "Look! Everything he has is in your hands. Nevertheless, do not stretch out your hand against him!"

Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Job's loss of his possessions and his children

¹³ One day, Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's home. ¹⁴ A messenger came to Job and said: "The oxen were ploughing and the donkeys grazing near them, ¹⁵ and the Sabean attacked, took them away and killed the servants with the edge of the sword. I am the only one who has escaped to tell you."

¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another came and said: "The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants. It consumed them, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you."

¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another came and said: "The Chaldeans formed three companies, made a raid

on the camels and took them away. They also killed the servants with the edge of the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you."

¹⁸ While he was still speaking, another came and said: "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine at their eldest brother's home, ¹⁹ when suddenly a fierce wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on the young people, and they are dead. I am the only one who has escaped to tell you."

²⁰ Job got up, tore his garment and shaved his head. Then he fell on the ground and worshipped. ²¹ He said: "I have come from my mother's womb naked and shall I return naked. The LORD has given and the LORD has taken away. May the name of the LORD be blessed!"

²² In all this, Job did not sin or ascribe anything improper to God.

2

Satan's second challenge to God about Job

¹ There was another day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. ² The LORD asked Satan, "Where do you come from?"

Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming around on the earth and from going back and forth on it."

³ The LORD asked Satan: "Have you paid attention to My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth. He is a blameless and upright man, fears God and **keeps away from evil**. He still persists in his perfect way of life, although you are trying to stir Me up against him, to swallow him up without a reason."

⁴ Satan answered the LORD: "Skin for skin! A man will give everything he has for his own life.

⁵ However, I beg You, stretch out Your hand and strike his bones and his flesh! Then he will certainly curse You to Your face."

⁶ The LORD told Satan: "Look! He is in your hands. Only spare his life!"

The suffering of Job

⁷ Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ Job took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself with it while he was sitting in the ashes. ⁹ His wife asked him: "Do you still persist in your perfect way of life? Curse God and die!"

¹⁰ He replied to her: "You are talking as one of the foolish women talks. We receive from God what is good. Should we not also receive what is bad?"

In all this, Job did not say anything sinful.

The arrival of Job's three friends

¹¹ When Job's three friends heard about all this trouble that had come on him, each of them came from his own place, Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuah, and Zophar from Naama. They met together to sym-

pathise with Job and comfort him. ¹² When they saw him from a distance, they did not recognise him. They began to weep aloud. Each one tore his clothes. They threw dust up toward the sky onto their heads. ¹³ They sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights. No one said anything to him because they saw that his suffering was very painful.

3

Job's regret that he had been born

¹ After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day when he was born. ² Job said:

³ "May the day when I was born perish, and the night when it was said, 'A boy is conceived!'" ⁴ May that day be dark! May God above not care about it! May no light shine on it! ⁵ May darkness and deep gloom reclaim it! May a cloud settle over it! May gloom that darkens a day terrify it! ⁶ May thick darkness seize that night! May it not be included among the days of the year! May it not come into the number of the months! ⁷ Look! May that night be barren! May no shout of joy enter it! ⁸ May those who put a curse on a day curse that one, those who are ready to disturb Leviathan! ⁹ May the stars of its early dawn be dark! May it hope for light but have none and may it not see the flashing rays of the morning! ¹⁰ For it did not shut the doors of my mother's womb or hide trouble from my eyes. ¹¹ Why did I not die at birth and pass away when I came out of the womb? ¹² Why did knees come in contact with me? Or why were there breasts, that I should suck? ¹³ For then I would have lain down and been quiet. I would have slept. Then there would have been rest for me. ¹⁴ I would have been with kings and counsellors of the earth, who built places for themselves that are now ruins. ¹⁵ Or I would have been with princes who had gold and who used to fill their houses with silver. ¹⁶ Or why was I not like a hidden stillborn child, like infants who have never seen the light? ¹⁷ There wicked people have ceased their agitation, and there weary people are at rest. ¹⁸ There the prisoners have together become free from anxiety. They have stopped hearing the shout of the slave driver. ¹⁹ The small and the great are there, and the slave is free from his master. ²⁰ Why is light given to a miserable person, and life to people who are in mental distress, ²¹ who lie in wait for death that does not come and who have been searching for it more than for hidden treasures, ²² who rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they find the grave? ²³ Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, which God has made inaccessible for him? ²⁴ For my moaning comes instead of my food, and my groanings have been poured out like water. ²⁵ For I have become afraid of danger, and it has overtaken me, and what I have dreaded has happened to me. ²⁶ I have not been at ease and have not been at peace. I have not been at rest, but turmoil has come."

4

Eliphaz' opinion that those who suffer have been wicked

¹ Then Eliphaz from Teman replied:

² "If anyone has attempted to speak to you, will you become impatient? Yet who can refrain from speaking? ³ Look! You have been instructing many people and you used to strengthen hands that were hanging limp. ⁴ Your words used to uphold a person who was stumbling, and you used to strengthen knees that were giving way. ⁵ However, now trouble is coming on you, and you have become impatient. It touches you, and you are dismayed. ⁶ Does not your worship make you confident, and do not your blameless ways give you hope? ⁷ Please remember! Which innocent person has ever perished? Or where have upright people ever been destroyed? ⁸ When I have observed people ploughing wickedness and sowing trouble, they reap what they have sown. ⁹ The breath of God destroys them, and they perish because of the blast of His anger. ¹⁰ A lion may roar, and a fierce lion may growl, but the teeth of fierce strong lions have been knocked out. ¹¹ A lion perishes for lack of prey, and the cubs of a lioness are scattered. ¹² A word is brought to me secretly. My ear has received a whisper about it. ¹³ Among troubled thoughts from visions during the night, when deep sleep falls on men, ¹⁴ fear and trembling have come over me and have made all my bones shake. ¹⁵ A spirit used to pass over my face. It used to make the hair on my body stand on end. ¹⁶ It used to stand still, but I could not discern what it looked like. A form was before my eyes. There was a whisper, and I used to hear a voice: ¹⁷ 'Can any human being be righteous before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker?' ¹⁸ You see! God does not trust His own servants and accuses His angels of folly. ¹⁹ How much more those who live in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust and whom people crush more readily than a moth! ²⁰ Between morning and evening they are broken in pieces. They perish for ever with no one paying any attention to it. ²¹ Have their tent-cords not been pulled up in them? Do they not die even without wisdom?"

5

Eliphaz' answer that submission to God brings happiness

¹ "Please, call out! Is there anyone who answers you? To which of the holy ones will you turn? ² Surely, vexation will kill a foolish person, and jealousy will slay a person who is easily deceived. ³ I myself saw a foolish person while he was taking root. However, I suddenly cursed his dwelling. ⁴ His children are far from safety. They are crushed in the city-gate, and there is no one to rescue them. ⁵ A hungry person eats his harvest and takes it even from among thorns. A trap also longs to catch his wealth. ⁶ For calamity will not come out of the dust, and trouble will not sprout

up from the ground. ⁷ Nevertheless, man is born to trouble as sparks fly high up. ⁸ Nevertheless, I myself would make supplication to God and would commit my cause to God. ⁹ He performs great deeds that are unsearchable, wonderful things that cannot be counted. ¹⁰ He gives rain on the earth and sends water on the open fields. ¹¹ He **sets lowly people on high**, and people who mourn have been lifted high to safety. ¹² **He frustrates the devices of cunning people**, so that their hands will not achieve any success. ¹³ **He catches wise people in their own craftiness**, and the plans of wily people are brought to a quick end. ¹⁴ During the day they will encounter darkness and will grope at noon as in the night. ¹⁵ However, He has been saving a needy person from the swords in their mouths. He has been saving him from the hands of a powerful man. ¹⁶ Therefore, poor people have had hope, and injustice has shut its mouth.

Eliphaz' opinion that God's correction brings blessing

¹⁷ "Look! Blessed is the human being whom God **corrects!** Do not despise the discipline of the Almighty! ¹⁸ For, although He wounds, He will bandage. Although He causes injury, His hands will heal.

¹⁹ "He will rescue you from six troubles. In seven no harm will touch you. ²⁰ In famine He will redeem you from death and in war from the power of the sword.

²¹ You will be protected from the lash of the tongue and will not be afraid when violent action comes.

²² You will laugh at violent action and famine and you should not be afraid of the wild animals of the earth! ²³ For you will have a contract with the stones of the field, and the wild animals will be at peace with you. ²⁴ You will know that your tent is secure. When you inspect your dwelling you will not miss anything.

²⁵ You will also know that your offspring will be numerous and your descendants will be like the grass of the earth. ²⁶ You will come to the grave in ripe old age, like a stack of sheaves gathered up in its season.

²⁷ Look! We have examined this. It is true. Listen to it and learn it yourself for your own good!"

6

Job's reply that he is suffering severely without reason

¹ Then Job answered:

² "I wish that my grief were fully weighed and that my calamity were laid with it on the scales! ³ For then it would be heavier than the sand of the seas. That is why I have been uttering my words impetuously.

⁴ For the arrows of the Almighty are in me, so that my spirit is drinking their poison. The terrors of God are lining up in battle against me. ⁵ Does a wild donkey bray when he has grass or an ox bellow over his mixed fodder? ⁶ Can tasteless food be eaten without salt or is there any taste in the juice of a marshmallow plant? ⁷ My appetite has refused to touch them. They are like rotten food to me. ⁸ I wish that what I ask would happen and that God would grant what I hope

for! ⁹ I wish that God would be content to crush me, that He would let His hand loose and cut me off! ¹⁰ Then I would still have this consolation. I would be jumping for joy although the pain has no compassion. For I would not have refused to declare the Words of the Holy One. ¹¹ What strength do I have that I should wait untiringly? What is my destination, that I should be patient? ¹² Do I have the strength of stones? Or is my flesh bronze? ¹³ Am I not completely helpless when a good result has been driven away from me?

Job's reply that his advisers are not good friends

¹⁴ "A man in despair should receive kindness from his friend even though he gives up fearing the Almighty.

¹⁵ My brothers have been as unreliable as gully-water, as streams that go past in gullies. ¹⁶ They are dark because of ice. Snow hides itself on them. ¹⁷ At the time when they dry up, they have ceased. When it is hot, they have vanished from their places. ¹⁸ When caravans turn aside in their course they go up into the wasteland and perish. ¹⁹ Caravans from Tema have been looking. Travelling merchants from Sheba have been looking forward to them. ²⁰ They are disappointed because they had been confident. When they come there they are distressed. ²¹ For now you have been at that place. When you saw something terrifying you became afraid. ²² Have I ever said, 'Give me a gift!' or, 'Pay a ransom out of your wealth on my behalf'?

²³ Have I ever said, 'Deliver me from the hand of an enemy,' or 'Redeem me from the hands of ruthless people'? ²⁴ Teach me! Then I myself shall be silent. Make me understand how I have gone astray! ²⁵ How hurtful honest words are! However, what proof of arguments will really come from you? ²⁶ Do you think that you will correct what I say and think that what a despairing person says is wind? ²⁷ You would even cast lots over an orphan and bargain over your friend.

²⁸ Now, therefore be content to look at me, whether I would lie to you in the face! ²⁹ Please change your minds, and let there be no injustice! Change your minds! I am still right in this. ³⁰ Is there any injustice on my tongue? Will my mouth not perceive malicious speech?

²³ Have I ever said, 'Deliver me from the hand of an enemy,' or 'Redeem me from the hands of ruthless people'?

²⁴ Teach me! Then I myself shall be silent. Make me understand how I have gone astray! ²⁵ How hurtful honest words are! However, what proof of arguments will really come from you? ²⁶ Do you think that you will correct what I say and think that what a despairing person says is wind? ²⁷ You would even cast lots over an orphan and bargain over your friend.

²⁸ Now, therefore be content to look at me, whether I would lie to you in the face! ²⁹ Please change your minds, and let there be no injustice! Change your minds! I am still right in this. ³⁰ Is there any injustice on my tongue? Will my mouth not perceive malicious speech?

7

Job's reply that human beings are slaves without hope

¹ "Does a human being not have trouble on earth? Are his days not like those of a hired servant? ² Is he not like a slave who longs for shade and like a hired servant looking for his wages? ³ I have been allotted futile months, and troublesome nights have been assigned to me. ⁴ When I have lain down I say, 'How long before I get up?' However, the evening drags on, and I have had more than enough tossing about until dawn. ⁵ My flesh has been clothed with worms and a crust of dust. My skin has become hard, and people loathe it. ⁶ My days are swifter than a weaver's bobbin and have come to an end without hope. ⁷ Remember that my

life is a breath! My eye will not see again what is good. ⁸ The eye of a person who now sees me will not see me again. While your eyes are on me, I shall be no more. ⁹ As a cloud has vanished and gone away, so he who goes down to the grave will not come up. ¹⁰ He will not return to his house again. His place will not recognise him any longer. ¹¹ Therefore, I myself shall not restrain my mouth. I shall speak out in the anguish of my spirit. I shall complain in the bitterness of my soul.

Job's request to God to leave him alone

¹² "Am I the sea or a sea monster, that You should set a guard over me? ¹³ When I have thought, 'My couch will comfort me, my bed will support me in my complaint,' ¹⁴ then You frighten me with dreams and terrify me with visions. ¹⁵ Then my soul has preferred suffocation and death to my own bones. ¹⁶ I have been feeling aversion. I shall not live for ever. Leave me alone! For my days are only a breath. ¹⁷ What is a human being, that You should make much of him and that You should set Your heart on him? ¹⁸ What is he that You should visit him every morning and test him every moment? ¹⁹ How long? Will You not look away from me? Will You not let me alone until I swallow my spittle? ²⁰ Have I sinned? What shall I do for You, You Preserver of mankind? Why have You made me Your target, so that I have become a burden to myself? ²¹ Why, then, will You not pardon my rebellion and take away my guilt? For I shall soon lie down in the dust. When You search for me, I shall be no more."

8

Bildad's reply that God is just and that Job should not accuse him of doing evil

¹ Then Bildad from Shuah answered:

² "How long will you keep saying these things? The words of your mouth are only a strong wind. ³ Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert what is right? ⁴ If your children have sinned against Him, He has delivered them into the hand of their own rebellion. ⁵ If you yourself search for God and plead with the Almighty for mercy, ⁶ if you are pure and upright, surely then He will act for you and restore your rightful dwelling-place. ⁷ Although your beginning has been small, your future will be very prosperous. ⁸ For you should please find out from previous generations and ask about what their fathers have tried to learn! ⁹ For we came only yesterday and know nothing. For our days on earth are a shadow. ¹⁰ Will they not teach you and tell you? Will they not bring forth words from their understanding?

Bildad's assertion that God does not afflict innocent people

¹¹ "Will papyrus grow high where there is no swamp? Will river-grass thrive where there is no water? ¹² While they are still fresh, without being plucked off, they wither more quickly than any other green

grass. ¹³ The paths of all who forget God are like them. The hope of a godless person will perish. ¹⁴ His confidence will snap. His trust is a spider's web. ¹⁵ When he leans against his own house, it will not stand. When he clings to it, it will not stand up. ¹⁶ He is a well-watered plant in the sunshine, and his shoots spread over his garden. ¹⁷ His roots will be entwined on a pile of rocks. He will gaze at a house of stones. ¹⁸ If it swallows the plant up from his place, it will disown him, saying, 'I have never seen you.' ¹⁹ You see! This is the withered condition of his way, and others will spring up out of the dust. ²⁰ Look! God will not reject a blameless person or strengthen the hands of evildoers. ²¹ He will still fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy. ²² Those who hate You will be clothed with shame, and the tents of wicked people will be no more."

9

Job's reply that he cannot defend himself against God although he is innocent

¹ Then Job answered.

² "Truly I know that it is so. However, how can a human being be righteous before God? ³ If anyone wishes to dispute with Him, he will not answer Him once in a thousand times. ⁴ God is wise in heart, and His power is vast. Who has resisted Him and remained unscathed? ⁵ He moves mountains without their knowing it. He has overturned them in His anger. ⁶ He shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble. ⁷ He speaks to the sun, and it does not rise. He seals up the stars. ⁸ He alone stretches out the heavens and walks on the wave-crests of the sea. ⁹ He is the Maker of the Great Bear, Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the southern sky. ¹⁰ He does things so great that they cannot be comprehended and too many wonders to be counted. ¹¹ Look! When He goes past me, I do not see Him. When He moves on, I do not perceive Him. ¹² Look! When He snatches something away, who will turn Him back? Who will ask Him, 'What are You doing?' ¹³ God will not turn away from His anger. The helpers of Rahab have bowed down beneath Him. ¹⁴ How much less can I answer Him? How can I choose my words to speak with Him? ¹⁵ Even if I were righteous, I could not answer Him. I would plead for mercy from my Judge. ¹⁶ If I had summoned Him and He had answered me, I would not believe that He was listening to what I was saying. ¹⁷ He would crush me with a storm and would give me many wounds without a reason. ¹⁸ He would not allow me to regain my breath but would overwhelm me with bitterness. ¹⁹ If it is a matter of strength, indeed, He is mighty! If it is a matter of justice, who will summon me? ²⁰ Even if I were righteous, my own mouth would condemn me. Even if I were blameless, He would pronounce me perverse. ²¹ If I were blameless, I would not be concerned about

myself. I despise my own life. ²² It is all the same. That is why I have said, ‘He eliminates both blameless people and wicked people.’ ²³ When a flood brings sudden death, He will mock at the despair of innocent people. ²⁴ The earth has been placed into the hand of wicked people. He covers the faces of its judges. If it is not He, then who is it? ²⁵ My days have been swifter than a runner. They have fled away. They have not seen any good things. ²⁶ They have gone past like boats made of reeds, like an eagle that swoops down on its prey. ²⁷ If I say, ‘I shall forget my complaint, I shall give up looking as I do and I shall smile,’ ²⁸ I am afraid of all my sufferings. I know that You will not consider me innocent. ²⁹ I myself shall be guilty. Why then should I labour in vain? ³⁰ If I washed myself with melted snow and cleaned my hands with lye, ³¹ then You would plunge me into the slime-pit, and my own clothes would detest me. ³² For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him and that we should come into court together. ³³ There is no arbitrator between us, who might lay his hand on both of us, ³⁴ who might remove God’s rod from me, that fear of Him might not torment me. ³⁵ Then I would speak without fear of Him. However, that is not how my own circumstances are.

10

Job’s reply that he hates his life because God is looking for sin in him

¹ ‘I myself feel disgust with my life. I shall express my complaint freely. I shall speak out in the bitterness of my soul. ² I shall say to God, ‘Do not declare me guilty! Inform me why You are bringing a prosecution against me! ³ Do You think that it is good that You are oppressing me, that You are despising what Your hands have laboured over and that You have been smiling with approval at the schemes of wicked people? ⁴ Do You have eyes of flesh? Do You see as a human being sees? ⁵ Are Your days like the days of a human being or are Your years like those of a man, ⁶ that You are looking for guilt in me and searching for sin in me, ⁷ although You know that I am not guilty and that there is no one who can rescue me from Your hands? ⁸ Your hands have shaped me and made me but all at once You have destroyed me on every side. ⁹ Please remember that You have made me like clay! Will You return me to the dust? ¹⁰ Are You not pouring me out like milk and curdling me like cheese? ¹¹ You clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews. ¹² You have made life for me and shown me faithful love, and Your providence has been preserving my spirit. ¹³ Nevertheless, You have hidden these things in Your heart. I know that this was Your purpose. ¹⁴ If I have sinned, You watch me and do not declare me free of punishment from my guilt. ¹⁵ If I have been guilty, how sad for me! If I have been righteous, I shall not

lift up my head. For I am full of shame. Just look at my affliction! ¹⁶ If my head is high, You will hunt me like a lion and display Your awesome wonders against me again. ¹⁷ You will bring Your new witnesses against me and increase Your anger against me. Another wave of soldiers and another army confront me. ¹⁸ Why have You brought me out of the womb? I should have died before any eye had seen me! ¹⁹ I would have been as if I had never existed. I would have been carried from the womb to the grave. ²⁰ My days are few, are they not? So, stop and turn away from me, that I may be cheerful for a little while, ²¹ before I go away and never return but go to the land of darkness and deep shadow, ²² the land of darkness like gloomy darkness, like deep shadow that lacks order, where what shines brightly is like gloomy darkness!’”

11

Zophar’s reply that, if Job got rid of sin, he would be happy.

¹ Then Zophar from Naama answered:
² “Should these many words go unanswered or should a man be vindicated because of his talking? ³ Should your loose talk silence people? When you mock, should there be no one who makes you ashamed? ⁴ You say, ‘What I believe is flawless, and I have been pure in Your sight.’ ⁵ Nevertheless, I wish that God would speak and would open His lips to you! ⁶ I wish that He would tell you the secrets of wisdom! For wisdom has two sides. Realise that God will cause you to forget some of your guilt! ⁷ Can you find out the mysteries of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty? ⁸ They are the heights of heaven. What can you do? They are deeper than Sheol. What can you know? ⁹ Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea. ¹⁰ If He comes along, imprisons anyone and summons people, who can make Him turn back? ¹¹ For He knows worthless people. When He has seen evil, will He not pay attention to it? ¹² However, a witless man will become intelligent only when a wild donkey’s colt is born as a human being! ¹³ If you yourself have made your heart ready, you will stretch out your hands toward Him. ¹⁴ If there is evil in your hand, put it far away! Do not cause injustice to dwell in your tents! ¹⁵ Surely you would then lift up your face without shame. You would be made a solid casting and would not be afraid. ¹⁶ You would surely forget your own misery. You would remember it only as water that has flowed past. ¹⁷ Your span of life would rise up more than the noonday. Its darkness would be like the morning. ¹⁸ You would be confident, because there is hope. You would look around and rest securely. ¹⁹ You would lie down, and no one would make you afraid. Many people would flatter you. ²⁰ However, the eyes of wicked people will fail. Their place of refuge has been lost to them, and their hope is the breathing out

of life.”

12

Job's reply that God in His wisdom upsets human lives

¹ Then Job answered:

² “Truly you are the people, and wisdom will die with you! ³ However, I have a mind as well as you have. I am not inferior to you. Who does not know things like these? ⁴ I am a laughingstock to my friends. Although I used to call to God and He answered me, although I am righteous and blameless, I am a laughingstock. ⁵ A person who is at ease thinks about calamity with contempt. He thinks that it is ready for those whose feet stagger. ⁶ The tents of those who lay waste are at peace, and those who provoke God to anger are secure, although God has brought security to them in His hand. ⁷ Nevertheless, please ask the animals, and they will teach you! Ask the birds of the sky, and they will tell you! ⁸ Or ask the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you, and let the fish of the sea inform you! ⁹ Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this? ¹⁰ In His hand is the life of every living creature and the spirit in every human body. ¹¹ Does not the ear test words, and does not the tongue taste its food? ¹² Wisdom is in aged people, and long life brings understanding. ¹³ However, God is both wise and powerful. Advice and understanding belong to Him. ¹⁴ Look! If He demolishes, no one will rebuild. If He puts a man in prison, it will not be opened. ¹⁵ Look! If He holds the water back, things wither. If He sends it out, it overwhelms the land. ¹⁶ God has strength and sound wisdom. The one who is deceived and **the one who leads astray** belong to Him. ¹⁷ He leads away those who give advice with their clothes stripped off and makes fools of judges. ¹⁸ He has released people from the punishment of kings and has tied a waistband around their hips. ¹⁹ He leads priests away with their clothes stripped off and **overthrows men who have been long established**. ²⁰ He takes away the speech of trusted men and takes away the discretion of elders. ²¹ He pours contempt on leading men and unties the military belt of mighty men. ²² He reveals deep things out of darkness and brings deep darkness to the light. ²³ He makes nations great and destroys them. He expands nations and guides them. ²⁴ He takes away the intelligence of the leaders of the people of the earth and makes them wander in a pathless wasteland. ²⁵ They grope in the dark without light, and He makes them stagger like a drunkard.

13

Job's reply that his friends misrepresent God and that he would like to speak to God

¹ “Look! My eye has seen all this. My ear has heard and understood it. ² I also know what you know. I am not inferior to you. ³ However, I myself would like to

speak to the Almighty and I desire to make my defence to God. ⁴ Nevertheless, you are telling lies as a cover. You are all worthless healers! ⁵ I wish that you would be quite silent! Then you would be wise! ⁶ Please listen to my argument and pay attention to what my lips contend! ⁷ Will you speak wickedly on God's behalf? Will you speak deceitfully for Him? ⁸ Will you show Him special favour? Will you contest a lawsuit on behalf of God? ⁹ Will it turn out well if He examines you? Or will you deceive Him, as you might deceive a human being? ¹⁰ He will certainly rebuke you if you secretly show special favours. ¹¹ Will His splendour not terrify you, and will the dread of Him not fall on you? ¹² Your maxims are proverbs of ashes. Your defences are defences of clay. ¹³ Be silent before me! Then I myself shall speak. Let whatever comes on me come! ¹⁴ Why should I take my flesh in my teeth, and why should I put my life in my hands? ¹⁵ Look! Although He kills me, I shall hope in Him. I shall surely defend my ways to His face. ¹⁶ **This will also serve to deliver me.** For no godless person would come before Him. ¹⁷ Continue to listen to what I say, and let what I declare be in your ears! ¹⁸ Please look! I have prepared my lawsuit. I know that I shall be declared righteous. ¹⁹ Who is there who will bring a lawsuit against me? For now, if I were silent, I would die.

Job's question why God would scare a leaf

²⁰ “Do not do to me only these two things! Then I shall not hide from You. ²¹ Take Your hand far away from me, and let terror of You not torment me! ²² Then call, and I myself shall answer! Or let me speak, and make Your reply to me! ²³ How many iniquities and sins have I committed? Show me my rebellion and my sin! ²⁴ Why would You hide Your face and regard me as Your enemy? ²⁵ Would You cause terror to a leaf being blown by the wind and would You chase after dry chaff? ²⁶ For You would write down bitter things against me and make me inherit the sins of my youth. ²⁷ You would put my feet in the shackles and watch all my paths. You would engrave marks on the soles of my feet. ²⁸ Man would decompose like something rotten. He would be like a garment that clothes-moths have eaten.

14

Job's request to God to consider his frail human nature

¹ “A human being who is born of a woman lives for a few days and is full of trouble. ² He has come out like a flower and withered away. He has fled like a shadow and will not continue. ³ Nevertheless, have You opened your eyes on such a person and will You bring me before Yourself for judgment? ⁴ Who can bring what is clean out of what is unclean? No one! ⁵ Rather, his days have been determined, and You control the number of his months. You have appointed his limits, which he cannot go past. ⁶ Look away from

him and let him become fat, until he enjoys his day, like a hired man! ⁷ For there is hope for a tree when it is cut down, that it will sprout again and that its young shoots will not fail. ⁸ If its root grows old in the ground and its stump dies in the dry soil, ⁹ at a scent of water it will bud and produce branches like a plant. ¹⁰ However, a man dies and loses all power. A human being breathes his last, and where is he? ¹¹ Water evaporates from a lake, and a river becomes parched and dries up. ¹² That is how a man lies down and does not rise. Until the heavens are no more men will not awake or be roused from their sleep. ¹³ I wish that You would hide me in the grave, that you would conceal me until Your anger has changed, that You would appoint a definite time for me and then remember me! ¹⁴ If a human being dies, will he live again? I shall wait eagerly all the days of my hard service, until my replacement comes. ¹⁵ You will call, and I shall answer You. You will long for the one whom Your hands have made. ¹⁶ For now You will count my steps. You will not keep watch over my sin. ¹⁷ My rebellion will be sealed up in a bag, and You will cover my sin. ¹⁸ However, a mountain falls and crumbles away, and a rock will move from its place. ¹⁹ Water wears away stones. Its current will flood the dry soil of the earth. That is how you destroy a human being's hope. ²⁰ You overpower him permanently, and he has gone. You change his expression and send him away. ²¹ If his sons are honoured, he does not know it. If they become insignificant, he does not perceive it. ²² He will feel only the pain of his own body and will mourn only for himself."

15

Eliphaz' reply that wise men know that wicked people are destroyed

¹ Then Eliphaz from Teman answered:
² "Should a wise man answer with empty notions and fill his belly with the east wind? ³ Should he argue with useless words or with speeches that have no value? ⁴ However, you yourself are causing the fear of God to fail and are hindering meditation before God. ⁵ For your sin is prompting your mouth, and you are choosing the language of crafty people. ⁶ Your own mouth condemns you, not mine. Your own lips testify against you. ⁷ Are you the first man to have been born? Or were you brought forth before the hills? ⁸ Do you listen in on the confidential discussion of God? Do you reduce wisdom to yourself? ⁹ What do you know that we do not know? What do you understand that we do not? ¹⁰ Both the grey-haired and the aged are among us, older than your father is. ¹¹ Are the comforting Words of God not enough for you, when He speaks gently to you? ¹² Why is your heart carrying you away, and why are your eyes flashing, ¹³ that you are turning your spirit against God and are bringing such words out of your mouth? ¹⁴ What is a hu-

man being, that he can be pure? What is a person born of a woman, that he can be righteous? ¹⁵ Look! God puts no trust in His holy ones, and the heavens are not pure in His sight. ¹⁶ How much less a person who is repulsive and corrupt, a man who drinks wickedness like water! ¹⁷ I shall explain to you. Listen to me! Let me declare what I have seen! ¹⁸ I shall tell you what wise men report, without concealing what they have received from their fathers. ¹⁹ The land had been given to them alone, and no stranger passed among them. ²⁰ The wicked man suffers torment all his days. The ruthless person suffers torment during the number of years that have been stored up for him. ²¹ Terrifying sounds are in his ears. When he prospers a plunderer will come on him. ²² He does not believe that he will return out of the dark. He is ambushed to be put to the sword. ²³ He wanders about for food and asks, 'Where is it?' Indeed, he knows that a dark day is ready and imminent. ²⁴ Trouble and distress will torment him. They will overpower him, like a king ready to attack. ²⁵ For he has stretched out his hand against God and behaves arrogantly against the Almighty. ²⁶ He runs stubbornly against Him with his thickly bossed shield. ²⁷ For he has covered his face with his fat and grown a fat bulge around his waist. ²⁸ He has been living in ruined cities, in houses where no one should live, which were soon to become heaps of ruins. ²⁹ He will not be rich, and his property will not endure. His possessions will not spread over the earth. ³⁰ He will not get out of the dark. A flame will wither his new shoots, and the breath of God's mouth will make him depart. ³¹ He should not trust in what is worthless and deceive himself! For he will exchange it for what is worthless. ³² It will reach its full measure before his time has come, and his palm-branch will not be green. ³³ Like a grapevine he will strip off his unripe fruit and like an olive tree he will throw off his blossoms. ³⁴ For the community of godless people is barren, and fire consumes the tents where bribery takes place. ³⁵ They conceive trouble and give birth to evil. Their womb nurtures deceit."

16

Job's reply that his friends are not helping him

¹ Then Job answered:
² "I have heard all such things before. You are all troublesome comforters! ³ Will long-winded speeches ever end? Or what is disturbing you that you keep on answering? ⁴ I also could speak like you if you were in my place. I could make fine speeches against you and shake my head at you. ⁵ I could use my mouth to encourage you, and the consoling words of my lips would bring you relief. ⁶ If I speak, my anguish is not relieved and, if I refrain, how much of it leaves me? ⁷ Surely now God has made me helpless. You have made my entire community desolate. ⁸ You have also

seized me. It is a witness against me. My thinness has risen up against me. It testifies against me in my face.

Job's description of what God has done to him

⁹ “He has been tearing me in His wrath and attacking me. He has been gnashing His teeth at me. My Enemy fastens His piercing eyes at me. ¹⁰ People have been opening their mouths wide at me. They have been striking me on the cheek in scorn. They have been coming together in a mass against me. ¹¹ God hands me over to an evil person and wrings me out in the hands of wicked people. ¹² I was at ease, but He shattered me. He seized me by the neck and crushed me. He set me up as His target. ¹³ His archers surround me. He pierces deep into my kidneys without mercy. He pours out my gall on the ground. ¹⁴ He breaks through me in one gap after another. He runs against me like a warrior. ¹⁵ I have stitched sackcloth over my skin and have thrust my forehead in the dust. ¹⁶ My face has become warm from weeping, and there is deep darkness on my eyelashes, ¹⁷ although my hands have been free from violence and my prayer has been pure.

Job's appeal to God in heaven

¹⁸ “O earth, do not cover my blood, and let there be no home for my cry! ¹⁹ Even now, look! My Witness is in heaven and He who testifies for me is on high. ²⁰ My friends scorn me. My eye has been shedding tears to God, ²¹ that He may argue the case of a man with God, as one human being pleads for another. ²² For a few years are passing, and I shall go on the road from which I shall not return.

17

Job's plea to God to declare him honest

¹ “My spirit has been broken. My days have been extinguished. The graveyard is ready for me. ² I certainly have mockery with me, and my eye is lingering on their bitterness. ³ Please lay down a guarantee for me with Yourself! Who is there who will take my hand to put up security for me? ⁴ Because You have closed their minds to understanding, therefore You will not let them triumph. ⁵ If anyone informs against his friends to get a share of their property, the eyes of his children will fail.

Job's insistence that he is wiser than his friends

⁶ “He has made me repeat a proverb to the peoples, and I am one in whose face people spit. ⁷ My eye has grown dim because of sorrow, and all the limbs of my body are like a shadow. ⁸ Upright people are appalled at this, and an innocent person rouses himself against a godless person. ⁹ Yet a righteous person will hold to his way, and he who has clean hands will grow stronger. ¹⁰ However, please come back again, all of you! However, I shall not find a wise man among you. ¹¹ My days have passed. My plans, the desires of my heart, have been shattered. ¹² They are turning night into day. They say that light is near in the face of

darkness. ¹³ If I hope for the grave as my home, if I have made up my bed in the dark, ¹⁴ if I have called out to the pit, ‘You are my father,’ and to the worm, ‘You are my mother and my sister,’ ¹⁵ then where is my hope? Who will see any hope for me? ¹⁶ Will my hopes go down to the crosspieces on the gates of Sheol? Will there be peace together in the dust?”

18

Bildad's reply that wicked people perish

¹ Then Bildad from Shuah answered:

² “How long before you people make an end of these speeches? You must understand! Then we shall speak. ³ Why have we been regarded as cattle? Why have we been considered as unclean in your sight? ⁴ He is tearing himself apart in his anger! Will the earth be abandoned for your sake or a boulder move along out of its place? ⁵ Indeed, the light of wicked people is extinguished, and the flame of his fire stops burning. ⁶ The light has become dim in his tent, and his lamp above him is extinguished. ⁷ His vigorous steps are restricted, and his own schemes throw him down. ⁸ His own feet thrust him into a net while he walks on its mesh. ⁹ A trap catches him by his heel. A snare holds him fast. ¹⁰ A noose is hidden for him on the ground. A trap is on his path for him. ¹¹ Sudden terrors have been frightening him on every side and have been harassing him at his heels. ¹² His strength is starved, and calamity is ready for him to stumble. ¹³ It eats away parts of his skin. The first-born of death eats away the limbs of his body. ¹⁴ He is torn away from the tent in which he has trusted, and they march him off to the king of sudden terrors. ¹⁵ What does not belong to him lives in his tent. Burning sulphur is scattered over his dwelling. ¹⁶ His roots shrivel up under him, and his branches wither above him. ¹⁷ The memory of him has been lost from the earth. He has no name in the street. ¹⁸ God will drive him from the light into the darkness and will banish him from the world. ¹⁹ He has no offspring or descendant among his people and no survivor in his residence. ²⁰ People in the west have been caused to tremble at his day, and people in the east are seized by horror. ²¹ Surely the dwelling-places of an evil person are like this. The place of the person who does not know God is like this.”

19

Job's reply that God is wronging him

¹ Then Job answered:

² “How long will you torment me and crush me with words? ³ These ten times you keep insulting me. You are attacking me shamelessly! ⁴ However, if it is true that I have done wrong, my wrongdoing remains with me. ⁵ If indeed you magnify yourselves against me and make my disgrace an argument against me, ⁶ then you should know that God has bent me and surround-

ed me with His net! ⁷ You see, I cry out, ‘Violence!’ but receive no answer. I call for help, but there is no justice.

Job’s description of what God has done to him

⁸ “He has blocked off my road, so that I cannot go past and brings darkness on my paths. ⁹ He has stripped my glory away from me and removed the crown from my head. ¹⁰ He breaks me down on every side, and I have ceased to exist. He has uprooted my hope like a tree. ¹¹ He has fired up His anger against me and has considered me as one of His enemies. ¹² His armed divisions come on together. They build up their highway against me and set up their camp around my tent. ¹³ He has removed my brothers far away from me, and those who used to know me have become completely estranged from me. ¹⁴ My relatives have left me alone. My close friends have forgotten me. ¹⁵ The guests in my house and my maidservants consider me as a stranger. They have come to regard me as a foreigner. ¹⁶ When I have called my servant, he does not answer. I must use my mouth to plead with him for mercy. ¹⁷ My breath has become disgusting to my wife, and I have become abhorrent to the children of my own body. ¹⁸ Even little boys have been despising me. When I get up, they criticise me. ¹⁹ All the men of my intimate circle have been loathing me, and those whom I loved have turned against me. ²⁰ My bones have stuck to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth. ²¹ Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, O you my friends! For the hand of God has struck me. ²² Why do you pursue me as God does? Will you never get enough of my flesh?”

Job’s confidence in his Redeemer

²³ “Therefore, I wish that my words were written! I wish that they were inscribed on a scroll! ²⁴ I wish that they were engraved for ever on rock with a stylus of iron and lead! ²⁵ I myself know that my Redeemer lives and that at the last He will stand on the dust. ²⁶ After this, my skin will surround this body, and from my flesh I shall see God. ²⁷ I myself shall see Him for myself. My own eyes will see and not as a stranger.

Job’s warning to his friends

“My inmost being fails inside me ²⁸ when you say: ‘How we shall persecute him! The root of the trouble is found in him.’ ²⁹ You yourselves should be afraid of the sword! For wrath will bring the punishment by the sword, that you may know that there is a judgment.”

20

Zophar’s reply that the happiness of wicked people is short and their pain is long

¹ Then Zophar from Naama answered:

² “My troubled thoughts will prompt me to reply, because I am greatly disturbed. ³ I hear rebuke that insults me, but a spirit coming from what I understand

will give me answers. ⁴ Do you know how this has been from of old, since man was placed on earth, ⁵ that the joyful song of wicked people is brief and the joy of an ungodly person lasts for only a moment? ⁶ Even if his high status rises up to the heavens and his head reaches the clouds, ⁷ he will perish for ever like his own dung. Those who have seen him will ask, ‘Where is he?’ ⁸ He will fly away like a dream, and people will not find him. He will be banished like a vision of the night. ⁹ The eye that has been seeing him will not see him any longer. His place will not look at him any longer. ¹⁰ His children will pay compensation to the poor, and his own hands will pay back his wealth. ¹¹ His bones had once been full of his youthful vigour, but it will lie down with him in the dust. ¹² Even if he enjoys the sweetness of evil in his mouth and hides it under his tongue, ¹³ even if he tries to save it and does not let it go but holds it back in his mouth, ¹⁴ his food will be altered in his stomach. It will become the venom of snakes inside him. ¹⁵ Although he has swallowed up wealth, he will vomit it out again. God will disgorge it out of his belly. ¹⁶ He will suck the poison of snakes. The fang of a viper will kill him. ¹⁷ Let him not enjoy the streams, the streams flowing with honey and cream! ¹⁸ He will give back what he has toiled for and will not swallow it down. He will not enjoy the profit gained from his trading. ¹⁹ For he has been oppressing and abandoning poor people. He has seized a house that he had not built. ²⁰ Indeed, he has not experienced any freedom from concern in his own body. He will not use what he has been coveting to save himself. ²¹ Nothing is left for him to eat. Therefore, his prosperity will not last for long. ²² Although he has great plenty, he will be in distress. The full weight of oppression will come on him. ²³ When he is filling his stomach, may God send His fierce anger on him! May He rain that down on him in His rage! ²⁴ He will flee from an iron weapon. A bronze-tipped arrow will pierce through him. ²⁵ He has drawn it out, and it has come out of his back, and the gleaming point comes out of his gall-bladder. Terrors come over him. ²⁶ What he has stored up is buried in complete darkness. A fire that has not been fanned will devour him. What has been left in his tent will be of no more use. ²⁷ The heavens will expose his guilt. The earth rises up against him. ²⁸ The possessions of his house will be carried away in a cascading stream on the day of God’s wrath. ²⁹ This is a wicked man’s portion from God, the inheritance that God has decreed for him.”

21

Job’s reply that wicked people often do not suffer for their sins

¹ Then Job answered:

² “Keep listening to what I am saying! Let this be the way you give comfort! ³ Bear with me! Then I shall

speak! After I have spoken, you may go on mocking. ⁴ As for me, is my complaint against a man? If it were, why should I not be impatient? ⁵ Look at me and be astonished! Then lay your hands over your mouths! ⁶ When I remember this, I am terrified, and shuddering seizes my body. ⁷ Why do wicked people go on living? Why have they grown old and even become more powerful? ⁸ They see that their offspring are firmly established around them and can look at their descendants. ⁹ Their homes are safe with nothing to fear, and no rod of God strikes them. ¹⁰ Their bulls breed without fail. Their cows calve and do not miscarry. ¹¹ They send out their little boys like a flock, and their children dance. ¹² They sing with the tambourine and the lyre and delight in the sound of the pipe. ¹³ They finish their days in prosperity and peacefully go down to the grave. ¹⁴ They have told God, 'Depart from us! We do not desire to know Your Ways. ¹⁵ What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? What benefit do we get if we pray to Him?' ¹⁶ You see! Their prosperity is not in their own hands. The advice of wicked people is far from me. ¹⁷ How often is the lamp of wicked people extinguished? How often does their calamity come on them, the destiny that God allots in His anger? ¹⁸ How often are they like straw before the wind and like chaff that a storm wind has blown away? ¹⁹ You say, 'God will store up a man's calamity for his children.' He should pay it back to the man himself, that they may know it! ²⁰ His eyes should see his own ruin! He should drink from the anger of the Almighty! ²¹ For what delight does he take in his family after him when the number of his months has come to an end?

Job's assertion that no one understands how God deals with human beings

²² "Will anyone teach God knowledge, since He will judge exalted beings? ²³ One man dies in his full vigour, completely at ease and undisturbed. ²⁴ His buckets are full of milk and the marrow of his bones is moist. ²⁵ Another man dies in the bitterness of his soul, without ever having tasted prosperity. ²⁶ They lie down together in the dust, and worms cover them.

Job's complaint that his friends have betrayed him

²⁷ "Look! I know what you are thinking and your schemes to mistreat me. ²⁸ For you ask, 'Where is the house of the noble person? Where are the tents in which wicked people used to live?' ²⁹ Have you not asked those who go past on the road and will you not pay regard to their accounts? ³⁰ They say that an evil man is relieved on the day of calamity. They will be delivered on the day of wrath. ³¹ Who will tell him to his face how he has been living, and who will pay him back for what he has done? ³² When he is carried off to the cemetery, people will keep watch over his grave-mound. ³³ The soil of the valley is sweet to him. All mankind will follow him, and countless others have gone before him. ³⁴ How, then, will you try

to comfort me with vanity? Nothing but fraud has been left of your answers!"

22

Eliphaz' reply that Job is wicked

¹ Then Eliphaz from Teman answered: ² "Will a human being benefit God? Will even a person who has insight benefit Him? ³ Is there any pleasure for the Almighty if you are righteous? Is there any gain for Him if you make your ways blameless? ⁴ Is it because of your piety that He disciplines you and enters into judgment with you? ⁵ Is your wickedness not great? There is no end to your iniquities. ⁶ For you demand security from your brothers for no reason and strip people of their clothing, leaving them naked. ⁷ You do not give water to an exhausted person to drink and refuse to give food to a hungry person. ⁸ A powerful man owns the land and an honoured man lives in it. ⁹ You have been sending widows away empty-handed, and the arms of orphans are bruised. ¹⁰ That is why snares are all around you and fear suddenly terrifies you. ¹¹ That is why there is darkness, so that you cannot see and why a flood of water covers you. ¹² Is not God in the heights of heaven? See also how lofty the highest stars are! ¹³ Yet you ask, 'What does God know? Will He judge through very thick cloud? ¹⁴ Clouds veil Him, so that He does not see. He walks around on the vault of the sky.' ¹⁵ Will you stay on the old road, on which wicked men have been walking? ¹⁶ They have been snatched away before their time. Their foundation has been washed away by a river. ¹⁷ They say to God, 'Depart from us!' They ask, 'What can the Almighty do to us?' ¹⁸ Yet it was He who had been filling their houses with good things. However, the advice of wicked people has been far away from me. ¹⁹ Righteous people see it and are glad. An innocent person mocks at them, ²⁰ saying, 'Surely our foes have been destroyed, and a fire has destroyed their wealth.'

Eliphaz' admonition to Job to make peace with God

²¹ "Please have a good relationship with God and be at peace! In that way prosperity will come to you. ²² Please receive Instruction from His mouth and put His Words in your heart! ²³ If you return to the Almighty you will be restored. If you remove wickedness far from your tent, ²⁴ if you lay your gold nuggets down in the dust and put your gold from Ophir among the rocks in the ravines, ²⁵ then the Almighty will be your gold nuggets and your choicest silver. ²⁶ For then you will take pleasure in the Almighty and will lift your face up to God. ²⁷ You will pray to Him and He will hear you, and you will fulfil your vows. ²⁸ You will decide on any matter and be successful in it, and light will shine on your ways. ²⁹ For when people have humiliated someone, you have been saying, 'It is because of pride'. However, God saves the person with downcast eyes. ³⁰ He will deliver even a

person who is not innocent. He will even be delivered through the cleanness of your hands.”

23

Job's reply that, if he could find God, he would defend himself

¹ Then Job answered:

² “Today also I am complaining defiantly. My hand is heavy because of my groaning. ³ I wish I knew where I might find Him. I would go to His dwelling place.

⁴ I would lay my case before Him and fill my mouth with protests. ⁵ I want to know the Words that He would use to answer me. I want to understand what He would say to me. ⁶ Would He use great power in conducting a lawsuit against me? No! Nevertheless, He Himself would pay attention to me. ⁷ There an upright person could argue it out with Him, and I would be successful in rescuing myself from my Judge.

⁸ Look! If I go to the east, He is not there and, if I go to the west, I cannot perceive Him. ⁹ When He is at work in the north, I cannot observe Him. When He turns aside to the south, I cannot see Him.

¹⁰ However, He knows the way that I have taken. When He has tested me, I shall come out like gold.

¹¹ My foot has been closely following His steps. I have been keeping His Way without turning aside. ¹² I do not depart from the Commandment of His lips. I have been treasuring the Words of His mouth more than my portion of food.

Job's complaint that God is against him

¹³ “However, He stands alone. Who can drive Him back? He does whatever He desires. ¹⁴ For He will complete what He has allotted for me. He has many other things like this in His mind. ¹⁵ That is why I am terrified at His presence. When I pay full attention to this, I am afraid of Him. ¹⁶ God has made my heart timid. The Almighty has terrified me. ¹⁷ For I have not been silenced because of the darkness or because of the thick darkness that has been hiding Him from me.

24

Job's statement that God does not punish those who mistreat the poor

¹ “Why have times of judgment not been determined by the Almighty, and why have those who know Him not seen His days? ² Some people remove boundary stones. After they have stolen a flock, they pasture it.

³ They drive along a donkey that had belonged to orphans. They take a widow's bull as security for a loan.

⁴ They force poor people off a road. Needy people of the country all keep themselves in hiding. ⁵ Look! Poor people go out to work in search for food like wild donkeys in the desert. They have the wasteland to provide food for their children. ⁶ They reap their fodder in the open country and glean the vineyard of a wicked man. ⁷ They spend the night naked, without clothing and have no garment in the cold. ⁸ They are wet from a downpour in the mountains and have been

clinging to a rock because there is no cave. ⁹ Wicked people kidnap a fatherless child from the breast they take security for a loan against a needy person.

¹⁰ Poor people go around naked, without clothing.

They carry sheaves while they are hungry. ¹¹ They press olives between their retaining walls. They have been treading winepresses but have been suffering from thirst. ¹² People groan from the city, and the souls of wounded people cry out for help. Yet God pays no attention to crime. ¹³ They have been among those who rebel against the light. They have not acknowledged its ways and have not stayed in its paths. ¹⁴ A murderer rises at dawn, that he may kill a poor and needy person, and, in the night, he becomes a thief. ¹⁵ The eye of an adulterer has been watching for the dusk. He says, ‘No eye will see me’ and he puts a covering over his face. ¹⁶ In the dark they have been digging through walls of houses. By day they have been shutting themselves in. They do not know the light. ¹⁷ For all of them, deep darkness is their morning. When someone recognises them, they feel the sudden terrors of deep darkness. ¹⁸ Such a person is like something buoyant on the surface of the water. Their tract of land is accursed on the earth. No one will turn into the road to their vineyards. ¹⁹ Drought and heat will snatch snow-water away. The grave will snatch away those who have sinned. ²⁰ The womb forgets him. The worm has feasted on him. He is no longer remembered, and wickedness is broken like a tree. ²¹ He destroys a barren and childless woman and does not help a widow. ²² Yet God will use His power to drag away mighty persons. Although such a person may become established, he will put no trust in life.

²³ God may give him confidence, so that he supports himself, but His eyes are on his ways. ²⁴ They have been exalted for a little while and then have gone. They have been brought low. Like all others they are gathered up and, like a head of grain, they are cut off. ²⁵ If it is not so, then who will prove me a liar and reduce what I am saying to nothing?”

25

Bildad's reply that human beings cannot be righteous in God's sight

¹ Then Bildad from Shuah answered:

² “Dominion and fear belong to God. He makes peace in His high places. ³ Is there any way of counting His military divisions? Is there anyone on whom His light does not rise? ⁴ How then can a human being be righteous before God? How can anyone born of a woman be pure? ⁵ You see, even the moon is not bright, and the stars have not been pure in His sight. ⁶ How much less a human being, who is only a maggot, and a son of man, who is only a worm!”

26

Job's reply that human beings know little about God and His power over creation

¹ Then Job answered:

² “How you have helped a person who is powerless! How you have saved the arm that is not strong!
³ What advice you have offered to a person who lacks wisdom! What a great display of sound judgment you have made! ⁴ Who has helped you to speak these words? Whose breath has come out of you? ⁵ The spirits of the dead are in deep anguish, those who are beneath the waters and the creatures that live in them. ⁶ The place of the dead is naked before God. The place of destruction has no covering. ⁷ God stretches out the north over empty space. He hangs the earth on nothing. ⁸ He wraps up water in His clouds, and the cloud is not burst open under it. ⁹ He covers the face of the full moon and spreads His cloud over it. ¹⁰ He has marked out a horizon on the surface of the water at the boundary between light and darkness. ¹¹ The pillars of heaven shake and are astounded when He rebukes them. ¹² He has used His power to stir up the sea. He has used His understanding to pierce the sea monster. ¹³ He has used His wind to make the sky clear. His hand has pierced the gliding sea-serpent. ¹⁴ You see! These are only the outer fringes of His Ways. How faint the whisper is that we hear of Him! Who, then, can understand the thunder of His power?”

27

Job's insistence that he is innocent and that wicked people will perish

¹ Job again took up his discourse and said:
² “As surely as God lives, who has taken away my justice, and as surely as the Almighty lives, who has made my life bitter, ³ while my life remains in me and the breath of God is in my nostrils, ⁴ my lips will certainly not speak anything wicked, and my tongue will not say anything deceitful. ⁵ I shall certainly never admit that you are right! Until I die I shall not give up my freedom from blame. ⁶ I have been keeping hold of my righteousness and shall not let it escape. My conscience will not accuse me all my life. ⁷ Let my enemy be like a wicked person, and let him who rises up against me be like an evil person! ⁸ For what hope does a godless person have when God cuts him off, when God takes away his life? ⁹ Will God listen to his cry when distress comes on him? ¹⁰ Will he take pleasure in the Almighty? Will he call on God at all times? ¹¹ I shall teach you about the power of God. I shall not conceal what the Almighty has in mind. ¹² Look! All of you have seen it yourselves. Why, then, are you saying what is quite worthless? ¹³ This is what God will allot to a wicked human being, the inheritance that ruthless men will receive from the Almighty: ¹⁴ If he has many children, the sword will take them, and his descendants will not have enough to eat. ¹⁵ Those who survive him will be buried because of plague, and his widows will not weep for him. ¹⁶ Although he heaps up silver like dust and heaps up clothing like clay, ¹⁷ although he heaps it up,

a righteous person will wear it, and innocent people will divide his silver. ¹⁸ He has built his house like that of a clothes-moth, like a shelter that a watchman has made. ¹⁹ He may be rich when he goes to bed, but his wealth will not be gathered in. When he has opened his eyes, his wealth will have gone. ²⁰ Terrors will overtake him like a flood. In the night a gale has blown him away. ²¹ The east wind will carry him away, and he will be gone. It will sweep him from his place. ²² It will hurl things at him without pity. He will flee headlong from its power. ²³ It will clap its hands at him and will whistle against him when he leaves his place.

28

Job's statement that human beings search out many things and his question where wisdom may be found

¹ “Certainly there is a mine for silver and a place where people refine gold. ² Iron is taken out of the ground, and copper is smelted out of ore. ³ Man has put an end to darkness while he searches out the ore to the farthest limit in gloom and deep darkness. ⁴ He has dug out a mineshaft away from where anyone lives, in places forgotten by the foot of man. They have been dangling and swinging back and forth, far away from other human beings. ⁵ Food grows out of the ground but underneath it is turned over as by fire. ⁶ Sapphires come from its stones, and it contains gold dust. ⁷ No bird of prey knows the path to it, and no falcon's eye has seen it. ⁸ No animal with a proud look has been treading on it. No lion has been prowling over it. ⁹ Man has been stretching out his hand towards the flinty rock and has been overturning hills at their roots. ¹⁰ He has been cutting out tunnels in the rocks, and his eye has seen every precious thing. ¹¹ He has been blocking off streams, so that water does not trickle out, and brings the hidden things of the earth out into the light. ¹² However, where can wisdom be found? Where is the source of understanding? ¹³ A human being does not know its proper value. It cannot be found in the land of the living. ¹⁴ The deep ocean has said, ‘It is not in me.’ The sea has said, ‘It is not with me.’ ¹⁵ It cannot be bought with pure gold, and silver cannot be weighed out as its price. ¹⁶ It cannot be bought with the gold of Ophir or with lapis lazuli or sapphires. ¹⁷ Gold and glass cannot compare with it, and golden jewellery cannot be exchanged for it. ¹⁸ No mention will be made of coral or of rock crystal. The price of wisdom is higher than red corals. ¹⁹ The chrysolite of Cush cannot compare with it. It cannot be bought with pure gold. ²⁰ From where, then, does wisdom come? Where is the source of understanding? ²¹ It has been hidden from the eyes of every living being. It has also been hidden from the birds in the sky. ²² The place of destruction and death have said, ‘We have heard a rumour about it with our ears.’ ²³ God understands the way to it and knows the

source of it. ²⁴ For He looks at the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. ²⁵ When He gave to the wind its force and determined the volume of water, ²⁶ when He made a decree for the rain and a path for thundering lightning bolts, ²⁷ then He saw it and declared it. He established it and explored it. ²⁸ He told human beings, ‘Look! The fear of the Lord is wisdom, and turning away from evil is understanding.’”

29

Job's statement that God had once been with him

¹ As Job continued his discourse he said:

² “I wish that I were as I was in the months gone by, as in the days when God was watching over me, ³ when His lamp was shining on my head, when by His light I used to walk through darkness! ⁴ That was when I was at the time of the prime of my life, when the intimate friendship of God was over my tent, ⁵ when the Almighty was still with me, when my young boys were around me. ⁶ That was when my paths were awash with cream and when the rock was being poured out for me as a flow of olive-oil. ⁷ That was when I used to go out to the gate of the city, when I used to take my seat in the public square, ⁸ when young men saw me and moved out of the way and when old people got up and stood. ⁹ That was when leaders refrained from speaking and laid their hands on their mouths. ¹⁰ The voices of the nobles were silent, and their tongues stuck to the roofs of their mouths. ¹¹ That was when the ear listened and called me blessed, and when the eye saw and supported me as a witness. ¹² For I used to rescue a poor person who cried for help, and an orphan who had no one to assist him. ¹³ The blessing of a dying person used to come on me, and I used to make a widow's heart to sing for joy. ¹⁴ I dressed myself with righteousness, and it clothed me. My justice was like a robe and a turban. ¹⁵ I was eyes to a blind person and feet to a lame person. ¹⁶ I was a father to poor people and pleaded the case of a person whom I did not know. ¹⁷ I broke the jawbones of an evil person and made him drop his prey from his teeth. ¹⁸ Then I thought, ‘I shall die in my nest and make my days as numerous as the sand. ¹⁹ My roots will spread out to the water, and dew will lie all night on my branches. ²⁰ My high status will remain fresh with me, and my bow will continue to be new in my hand.’ ²¹ People listened to me and waited in silence for my advice. ²² After I had spoken they did not speak again, and what I said dripped appealingly on them. ²³ They waited eagerly for me as for the rain and opened their mouths for the Spring-rains. ²⁴ I used to smile at them when they had no confidence, and they did not look disrespectfully at my kindness. ²⁵ I used to choose the way for them while I sat as their leader. I used to dwell like a king in his

military division, like one who was comforting mourners.

30

Job's declaration that God and human beings are destroying him

¹ “However, now younger people than I have been laughing at me. I would have scorned to classify their fathers with my sheep dogs. ² Indeed, what help could the strength of their hands have given me, since their physical strength has gone from them? ³ Since they are haggard because of want and hunger, they were foraging for food last night on the dry ground in desolate wastelands. ⁴ They were plucking off salt weed, the leaves of bushes and the roots of broom trees for their food. ⁵ They are driven away from their fellow human beings. People shout after them as if they were thieves. ⁶ They must live on the sloping banks of the ravines, in holes in the ground and in the rocks. ⁷ They bray among the bushes. They huddle together under wild artichokes. ⁸ They are a senseless and nameless brood and have been driven out of the land with whips. ⁹ Now, however, I have become their mocking song. I have become a byword to them. ¹⁰ They have been detesting me. They have been keeping far away from me. They have not hesitated to spit in my face. ¹¹ Because God has unfastened my bowstring and afflicted me, they have thrown off restraint in my presence. ¹² As a group they attack on my right hand. They have pushed my feet away. They have built up their siege ramps against me. ¹³ They have torn up my path. They have succeeded in destroying me. They need no one to help them. ¹⁴ They come in as through a wide gap in a wall. They roll along through the wreckage. ¹⁵ I have been overwhelmed by terrors. They chase away my dignity as by the wind, and my safety has passed away like a cloud. ¹⁶ Now my life in me is being poured out. Days of misery are taking hold of me. ¹⁷ The night has been piercing my bones, and my gnawing pains do not rest. ¹⁸ With great force God restricts my garment. He ties a belt around me like the collar of my tunic. ¹⁹ God has thrown me into the mud, and I have begun to look like dust and ashes.

Job's request to God to help him

²⁰ “I cry out to You for help, but You do not answer me. When I stand up, You only look at me. ²¹ You have changed, so that You are cruel to me. You assail me with Your mighty hand. ²² You lift me up to the wind, cause me to ride on it and toss my sound judgment about. ²³ For I know that You will bring me back to death, to the house where all the living assemble. ²⁴ Surely no one would stretch out his hand against a person in a pile of rubble, when he cries out for help because of his misfortune! ²⁵ Have I not wept for a person having a difficult time? Has my soul not grieved for the poor? ²⁶ However, when I hoped for good, evil came and, when I waited for light, darkness

came. ²⁷ My internal organs have been put in turmoil and are never still. Days of misery have confronted me. ²⁸ I have been going about darkened but not by the heat of the sun. When I stood up in the assembly I used to cry out for help. ²⁹ I have become a brother of jackals and a companion of owls. ³⁰ My skin has turned black and falls from me, and my bones have been burning with fever. ³¹ My harp has changed into mourning, and my flute into the sound of those who weep aloud.

31

Job's assertion that, if he has done wrong, he expects God to deal with him justly

¹ "I have made an agreement with my eyes. How, then, could I look closely at a virgin? ² What, then, is my portion from God above and my heritage from the Almighty on high? ³ Is not calamity for an evil person, and disaster for those who do wrong? ⁴ Does God not see my ways and count all my steps? ⁵ If I have been behaving falsely and my foot has been going quickly to deceive ⁶ (Let Him weigh me on honest scales and let God know that I am blameless!), ⁷ if my step turns aside from the way and my thoughts have been following my eyes, and, if any moral blemish has stuck to my hands, ⁸ then let someone else eat what I sow, and let what grows for me be pulled out by the roots! ⁹ If my heart has been enticed toward a woman and, if I have secretly waited near my neighbour's door, ¹⁰ then let my wife grind grain for another man, and let others have relations with her! ¹¹ For that would be a shameless wrong. That would be a sin for judges to deal with. ¹² For that would be a fire that burns as far as the place of destruction and would pull all my harvest out by the roots. ¹³ If I have denied justice to my manservant or my maidservant when they have brought a complaint against me, ¹⁴ what, then, shall I do when God confronts me? What shall I answer when He calls me to account? ¹⁵ Has not He who made me in the womb made my servant? Has not the same One formed us in the womb? ¹⁶ If I were refusing anything that poor people wanted or if I were causing the eyes of a widow to fail, ¹⁷ if I were eating my bit of food alone, without letting an orphan eat any of it, ¹⁸ (for since I was young an orphan has been reared with me as his father, and from my mother's womb I have been guiding a widow), ¹⁹ if I had seen anyone perishing because he had no clothes or a needy person without a garment, ²⁰ if his heart had not blessed me and, if he had not warmed himself with the fleeces of my lambs, ²¹ if I had swung my fist at an orphan because I had been aware that I would get support at the city-gate, ²² then let my upper arm fall from my shoulder, and let my arm be torn from its socket! ²³ For a calamity from God terrifies me, and I could not do such things because of His majesty. ²⁴ If I had placed my trust in gold or said to fine gold, 'You

are my confidence,' ²⁵ if I had been glad because of my great wealth or because my hands had gained a fortune, ²⁶ if I had looked at the sun when it shone or at the moon moving along in splendour, ²⁷ so that my heart had been secretly deceived, and my mouth had blown them a kiss on my hand, ²⁸ that too would have been a crime for the judges to punish. For I would have denied God above. ²⁹ If I had been glad about the misfortune of a person who hated me, if I had gloated when harm overtook him ³⁰ (I have not allowed my mouth to sin by calling down a curse to kill him), ³¹ if the people who belong to my tent have never asked, 'Who has not had enough of Job's meat to eat?' ³² (Rather, no stranger had to spend the night in the street. I used to open my doors to a traveller). ³³ If I had been concealing my rebellious acts as Adam did by hiding my guilt in my heart, ³⁴ because I had been very afraid of a noisy crowd and because the contempt of families had shattered me, so that I remained silent and refused to go out of doors — ³⁵ I wish that I had someone to hear me! (Here is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!) I wish that my Accuser had written His accusation on a scroll! ³⁶ I would certainly be wearing it on my shoulder. I would tie it on my head like a crown. ³⁷ I would declare to Him the full inventory of my steps. I would approach Him like a prince. ³⁸ If my land were crying out against me and, if its furrows were weeping aloud together, ³⁹ if I had eaten its yield without payment and, if I had made its tenants breathe their last, ⁴⁰ then may thorn-bushes come up instead of wheat, and may weeds come up instead of barley!"

This is the end of what Job said.

32

Elihu's insistence that he must speak

¹ Then these three men stopped answering Job, because he considered that he was righteous. ² Then Elihu, the son of Barachel, a descendant of Buz, who belonged to the family of Ram, became very angry with Job. His anger was aroused because Job was proving himself righteous rather than God. ³ He was also very angry with Job's three friends because they had not found any answer and yet had condemned Job. ⁴ Elihu had been waiting to speak to Job because they were older than he was. ⁵ When Elihu saw that these three men had no answer to give, he was very angry. ⁶ Elihu, the son of Barachel, the descendant of Buz, answered:

"I am young, and you are old. That is why I have been timid and afraid to tell you what I think. ⁷ I thought, 'Age should speak! Many years should teach wisdom!' ⁸ Nevertheless, it is the spirit in human beings, the breath of the Almighty, that makes them understand. ⁹ People are not wise because they live for many years. Nor do they understand what is right because they are old. ¹⁰ That is why I have said, 'Listen

to me! I shall also declare what I think.’¹¹ You see, I have been waiting for you to speak. I have been listening for your reasoning while you were searching out what to say.¹² I have been paying close attention to you and look! There is no one among you who has proved Job wrong. No one has answered what he has been saying.¹³ Be careful not to say, ‘We have found wisdom! God, not man, will refute him.’¹⁴ He has not been presenting an argument against me, and I shall not be using your words to answer him.¹⁵ They have been dismayed. They have not been answering any longer. Words have failed them.¹⁶ Shall I wait because they are not speaking, because they have been standing there without any further reply?¹⁷ I also shall answer with my share. I also shall declare what I think.¹⁸ For I am full of words. The spirit inside me has been compelling me.¹⁹ Look! My insides are like wine that has no outlet, like new wineskins that are ready to burst.²⁰ I must speak, that I may find relief. I must open my lips and answer.²¹ Please let me show no bias toward anyone and let me not flatter any person!²² For I do not know how to flatter. If I did, my Maker would soon take me away.

33

Elihu's assertion that God sends pain to warn and save human beings

¹ “However, please, Job, listen to my answer! Pay attention to everything that I say!² Please look! I have opened my mouth. The tongue in my mouth has begun to speak.³ What I say comes from my upright heart, and the knowledge that my lips announce is pure.⁴ The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.⁵ Answer me, if you can! Prepare your case before me! Take your stand!⁶ Look! I am like you before God. I too have been shaped from clay.⁷ Look! You need not be alarmed because you are terrified of me. Urgency from me will not weigh heavily on you.⁸ Indeed, I have been listening while you have been speaking. I was hearing the sound of your words.⁹ You are saying, ‘I am pure, free from wrongdoing. I am clean, and there is no guilt in me.¹⁰ You see! God finds reasons to oppose me. He considers me His enemy.¹¹ He is putting my feet in shackles. He is keeping watch on all my paths.’¹² You see! In this you are not righteous. I reply to you that God is greater than man is.¹³ Why have you been complaining to Him, saying, ‘He will not answer any of man’s words?’¹⁴ For God speaks in one way or in another, although man does not perceive it.¹⁵ He may speak in a dream, in a vision at night, when deep sleep falls on people, when they are slumbering on their beds.¹⁶ Then He may open the ears of human beings and terrify them with warnings,¹⁷ that He may turn a man aside from what he is doing and screen a person off from pride.¹⁸ He keeps man’s soul from going down to the pit and his life from perishing by

means of a weapon.¹⁹ He is also rebuked by pain on his bed and by constant strife in his bones,²⁰ so that his very being has found food repulsive, and his soul loathes the choicest food.²¹ His flesh wastes away, so that it disappears, and his bones, which had not been seen, are laid bare.²² His soul goes closer to the pit, and his life to the messengers of death.

Elihu's assertion that God sends a Redeemer

²³ “If there is an Angel to support him, a Mediator, One out of a thousand, to declare to a man what is right for him,²⁴ then He has been merciful to him and said, ‘Deliver him from going down into the pit. I have found a ransom.²⁵ His flesh is made newer than a child’s is. He returns to the days of his youth.’²⁶ He prays to God, and He takes pleasure in him. He sees God’s face with a shout of joy, and God restores a man’s righteousness to him.²⁷ He looks up at other men and says: ‘I had sinned and had perverted what was right, and yet I have not been punished for it, as I had deserved.²⁸ He has redeemed my soul from passing on to the pit, so that my life will look on the light.’²⁹ You see! God does all these things to a man, twice, even three times,³⁰ to bring his soul back from the pit, that he may shine with the light of life.³¹ Pay attention, Job! Listen to me! Be silent, and I shall say more.³² If you have any words, answer me! Speak, because I want to justify you.³³ If not, you must listen to me! Be silent, and I shall teach you wisdom.”

34

Elihu's assertion that God is right and Job is wrong

¹ Then Elihu continued his reply:

² “Hear my words, wise men! Listen to me, you who have knowledge!³ For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food.⁴ Let us choose what is right! Let us learn together what is good!⁵ For Job has been saying, ‘I am righteous, and God has denied me justice.⁶ Although my cause is just, I am considered a liar. My wound is incurable, although I have not done wrong.’⁷ What man is like Job, who drinks ridicule like water?⁸ He travels in the company of those who do wrong and associates with wicked men!⁹ For he has been saying, ‘A man receives no benefit from being friendly with God.’¹⁰ Therefore, listen to me, men of understanding! Far be it from God that He should be wicked and from the Almighty that He should do wrong!¹¹ For God will repay a human being for what he has done and will make what a man’s way deserves happen to him.¹² Most certainly, God will not do anything wicked and the Almighty will not pervert justice.¹³ Who has put Him in charge over the earth? Who has laid the whole world on Him?¹⁴ If He thought only of Himself and took back His spirit and His breath,¹⁵ all mankind would perish together, and man would return to dust.¹⁶ If you have understanding, hear this! Listen to what I am saying!¹⁷ Could anyone who hates justice really govern? Will you

condemn the righteous Mighty One? ¹⁸ Can anyone say to a king, 'You are worthless,' and to nobles, 'You are wicked'? ¹⁹ He shows no bias in favour of princes and does not respect a rich man more than a poor man. For His hands have made them all. ²⁰ They die in a moment. At midnight the people are mortally harmed and pass away. No human hand is needed to remove a mighty person. ²¹ For God's eyes watch the ways of a man, and He sees all his steps. ²² There is no gloom or deep darkness where those who do wrong may hide. ²³ For God does not need to examine a man further before he goes before God in the judgment. ²⁴ He shatters mighty men without investigation and sets up others in their place. ²⁵ Because He discerns what they are doing, He overthrows them in the night, and they are crushed. ²⁶ Because they have been wicked, He has flogged them in a place where people can see them, ²⁷ because they have been turning away, have not been following Him and do not have insight into any of His ways, ²⁸ with the result that they have caused the cry of a poor person to come before God, and that He has heard the cry of afflicted people. ²⁹ When He remains silent, who can condemn Him? When He hides His face, either from a nation or from a single person, who can see Him? ³⁰ He wants to prevent a godless man from being king and from ensnaring other people. ³¹ For has anyone said to God, 'I have borne the consequences. I shall not act corruptly any longer. ³² You Yourself teach me what I cannot see! If I have done wrong, I shall not do it any longer?' ³³ Should God reward that on your own terms, because you have rejected it? For you yourself must choose, and not I. Therefore, tell me what you know! ³⁴ Men who have understanding should tell me, and a wise man who hears me should say: ³⁵ 'Job speaks without knowledge. His words lack insight.' ³⁶ I wish that Job were tested to the utmost, because he answers like wicked men! ³⁷ For he adds rebellion to his sin. He claps his hands among us and keeps saying more things against God."

35

Elihu's assertion that God is high above human beings

¹ Elihu continued his reply:

² "Have you been thinking that this is right? You have been saying, 'God affirms that I am righteous.' ³ For you are asking, 'What benefit will it be to You? What more would I have gained than if I had sinned?' ⁴ I myself shall reply to you and to your friends with you. ⁵ Look at the sky and see! Gaze at the clouds high above you! ⁶ If you have sinned, how will you affect Him? If you have committed many wrongs, what can you do to Him? ⁷ If you have been righteous, what do you give to Him? Or what does He receive from your hand? ⁸ Your wickedness affects only a man like yourself. Your righteousness affects only a human

being. ⁹ People cry out because they are greatly oppressed. They call for help because of the power of mighty men. ¹⁰ However, no one has asked, 'Where is God, who has made me, who gives songs in the night, ¹¹ who teaches more to us than to the animals of the earth, and who makes us wiser than the birds of the sky?' ¹² There people cry out, but He does not answer them, because evil men are proud. ¹³ It is all to no purpose. God will not hear it. The Almighty will not pay attention to it. ¹⁴ How much less will He listen when you say that you do not see Him, that your case is before Him and that you have been anxiously waiting for Him! ¹⁵ Now therefore, because His anger does not punish, and because He does not take much notice of transgression, ¹⁶ Job opens his mouth in empty talk. He speaks profusely without knowledge."

36

Elihu's assertion that God's justice is beyond human understanding

¹ Elihu continued to speak:

² "Be patient with me a little longer, and I shall show you. For there is more to be said on God's behalf. ³ I shall get my information from far away and ascribe righteousness to Him who has made me. ⁴ For truly what I shall say is not false. One who knows perfectly is with you. ⁵ Look! God is mighty and does not despise anyone. He is mighty, and His mind is powerful. ⁶ He does not keep wicked people alive but gives justice to those who are oppressed. ⁷ He does not take his eyes off a righteous person but is on a throne with kings. He makes them sit there for ever, and they are exalted. ⁸ If they are tied up with chains and held by the ropes of affliction, ⁹ then He tells them their evil deeds and their wrongs and that they are behaving arrogantly. ¹⁰ He opens their ears to warn them and tells them to turn away from wrong. ¹¹ If they listen and serve Him, they complete their days in prosperity and their years in contentment. ¹² However, if they do not listen, a weapon will cause them to perish, and they will die without knowledge. ¹³ Those who are ungodly at heart harbour resentment. They do not cry for help when He has tied them up. ¹⁴ Their souls meet death when they are young, and their lives end among the male shrine-prostitutes. ¹⁵ He delivers an afflicted person when he is suffering and opens their ears when they are oppressed. ¹⁶ How much less would He also have lured you out of distress into a broad place where you were not restrained, and you would have been comforted with your table filled with choice food! ¹⁷ However, you are filled with the judgment due to a wicked person. Judgment and justice are taking hold of you. ¹⁸ Because you are angry, be careful that no one uses riches to lure you away! Let a great bribe not entice you! ¹⁹ Will your riches prepare you for battle to keep you from distress or will all the spending of your resources save you? ²⁰ Do not long for the night, when peoples vanish in their plac-

es! ²¹ Be careful that you do not turn to evil! For you have chosen this rather than suffering.

Elihu's affirmation of God's greatness

²² "Look! God shows Himself exalted in His power. Who is a teacher like Him? ²³ Who has assigned His ways for Him or who has told Him, 'You have done wrong'? ²⁴ Remember to extol His work, which men have praised in song! ²⁵ All mankind has seen it. A human being looks at it from far away. ²⁶ Look! God is too exalted for us to know Him. The number of His years cannot be investigated. ²⁷ For He draws up drops of water, which distil as rain to become a stream. ²⁸ They flow down from the clouds and drop down abundantly on mankind. ²⁹ Can anyone really understand how the clouds spread out and how He thunders from His hut? ³⁰ See! He has scattered His lightning around Him and has covered the depths of the sea. ³¹ He uses these to govern peoples. He provides food abundantly. ³² He has covered His hands with the lightning and has commanded it to strike its mark. ³³ His crashing announces Him. Even the cattle declare the One who is approaching.

37

¹ "At this, my heart also trembles and leaps from its place. ² Keep listening to the thunder of His voice and the rumbling that comes from His mouth! ³ He lets it loose everywhere under the sky, and His lightning goes to the very distant places of the earth. ⁴ It is followed by a roaring sound. He thunders with His majestic voice. He does not restrain the lightnings when His voice is heard. ⁵ God thunders marvellously with His voice. He does great things, which we cannot understand. ⁶ For He tells the snow, 'Fall on the earth!' He also commands a shower of rain and His heavy downpour of rain. ⁷ He seals up the hand of every human being, that all men whom He has made may acknowledge it. ⁸ Then a wild animal goes into its lair. They remain in their dens. ⁹ The storm wind comes from its inner room, and cold comes from the north wind. ¹⁰ The breath of God produces ice, and the broad waters become frozen. ¹¹ Indeed, He loads down the cloud with moisture. He scatters the bright clouds. ¹² As He guides them, they swirl round about, to do whatever He commands them over the surface of the inhabited earth. ¹³ He causes them to come, either for correction or to benefit His earth in faithful love. ¹⁴ Listen to this, Job! Stand still and consider the miraculous works of God! ¹⁵ Do you know how God imposes His orders on them and makes His bright clouds shine? ¹⁶ Do you know how the clouds float, the miraculous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge, ¹⁷ while you are sweltering in your clothes, when the earth is hushed because of a south wind? ¹⁸ Can you, like Him, hammer out the clouds and make them hard like a mirror of cast metal?

¹⁹ Teach us what we should say to Him! We cannot draw up our legal case because of our darkness. ²⁰ Should He be told that I want to speak? If anyone were to speak, he would surely be swallowed up. ²¹ Even now people cannot look at the sun when it is obscured among the clouds or when the wind has passed through and cleared them. ²² A golden light comes from the north. There is an awesome majesty around God. ²³ The Almighty, who is beyond our reach, is exalted in power, in justice and in abundant righteousness but will not oppress anyone. ²⁴ That is why men fear Him. He does not respect any who think that they are wise."

38

God's question whether Job knows His wonderful ways in what He has created — compare Genesis 1:1-10

¹ Then the LORD answered Job out of the windstorm: ² "Who, then, is making My purpose dark by talking without knowledge? ³ Please get yourself ready for action like a man, that I may question you! Then you must instruct Me! ⁴ Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you know how to discern it! ⁵ Who determined its dimensions? Surely you know! Or who stretched a measuring line over it? ⁶ On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷ while the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God were shouting for joy? ⁸ Who shut off the sea with doors when it burst from the womb and came out, ⁹ when I made clouds its garment and very thick cloud its infant-wrappings, ¹⁰ when I marked out My limits for it and set its bars and doors in place, ¹¹ and when I said, 'You may come as far as this but no farther, and here your proud waves will meet opposition'? ¹² Have you given orders to the morning since your days began and have you informed the dawn where its place is, ¹³ that it may take hold of the ends of the earth and that wicked people may be shaken off from it? ¹⁴ The earth changes shape like clay under a seal, and its features appear as in a garment, ¹⁵ that the light of wicked people may be withheld and that their raised arms may be broken. ¹⁶ Have you gone to the lowest limits of the sea or walked in the deep places of the ocean? ¹⁷ Have the gates of death been shown to you or can you see the gates of deep darkness? ¹⁸ Have you fully considered how broad the earth is? Tell me, if you know all about it! ¹⁹ Where, then, is the way to where light dwells, and where, then, is the place of darkness, ²⁰ that you may take it to its territory, and that you may discern the paths to its home? ²¹ You know! For you were born then and have lived for such a long time! ²² Have you entered the store-rooms of the snow or can you see the storerooms of the hail, ²³ which I have reserved for a time of trouble, for a day of battle and war? ²⁴ What, then, is the way to the place where the light is distributed or where the east wind is scattered on the earth? ²⁵ Who has cut a

watercourse open for the flood and a path for the rumbling bolt of lightning, ²⁶ to bring rain on a land where no man lives, on a desert in which there is no human being, ²⁷ to satisfy a land that is waste and desolate and to make it sprout with grass? ²⁸ Does the rain have a father? Or who has caused the birth of dewdrops? ²⁹ From whose womb has the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the frost from the sky? ³⁰ The water becomes hard like stone and the surface of the deep freezes over.

³¹ “Can you tie together the chains of the Pleiades or undo the fetters of Orion? ³² Can you bring out the constellations at their right times? Or can you lead out the Great Bear with its children? ³³ Do you know the regulations for the heavens? Can you establish their rule over the earth?

³⁴ “Can you raise your voice to the clouds that a flood of water may cover you? ³⁵ Can you send out lightning flashes, that they may go and say to you, ‘Here we are’?

³⁶ “Who has put wisdom in the heart? Or who has given understanding to the mind? ³⁷ Who is wise enough to count the clouds? Who can pour out the water-jars of the heavens, ³⁸ when the dust cakes like a metal casting and the clods stick fast together?

³⁹ “Can you hunt prey for the lion? Or can you satisfy the hunger of strong young lions, ⁴⁰ when they crouch in their hiding places or lie in wait in their thicket?

⁴¹ Who provides the raven with its game, when its chicks cry to God for help and wander about because they lack food?

39

¹ “Do you know when the mountain goats on the cliffs give birth? Do you observe the calving of the hinds?

² Can you number the months that they take to produce offspring? Do you know the time when they give birth? ³ They kneel to give birth. They deliver their babies and bring them forth. ⁴ Their young ones become strong. They grow up in the open. They leave and do not return to them.

⁵ “Who has let the wild donkey go free? Who has untied the tethering ropes on the wild ass? ⁶ I have made the desert plain his home and the salt flats his dwelling place. ⁷ He scoffs at the commotion of the city. He does not hear the shouting of a driver. ⁸ He explores the mountains for his pasture and searches for any green plant.

⁹ “Is the Arabian antelope willing to serve you? Will he spend the night at your feed trough? ¹⁰ Can you tie an Arabian antelope in a furrow with his harness? Or will he harrow the valleys as you lead him? ¹¹ Can you rely on him because he is very strong? Will you leave your heavy work to him? ¹² Can you trust him to bring in your grain and bring it together at your threshing floor?

¹³ “The wings of an ostrich flap happily but are they the wings and feathers of a stork? ¹⁴ For she leaves her eggs on the ground and lets them become warm on the dust. ¹⁵ She forgets that a foot may crush them and that a wild animal may trample on them. ¹⁶ She treats her young harshly, as if they were not hers. She is not distressed that her labour has been for nothing. ¹⁷ For God has made her forget wisdom and has given her no share in intelligence. ¹⁸ At the moment when she flaps her wings high up, she laughs at the horse and its rider.

¹⁹ “Can you give the horse his strength? Can you clothe his neck with a flowing mane? ²⁰ Can you make him jump like a locust? His majestic snorting is terrifying. ²¹ He paws in the valley and rejoices in his strength. He goes out to meet the line of battle. ²² He laughs at fear and is not dismayed. He does not shy away from the sword. ²³ The quiver, the flashing spear and the javelin rattle against him. ²⁴ In the commotion and excitement, he swallows up the ground. He cannot stand still when the trumpet sounds. ²⁵ Whenever the trumpet sounds, he says ‘Aha!’ He senses the battle from far away, the thunderous shouts of the captains and the battle cry.

²⁶ “Is it by your understanding that the hawk takes flight and spreads out his wings toward the south? ²⁷ Is it at your command that the eagle flies loftily and builds his nest high up? ²⁸ He lives on a cliff and perches for the night on a rocky crag and mountain stronghold. ²⁹ He searches for his food from there. His eyes detect it from far away. ³⁰ His chicks tear off bloody meat, and he is to be found where the carcasses are.”

40

God's question whether anyone could quarrel with Him

¹ The LORD replied to Job:

² “Should a person who finds fault quarrel with the Almighty? Anyone who rebukes God must give a response for it.”

Job's reply to God

³ Then Job answered the LORD:

⁴ “Look! I am insignificant. What shall I reply to You? I have put my hand on my mouth. ⁵ I have spoken once but shall not answer. Yes, twice but I shall not speak any longer.”

God's question whether Job can be like Him

⁶ Then the LORD answered Job out of the windstorm:

⁷ “Please prepare for action like a man! I shall question you. Then you must give Me information! ⁸ Will you even cancel My justice? Will you condemn Me that you may be righteous? ⁹ Do you have an arm like God? Can you thunder with a voice like His? ¹⁰ Then glorify yourself with magnificence and eminence! Clothe yourself with majesty and splendour! ¹¹ Scatter your fits of rage! Look at everyone who is proud and make him humble! ¹² Look at everyone who is proud

and bring him low! Trample on wicked people where they stand! ¹³ Bury them all in the dust together. Shroud their faces in an unknown grave! ¹⁴ Then even I shall admit to you that your own right hand can save you.

God's instruction to Job to look at Behemoth as a principal example of His power

¹⁵ "Please look at Behemoth, which I have made as well as you! He eats grass like a bull. ¹⁶ Please look at how strong his hips are and how powerful the muscles of his belly are! ¹⁷ His tail hangs like a cedar. The sinews of his thighs are interwoven. ¹⁸ His bones are bronze tubes. His limbs are like iron bars. ¹⁹ He is primary evidence of the works of God. His Maker can bring His sword close to him. ²⁰ For the mountains yield him what they produce, and all the wild animals play there. ²¹ He lies under lotus plants, in a hiding-place in the reeds and in a swamp. ²² Lotus cover him with their shade. Poplar trees beside the stream surround him. ²³ Look! If the river is turbulent he is not alarmed. He is confident when the Jordan surges against his mouth. ²⁴ Can anyone capture him when he is on the watch or pierce his snout with traps?"

41

God's instruction to Job to look at Leviathan

¹ "Can you pull out a Leviathan with a fishhook or tie down his tongue with a rope? ² Can you put a reed-cord in his nose or pierce his jaw with a thorny spike? ³ Will he make many pleas to you for mercy? Will he speak gently to you? ⁴ Will he make an agreement with you to take him as your slave for life? ⁵ Will you play with him as with a bird or will you put him on a leash for your girls? ⁶ Will traders bargain over him? Will they divide him up among the merchants? ⁷ Can you stick his hide full of harpoons or his head full of fishing spears? ⁸ Lay your hands on him! Remember the struggle! Then you will not do it again. ⁹ Indeed, any hope of subduing him is false. Will even the sight of him not overwhelm anyone? ¹⁰ No one is ruthless enough to wake him up. Who, then, is the one who can stand before Me? ¹¹ Who has had a claim against Me, that I should pay him back? What is under the whole sky belongs to Me. ¹² I shall not fail to tell about his limbs, his strength or his graceful symmetry. ¹³ Who has stripped off his outer garment? Who will approach him with a double bridle? ¹⁴ Who has opened the doors of his mouth? Terror surrounds his teeth. ¹⁵ There is majesty in his rows of shields, which are tightly closed with seals. ¹⁶ Each is so close to the next that no turbulence can pass between them. ¹⁷ They are joined one to another. They cling together and cannot be separated. ¹⁸ His snorting flashes out light, and his eyes are like the flashing rays of the dawn. ¹⁹ Firebrands stream from his jaws. Fiery sparks shoot out. ²⁰ Smoke pours from his nostrils, as from a boiling pot and burning reed stalks. ²¹ His

breath sets coals on fire, and a flame comes out of his mouth. ²² Strength is lodged in his neck, and dismay dances before him. ²³ The folds of his body are tightly joined. They are firmly moulded on him and immovable. ²⁴ His chest is a hardened casting like a stone, as hard as a lower millstone. ²⁵ When he raises himself up, mighty men are terrified. They retreat before his thrashing. ²⁶ If a sword strikes him, it will have no effect. Nor will a spear, a dart or a javelin. ²⁷ He imagines that iron is like straw and that bronze is like rotten wood. ²⁸ An arrow from a bow will not make him run away. Stones from a sling have turned to chaff against him. ²⁹ He regards clubs as pieces of straw. He laughs at the rattling of javelins. ³⁰ His undersides are like sharp pieces of broken pottery. He stretches out like a threshing sledge on the mud. ³¹ He makes the deep water churn like a boiling pot. He makes the sea like a pot of ointment. ³² He leaves a shining trail behind him. One would think the deep had grey hair. ³³ There is nothing like him on earth. He is the one made to be without fear. ³⁴ He looks at everything that is high. He is king over all proud creatures."

42

Job's confession that he has been wrong

¹ Then Job answered the LORD:

² "I know that You **can do all things** and that nothing that You plan can be thwarted. ³ Who am I but one who conceals Your purpose without knowledge? That is why I have been saying what I do not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I do not know. ⁴ You said, 'Please listen! Then I Myself shall speak. I shall question you. Then you must instruct Me!' ⁵ My ears had heard about You through reports, but now my eyes have seen You. ⁶ Therefore, I reject what I had said and repent in dust and ashes."

God's instruction to Job's friends to offer a sacrifice and to ask Job to pray on their behalf

⁷ After the LORD had said these things to Job, the LORD told Eliphaz from Teman: "I have been very angry with you and with your two friends. For you have not been telling the truth about Me, as My servant Job has been doing. ⁸ Now therefore, take seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job and offer up a burnt-offering for yourselves! My servant Job will pray for you. For I show him favour, so that I do not deal with you as your folly deserves. For you have not been telling the truth about Me, as My servant Job has been doing."

⁹ Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuah, and Zophar from Naama went and did what the LORD had told them, and the LORD showed favour to Job.

The twofold restoration of Job's life

¹⁰ The LORD made Job prosperous again when he had prayed for his friends. The LORD gave Job twice as much as he had had before. ¹¹ Then all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him previously came to him. They ate with him in his home. They

Job

showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the trouble that the LORD had brought on him. Each one gave him a piece of money and a golden ring. ¹² The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first part. He had fourteen thousand sheep and goats, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen and one thousand female donkeys. ¹³ He also had seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴ He named the first

daughter "Jemimah," the second "Keziah," and the third "Keren-Happuch." ¹⁵ Nowhere in the whole country could any women be found who were as beautiful as Job's daughters were. Their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. ¹⁶ After this Job lived for one hundred and forty years. He saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. ¹⁷ Then Job died, an old man and satisfied with life.

PSALMS

BOOK ONE (PSALMS 1-41)

1

¹ Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of wicked people, stand in the path of sinners or sit in the seat of scoffers!

² Rather, his delight is in the Instruction of the LORD, and on His Instruction he meditates day and night.

³ He is like a tree planted beside streams of water, which produces its fruit in its season and has leaves that do not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

⁴ The ungodly are not like that but are like the chaff that the wind blows away.

⁵ Therefore, wicked people will not stand in the judgment or sinners in the assembly of righteous people.

⁶ For the LORD knows the way of righteous people, but the way of wicked people will perish.

2

— *compare v. 1-3 with Acts 4:23-31* *The psalmists speak about the wicked nations*

¹ **Why have the nations been restless, and why do the peoples plot for no purpose?**

² **The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers conspire together, against the LORD and against His Anointed One,**

The wicked nations announce their opposition

saying: ³ “Let us tear up their chains and throw their ropes away from us!”

The LORD tells the nations about His King

⁴ The One enthroned in heaven laughs. The LORD ridicules them.

⁵ Then He speaks to them in His anger and terrifies them in His glowing anger, saying: ⁶ “Nevertheless, I Myself have consecrated My King on Zion, My holy mountain.”

The Son acknowledges His Father

⁷ “I shall proclaim the decree of the LORD: He has said to Me: **‘You are My Son. Today I have begotten You.**

⁸ “Ask Me, that I may make the nations Your inheritance and the ends of the earth Your property.

⁹ “**You will break them with an iron rod. You will smash them to pieces like a vessel of pottery.**”

The psalmist asks leaders to comply

¹⁰ Now therefore, kings, act with insight! Take advice, judges of the earth!

¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling!

¹² Fervently kiss the Son, that He may not become angry, and that you may not perish in your way! For His anger may blaze up in a short time. Blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

3

A psalm of David when he fled from his son Absalom

¹ O LORD, how many my enemies have become! Many are rising up against me.

² Many are saying about my soul, “He has no salvation in God.” *Selah*

³ Nevertheless, You, O LORD, are a shield for me and my glory and You lift my head high.

⁴ With my voice I was calling to the LORD, and He answered me from His holy mountain. *Selah*

⁵ I have lain down and gone to sleep. I have awoken. For the LORD continues to support me.

⁶ I shall not be afraid of the tens of thousands of people who have taken positions against me on all sides.

⁷ Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheek. You have smashed the teeth of wicked people.

⁸ Salvation belongs to the LORD. May Your blessing be on Your people! *Selah*

4

For the choir director, with stringed instruments. A psalm of David

¹ Answer me when I call, O my righteous God! You have made wide room for me in my distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!

² O sons of man, how long will my glory be disgraced? How long will you love what is empty and search for what is a lie? *Selah*

³ Know that the LORD has singled out for Himself the one who is devout. The LORD will hear when I call to Him.

⁴ **Tremble and do not sin!** Tell this to yourselves on your beds and be silent! *Selah*

⁵ Offer righteous sacrifices and trust in the LORD!

⁶ Many are saying, “Who will show us anything good?” Lift up the light of Your face on us, O LORD!

⁷ You have put more joy in my heart than people have when their grain and their new wine have increased.

⁸ Let me at once lie down in peace and sleep! For You alone, O LORD, will make me dwell in safety.

5

For the choir director, for the flutes. A psalm of David

¹ Open Your ears to my words, O LORD! Pay attention to my groaning!

² Listen carefully to the sound of my cry, my King and my God! For I am praying to You.

³ O LORD, in the morning You will hear my voice. In the morning I shall set out my requests before You and wait expectantly.

⁴ For You are not a God who delights in wickedness. Nothing evil will dwell with You.

⁵ Arrogant people will not stand in Your sight. You hate all evildoers.

⁶ You will destroy those who tell lies. The LORD

loathes the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

⁷ However, because of Your great mercy I myself shall enter Your house. In fear of You, I shall bow down toward Your holy Temple.

⁸ O LORD, lead me in Your righteousness because of my enemies! Make Your Way level in front of me!

⁹ For nothing in their mouths is reliable. Their inward parts are ruin. **Their throats are an open grave. They flatter with their tongues.**

¹⁰ Hold them guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels! Disperse them because of their many crimes! For they have been rebelling against You.

¹¹ Nevertheless, let all who take refuge in You rejoice! Let them shout with joy for ever! May You shelter them, that those who love Your name may rejoice in You!

¹² For You Yourself will bless the person who is righteous, O LORD. Like a shield You will surround him with Your favour.

6

For the choir director, with stringed instruments, on the *Sheminith*. A psalm of David

¹ O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger or discipline me in Your wrath!

² Be gracious to me, O LORD! For I am ready to faint. Heal me, O LORD! For my bones have been shaking with terror.

³ My soul also has been shaking extremely with terror. But You, O LORD, how long?

⁴ Return, O LORD! Deliver my life! Save me because of Your mercy!

⁵ For there is no remembrance of You in death. In Sheol who will praise You?

⁶ I have grown weary from my groaning. All night I flood my bed with tears. I drench my couch with my weeping.

⁷ My eye has become weak from irritation. It has grown old because of all my enemies.

⁸ **Go away from me, all you evildoers!** For the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.

⁹ The LORD has heard my plea for favour. The LORD accepts my prayer.

¹⁰ All my enemies will be ashamed and extremely terrified. They will turn back. They will suddenly be put to shame.

7

A *Shiggaion* of David. He sang it to the LORD about the words of Cush, a descendant of Benjamin.

¹ O LORD, my God, I have been taking refuge in You. Save me from all who are pursuing me and rescue me, ² that they may not, like a lion, tear my life to pieces, tearing away, with no one to rescue!

³ O LORD, my God, if I have done this, if there is injustice on my hands, ⁴ if I have done evil to one who was keeping peace with me or if I have plundered my

enemy without a cause, ⁵ then let the enemy pursue my life and overtake it! May he trample my life down into the ground! Let him lay my honour in the dust!
Selah

⁶ Arise, O LORD, in Your anger! Raise Yourself up against my enemies' outbursts of anger and be awake for me! You have ordained justice.

⁷ Let the assembly of peoples gather around You! For its sake return to the place on high!

⁸ The LORD will judge the peoples. Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness and according to the integrity that is in me!

⁹ Oh, let the evil of wicked people come to an end, but may You set the righteous person up firmly, You who **test the hearts and the inmost parts**, O righteous God!

¹⁰ My Shield is with God, who saves people who are upright in heart.

¹¹ God is a righteous Judge, a God who shows indignation every day.

¹² If a person does not repent, God will sharpen His sword. He has drawn His bow and made it ready.

¹³ He has prepared deadly weapons for Himself. He makes His arrows into flaming shafts.

¹⁴ Look! The wicked person is pregnant with harm. He conceives calamity and gives birth to falsehood.

¹⁵ He has dug a pit and hollowed it out. Then he has fallen into the hole that he has made.

¹⁶ The trouble that he causes recoils on his own head. His violence comes down on his own skull.

¹⁷ I shall praise the LORD for His righteousness. I shall sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High.

8

For the choir director, according to the *Gittith*. A psalm of David

¹ O LORD, our Lord, how splendid is Your name in all the earth! O set Your glory above the heavens!

² **Out of the mouths of children and nursing infants You have established strength**, because of **Your enemies**, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

³ When I look at Your heavens, which Your fingers have made, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, ⁴ **what is man, that You should be mindful of him, and the son of man, that You should be concerned about him?**

⁵ **You have made Him lower than the angels for a little while and have crowned Him with glory and honour.**

⁶ **You have made him master over the works that Your hands have made. You have put all things under his feet**, ⁷ all sheep and oxen and even wild animals, ⁸ the birds of the sky and the fish of the sea, which pass through the paths of the seas.

⁹ O LORD, our Lord, how splendid is Your name in

all the earth!

9

For the choir director, according to *Muth-labben*, a psalm of David

¹ I shall give thanks to the LORD with all my heart. I shall tell about all Your marvellous deeds.

² I shall be glad and rejoice in You. I shall sing praise to Your name, O Most High.

³ When my enemies turn back, they will stumble and perish before You.

⁴ You have maintained my just cause. You have sat down on Your throne as a righteous judge.

⁵ You have rebuked the nations. You have destroyed the wicked person. You have blotted out their names for ever and ever.

⁶ The enemies have perished in ruins for ever. You have uprooted their cities. Even the memory of them has perished.

⁷ Nevertheless, the LORD will sit enthroned for ever. He has established His throne for judgment.

⁸ He will judge the world in righteousness and justly administer judgment for the peoples.

⁹ May the LORD be a stronghold for oppressed people, a stronghold in times of trouble!

¹⁰ Let those who know Your name trust You! For You have not forsaken those who are intent on You, O LORD.

¹¹ Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the peoples!

¹² For He who takes revenge for bloodshed remembers them. He does not forget the cry of afflicted people.

¹³ Be gracious to me, O LORD! Look at my misery because of those who hate me! You lift me up from the gates of death, ¹⁴ that I may tell about all Your praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion. Let me shout for joy in Your salvation!

¹⁵ The nations have sunk into the pit that they have made. Their own feet have been caught in the net that they have hidden.

¹⁶ The LORD has revealed Himself. He has carried out judgment. He catches the wicked person in the work of his own hands. *Higgaion. Selah*

¹⁷ Wicked people, all the nations that forget God, will depart to Sheol.

¹⁸ For the needy person will not always be forgotten. The hope of afflicted people will not be lost for ever.

¹⁹ Arise, O LORD! Let man not prevail! Let the nations be judged in Your presence!

²⁰ Send terror on them, O LORD! Let the nations know that they are only men! *Selah*

10

¹ Why, O LORD, do You stand afar away? Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?

² In his arrogance, the wicked person hotly pursues

the oppressed person. Let them be caught in the intrigues that they have devised!

³ For the wicked person boasts about the desire of his own soul. The one who is greedy for gain curses and despises the LORD.

⁴ The wicked man with his proud face is not intent on Him. All his thoughts are: "There is no God."

⁵ God's Ways endure at every time. Your Judgments are far above, beyond His sight. As for all His opponents, He sneers at them.

⁶ The wicked man has said to himself: "I shall not stagger. From generation to generation I shall be free from adversity."

⁷ **His mouth is full of cursing**, deception and oppression. Trouble and iniquity are under his tongue.

⁸ He waits in ambush in the villages. In his hiding places he kills the innocent person. His eyes are secretly fixed on a miserable person.

⁹ He lies in ambush in his hiding place like a lion in a thicket. He lies in ambush to seize a wretched man. He seizes a wretched man when he drags him into his net.

¹⁰ He is crushed. He sinks down. Because of his power the victim fall helplessly.

¹¹ He has said in his heart: "God has forgotten. He has hidden His face. He has never seen it."

¹² Arise, O LORD! O God, lift up Your hand! Do not forget afflicted people!

¹³ Why has the wicked person treated God disrespectfully? He has said to himself, "You will not call it to account."

¹⁴ You have seen it. For You Yourself gaze at trouble and irritation, that You may repay them by Your own hand. The helpless person entrusts himself to You. You Yourself have been the Helper of the orphan.

¹⁵ Break the arm of the wicked and evil person! Call his wickedness to account until You find no more!

¹⁶ The LORD is King for ever and ever. The nations have perished from His land.

¹⁷ You have heard the desires of afflicted people, O LORD. You will make their hearts firm. You will make Your ear attentive, ¹⁸ to provide justice for the orphan and the oppressed person, that no man from the earth may terrify them again.

11

For the choir director. Of David

¹ I have taken refuge in the LORD. How can you tell my soul: "Be homeless in your mountain like a bird"?

² For look! Wicked people draw their bows. They have put their arrows against the bow-strings to shoot in the dark at people who are upright in heart.

³ When the foundations are laid in ruins, what has a righteous person been able to do?

⁴ The LORD is in His holy Temple. The throne of the LORD is in heaven. His eyes see. His eyelashes test the descendants of Adam.

⁵ The LORD tests the righteous person but His soul hates the wicked person and the one who loves violence.

⁶ Let Him rain snares down on wicked people! Fire, sulphur and a whirlwind will be the portion of their cup.

⁷ For the LORD is righteous. He loves righteous actions. The upright person will see His face.

12

For the choir director, on the *Sheminith*, a psalm of David

¹ Save, O LORD! For the devout person has ceased to exist. For faithful people have vanished from among the descendants of Adam.

² Everyone speaks falsely to his neighbour. They speak with smooth lips and with a divided heart.

³ May the LORD cut off all smooth lips and every tongue that speaks boastfully!

⁴ They have been saying: "We shall prevail with our tongues. Our lips are our own. Who will be master over us?"

⁵ "Because poor people are oppressed and needy people groan, I shall now arise," the LORD says. "I shall provide deliverance for the one who longs for it."

⁶ The Words of the LORD are pure Words, like silver refined in a smelting kiln on the ground and purified seven times.

⁷ O LORD, You Yourself will protect them. You will keep each one safe from this generation for ever.

⁸ Wicked people constantly prowl around when what is worthless is highly honoured among the descendants of Adam.

13

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ How long, O LORD? Will You forget me for ever? How long will You hide Your face from me?

² How long must I put anxieties in my soul and have torment in my heart day after day? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

³ Look at me! Answer me, O LORD, my God! Make my eyes bright, that I may not sleep in death, ⁴ and that my enemy may not say, "I have conquered him," and that my oppressors may not rejoice because I am staggering.

⁵ Nevertheless, I trust Your mercy. Let my heart shout for joy over Your salvation!

⁶ Let me sing to the LORD! For He has been good to me.

14

For the choir director, of David

¹ The fool has been saying in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt. They have been acting abominably. **There is no one who does good.**

² The LORD has been looking down from heaven on the descendants of Adam to see **if there is anyone**

who understands and who seeks God.

³ **Everyone has turned aside. Together they have become corrupt. There is no one who does good. There is not even one.**

⁴ Have all evildoers no knowledge? They devour my people as if they were devouring food. They have not been calling on the LORD.

⁵ There they have been trembling in terror. For God is with the generation of righteous people.

⁶ You people frustrate the plan of the poor person, but the LORD is his refuge.

⁷ If only the **salvation** of Israel would come **from Zion!** When the LORD turns back the captivity of His people, let Jacob rejoice! Let Israel be glad!

15

A psalm of David

¹ O LORD, who will stay in Your tent? Who will dwell on Your holy mountain?

² The one who walks honestly, who does what is righteous and who speaks the truth in his heart, ³ the one who does not slander with his tongue, who does no wrong to his companion and who brings no disgrace on his neighbour, ⁴ the one whose eyes despise a contemptible person but who honours those who fear the LORD, who makes an oath, even though he is hurt by it and does not change it, ⁵ the one who lends his money without interest and who does not accept a bribe against an innocent person. Whoever does these things will never be shaken.

16

A *Miktam* of David

¹ Protect me, O God! For I have taken refuge in You.

² I have been saying to the LORD: "You are my Lord. Without You I have nothing good."

³ As for the holy people who are in the land, they are the excellent people, and all my delight is in them.

⁴ Those who run after another god will have many sorrows. I shall not pour out their libations of blood or take up their names on my lips.

⁵ O LORD, You are my allotted portion and my cup. You are firmly holding what has been allotted to me.

⁶ The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places. Surely, I have a delightful inheritance.

⁷ I shall bless the LORD, who has given me advice. Even during the nights my inmost parts teach me.

⁸ **I have set the LORD before Me constantly. Because He is at My right hand, I shall not stagger.**

⁹ **Therefore, My heart is glad, and My glory rejoices. My body also will dwell securely.** ¹⁰ **For You will not abandon My soul to Sheol or allow Your Faithful One to see decay.**

¹¹ **You make known to Me the path of life. In Your presence there is fullness of joy.** At Your right hand there are pleasures for ever.

17

A prayer of David

¹ Hear a just cause, O LORD! Pay attention to my cry! Give ear to my prayer, which comes from lips that are free from deceit!

² Let my vindication come from You! Let Your eyes see what is upright!

³ You have tested my heart. You have examined me by night. Although You have tested me, You do not find anything. I have resolved that my mouth will not transgress.

⁴ As for the deeds of man, by the Word of Your lips I have guarded against the paths of the violent person.

⁵ My steps have held firmly in Your tracks. My feet have not slipped.

⁶ I myself have been calling on You. For You will answer me, O God. Turn Your ear to me! Hear what I say!

⁷ Display the wonders of Your acts of mercy, O You who use Your right hand to save those who take refuge from their adversaries!

⁸ Guard me as the pupil in Your eye! Hide me in the shadow of Your wings ⁹ from wicked people who have been ruining me, from the enemies of my life, who are surrounding me!

¹⁰ They have closed up their unreceptive hearts, and their mouths have been speaking arrogantly.

¹¹ They have now surrounded us in our tracks. They are fixing their eyes as they crouch down on the ground.

¹² Each one is like a lion as he longs to tear its prey in pieces and is like a young lion crouching in his hiding place.

¹³ Arise, O LORD! Confront him! Force him to his knees! Use Your sword to rescue my life from the wicked man!

¹⁴ O LORD, use Your hand to rescue me from men, from men of this world, who have their portion in this life! You fill their bellies with Your treasure. Their children are satisfied and leave their wealth behind to their children.

¹⁵ As for me, I shall see **Your face** in righteousness. When I awake, let me be satisfied with Your manifestation!

18

— compare v. 1-50 with 2 Samuel 22: 1-51

For the choir director, of David, the servant of the LORD. He sang the Words of this song to the LORD after the LORD had rescued him from the hands of all his enemies, especially from Saul. He said:

¹ "I shall love You, O LORD, my Strength.

² "The LORD is my Rock, my Fortress and my Deliverer. My God is my Rock, **in whom I take refuge**, my Shield and **the Horn of my salvation**, my Stronghold.

³ "He should be praised! I used to call to the LORD and kept on being saved from my enemies.

⁴ "The snares of death had surrounded me, and the torrents of wickedness were terrifying me.

⁵ "The cords of Sheol had surrounded me. The snares of death had confronted me.

⁶ "I was calling on the LORD in my distress and was crying to my God for help. He used to hear my voice from His Temple, and my cry to Him for help used to come before Him, into His ears.

⁷ "Then the earth shook and quaked. Even the foundations of the mountains were trembling. They shook violently because He was angry.

⁸ "Smoke went up in His nostrils, and **a devouring fire was coming out of His mouth**. Glowing coals blazed up from Him.

⁹ "He spread out the heavens and came down, with thick darkness under His feet.

¹⁰ "He rode on a cherub and flew and soared on the wings of the wind.

¹¹ "He made darkness His hiding place. His canopy around Him consisted of dark water and rain-clouds.

¹² "Out of the brightness in front of Him His clouds passed along with hailstones and coals of fire.

¹³ "The LORD caused thunder in the heavens, and the Most High was uttering His voice with hailstones and coals of fire.

¹⁴ "He shot His arrows and scattered them. He sent many flashes of lightning and threw them into confusion.

¹⁵ "Then the channels of the sea became visible. The foundations of the world were laid bare because of Your rebuke, O LORD, because of the blast of the breath from Your nostrils.

¹⁶ "He reached down from high above. He used to take hold of me. He kept pulling me out of many waters. ¹⁷ He used to rescue me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me. For they were too strong for me.

¹⁸ "They were confronting me on the day of my calamity, but the LORD became my Support.

¹⁹ "He brought me out into a spacious place. He kept delivering me, because He had taken pleasure in me.

²⁰ "The LORD kept treating me well according to my righteousness. According to the cleanness of my hands He kept restoring me.

²¹ "For I had been keeping the Ways of the LORD and had not wickedly departed from my God.

²² "For all His Decisions used to be before me, and I was not putting His Statutes away from myself.

²³ "I had been blameless before Him and had kept myself from my guilt.

²⁴ "The LORD has paid me back according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.

²⁵ "**With a faithful man You were showing Yourself merciful**. With a blameless man You were showing Yourself blameless.

²⁶ “With a pure man You were showing Yourself pure. With a devious man You were showing Yourself shrewd.

²⁷ “Indeed, You Yourself were saving a humble people but were bringing haughty eyes down.

²⁸ “Indeed, You Yourself were lighting my lamp. The LORD, my God, was turning my darkness into light.

²⁹ “Indeed, with You I could run against a troop and with my God I could jump over a wall.

³⁰ “As for God, His Way is perfect. The Word of the LORD is refined. He is a Shield to all those who take refuge in Him.

³¹ “For who is God but the LORD? Moreover, who is a Rock except our God?

³² “It was God who was closely and strongly embracing me and making my way perfect.

³³ “He used to make my feet like the feet of deer and used to make me stand firmly on my high places.

³⁴ “He was training my hands for battle, so that my arms could bend a bow of bronze.

³⁵ “You gave me the shield of Your salvation. Your right hand was supporting me and Your gentleness was making me great.

³⁶ “You kept on widening a place beneath me for my steps, and my ankles did not twist.

³⁷ “When I was pursuing my enemies, I used to catch up with them and did not turn back until I had finished them off.

³⁸ “I was smashing them, so that they could not get up. They kept falling under my feet.

³⁹ “You had armed me strongly for the battle. You were making those who were rising up against me bow down beneath me.

⁴⁰ “As for my enemies, You had given me their backs and, as for those who used to hate me, I was putting them to silence.

⁴¹ “They kept crying out for help, but there was no one to save them. They were crying out to the LORD, but He did not answer them.

⁴² “I was grinding them fine like dust before the wind. I was pouring them out like mud in the streets.

⁴³ “You were delivering me from disputes among the people. You were making me the head over nations. A people that I had not known were serving me.

⁴⁴ “As soon as their ears heard about me they used to become obedient to me. The sons of foreigners were making a show of submission to me.

⁴⁵ “The sons of foreigners were losing heart, falling and were coming out trembling from their dungeons.

⁴⁶ “The LORD lives. Blessed be my Rock! Let God, who saves me, be exalted!

⁴⁷ “It was God who was avenging me and was subjugating nations under me.

⁴⁸ “He was delivering me from my enemies. Indeed, You were lifting me up above those who were rising up against me. You were rescuing me from a violent

man.

⁴⁹ “**That is why I am praising You among the nations, O LORD, and making music to praise Your name.**

⁵⁰ “He is the Giver of great deliverance to His king and the One who shows mercy to His anointed one, to David and to his Descendant for ever.”

19

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the expanse above displays what His hands have made.

² One day pours out information to the next, and one night announces knowledge to the next.

³ There is no talking, there are no words, and their voices are not audible.

⁴ **Their measuring line has gone out through all the earth, and their messages to the end of the world.**

He has set a tent in them for the sun, ⁵ and it comes out of its bridal-chamber like a bridegroom. It rejoices like a champion to run its course.

⁶ It rises from one end of the heavens, its turning point is at their edges and nothing is hidden from its heat.

⁷ The Instruction of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul. The Reminder of the LORD is reliable, making the simple person wise.

⁸ The Directions of the LORD are correct, making the heart rejoice. The Commandment of the LORD is pure, giving light to the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever. **The Decisions of the LORD are true and altogether righteous.**

¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold, even much pure gold. Moreover, they are sweeter than honey, than honey from honeycomb.

¹¹ They also warn Your servant. There is great reward in keeping them.

¹² Who understands his errors? Declare me exempt from hidden faults!

¹³ Restrain Your servant also from presumptuous sins! Let them not have control over me! Then I shall be blameless and be innocent of great rebellion.

¹⁴ May the words from my mouth and the thinking of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my Rock, and my Redeemer!

20

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob lift you up on a safe height!

² May He send you help from the sanctuary and support you from Zion!

³ May He remember all your offerings and accept your burnt offerings! *Selah*

⁴ May He give you the desire of your heart and make all that you plan succeed!

⁵ Let us shout joyfully about Your salvation! We shall put up our banners in the name of our God. May the LORD fulfil all your requests!

⁶ Now I know that the LORD has saved His anointed one. He will answer him from His holy heaven with the saving, powerful deeds of His right hand.

⁷ Some rely on chariots, and others on horses, but we shall acknowledge the name of the LORD, our God.

⁸ They have sunk to their knees and fallen, but we have risen and helped each other up.

⁹ O LORD, save the king! May He answer us when we call!

21

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ O LORD, the king rejoices in Your strength. What great joy he has in Your salvation!

² You have given him what his heart has desired and have not withheld from him what his lips have requested. *Selah*

³ For You were meeting him with the blessings of good things. You are putting a crown of pure gold on his head.

⁴ He has asked You for life, and You have given it to him, long life, for ever and ever.

⁵ His glory is great because of Your salvation. You are conferring majesty and grandeur on him.

⁶ For You are causing him to be blessed for ever. You are making him glad and joyful with Your presence.

⁷ For the king trusts in the LORD and through the mercy of the Most High he will not be made to stumble.

⁸ Your hand will find out all Your enemies. Your right hand will find out those who hate You.

⁹ You will make them burn like a blazing furnace at the time when You appear. The LORD will swallow them up in His anger, and fire will devour them.

¹⁰ You will destroy their descendants from the earth and their offspring from among the children of Adam.

¹¹ For, although they have been spreading out evil against You and have been devising a plot, they will not succeed.

¹² For You will make them show their shoulders in flight. With Your bowstrings You will take aim at their faces.

¹³ Arise, O LORD, in Your strength. Let us sing and make music to praise Your power!

22

For the choir director, according to "The Deer of the Dawn," a psalm of David

¹ **My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?** Why are You so far from saving Me, from the Words of My groaning?

² O My God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer, and by night I am not silent.

³ Nevertheless, You are holy, enthroned on the praises

of Israel.

⁴ Our fathers trusted in You. They trusted, and You delivered them.

⁵ They cried to You and were rescued. They **trusted** in You and were **not ashamed**.

⁶ However, I am a worm and not a man, **scorned** by human beings and despised by the people.

⁷ All those who see Me **ridicule** Me. They open their lips wide. **They shake their heads**, saying,

⁸ **"Commit it to the LORD! Let Him rescue Him! Let Him deliver Him! For He takes pleasure in Him."**

⁹ Nevertheless, You are the One who brought Me out of the womb, the One who made Me trust while on My mother's breasts.

¹⁰ I have been cast on You from the womb. From My mother's womb You have been My God.

¹¹ Do not be far from Me! For trouble is near, for there is no one to help.

¹² Many bulls have surrounded Me. Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.

¹³ They have opened their mouths against Me like a mangling and roaring lion.

¹⁴ I have been poured out like water, and all My bones have separated from each other. My heart has become like wax. It has melted inside my chest.

¹⁵ My strength has dried up like baked clay. My tongue clings to My palate, and You are putting Me on the dust of death.

¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me. A gang of evil-doers has encircled Me. Like a lion **they have pierced My hands and My feet**.

¹⁷ I can count all My bones. People look and stare at Me.

¹⁸ **They divide My garments among them and cast lots for My clothing.**

¹⁹ However, You, O LORD, do not be far away! O My Strength, come quickly to help Me!

²⁰ Rescue My soul from the sword! Rescue My lonely soul from the power of the dog!

²¹ **Save Me from the lion's mouth!** You have answered Me from the horns of wild oxen.

²² **Let Me declare Your name to My brothers! I shall praise You amid the assembly.**

²³ You **who fear** the LORD, **praise Him!** All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him! Be afraid of Him, all you descendants of Israel!

²⁴ For He has not despised or detested the misery of the Wretched One or hidden His face from Him. Rather, when He cried to Him for help, He heard.

²⁵ My praise comes from You in the great assembly. I shall fulfil My vows in the presence of those who fear Him.

²⁶ Humble people will eat and be satisfied. Those who look for the LORD will praise Him. May your hearts live for ever!

²⁷ All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD. All the families of **the nations will worship** before **You**.

²⁸ For **the kingship belongs to the LORD**, and He **rules** over the nations.

²⁹ All the prosperous people of the earth have been eating and worshipping. All those who go down to the dust will kneel before Him, even the one who could not keep himself alive.

³⁰ Descendants will serve Him. The coming generation will be told about the Lord.

³¹ They will come and tell about His righteousness to a people yet to be born. For He **has accomplished it**.

23

A psalm of David

¹ The LORD is my shepherd. I shall not lack anything.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures. He **leads me to water** where there is quiet.

³ He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of deep darkness, I shall fear no evil. For You are with me. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows.

⁶ Surely, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

24

A psalm of David

¹ **The earth is the LORD's and what fills it**, the world and those who live in it.

² For He Himself has laid its foundations on the seas and set it firmly on the waters.

³ Who may go up to the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in His Holy Place?

⁴ The person who has clean hands and **a pure heart**, who has not lifted up his soul to what is false or who has not sworn deceitfully.

⁵ He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from God, who saves him.

⁶ These are the kinds of people who are intent on Him, who are intent on Your face, O God of Jacob. *Selah*

⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates, and be lifted up, you everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in!

⁸ Who is this, the King of Glory? The LORD, strong and mighty. The LORD, mighty in battle.

⁹ Lift up your heads, you gates! Lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of Glory may come in!

¹⁰ Who is He, who is this, the King of Glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of Glory. *Selah*

25

Of David

¹ I am lifting up my soul to You, O LORD.

² O my God, I trust in You. Let me not be put to shame! Let my enemies not gloat over me!

³ Certainly, **no one who waits in hope** for You **will be put to shame**. Those who act treacherously without any reason will be put to shame.

⁴ Make Your Ways known to me, O LORD! Teach me Your paths!

⁵ Lead me in Your truth and teach me! For You are the God who saves me. I wait in hope for You all day long.

⁶ Remember, O LORD, Your compassionate and merciful deeds! For they have existed from eternity.

⁷ Do not remember the sins of my youth or my rebellious acts! According to Your mercy remember me, because of Your goodness, O LORD!

⁸ The LORD is good and upright. Therefore, He teaches sinners in the Way.

⁹ He leads humble people in what is right and teaches humble people His Way.

¹⁰ All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth for those who keep His Covenant and His Testimonies.

¹¹ For the sake of Your name, O LORD, pardon my guilt! For it is great.

¹² Who, then, is the man who fears the LORD? He will teach him in the way that he should choose.

¹³ He himself will dwell in prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land.

¹⁴ The intimate advice of the LORD is for those who fear Him, so that He causes them to know His Covenant.

¹⁵ My eyes are constantly on the LORD. For He will pull my feet out of the snare.

¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me! For I am lonely and afflicted.

¹⁷ The troubles of my heart have multiplied. Bring me out of my afflictions!

¹⁸ Look on my affliction and my trouble and forgive all my sins!

¹⁹ Look at my enemies! For they are many and hate me with violent antipathy.

²⁰ Protect my life and rescue me! Let me not **be put to shame!** For I have been taking refuge in You.

²¹ May innocence and honesty protect me! For I have been waiting for You.

²² Redeem Israel, O God, from all his troubles!

26

Of David

¹ Vindicate me, O LORD! For I have been walking in my integrity and I trust in the LORD. I shall not waver.

² Test me, O LORD, and try me! **Examine my secret parts and my heart!**

³ For Your mercy is before my eyes, and I have been walking in Your truth.

Psalms

⁴ I have not been sitting with deceitful people and shall not associate with hypocrites.

⁵ I hate the assembly of evildoers and shall not sit with wicked people.

⁶ I shall wash my hands in innocence, that I may walk around Your altar, O LORD, ⁷ that I may proclaim a song of thanksgiving and tell about all Your wonderful deeds.

⁸ O LORD, I love the house where You live, the place where Your glory dwells.

⁹ Do not sweep my soul away with sinners or my life with bloodthirsty people!

¹⁰ They have an evil scheme in their hands, and their right hands are full of bribes.

¹¹ However, I myself shall walk in my integrity. Redeem me and be gracious to me!

¹² My foot has been standing on level ground. I shall bless the LORD in the assemblies.

27

Of David

¹ The LORD is my Light and my Salvation. Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the Fortress of my life. Of whom should I be afraid?

² When evildoers came against me to devour my flesh, my oppressors and my enemies stumbled and fell.

³ If an army were to pitch camp against me, my heart would not be afraid. If a war were to break out against me, in this I would be confident.

⁴ One thing I have asked of the LORD. That I shall seek, that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to reflect in His Temple.

⁵ For He will hide me in His shelter in the day of trouble. He will conceal me under the cover of His tent. He will set me high on a rock.

⁶ Now my head will be high above my enemies all around me. Therefore, I shall offer sacrifices in His tent with shouts of joy. I shall sing and make music to praise the LORD.

⁷ Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud! Be gracious to me and answer me!

⁸ When You said, "Be intent on My face!" my heart said to You, "I shall be intent on Your face, O LORD."

⁹ Do not hide Your face from me! Do not turn Your servant away in anger! You have been my Help. Do not cast me off or abandon me, O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ When my father and my mother have abandoned me, the LORD will take me in.

¹¹ Teach me Your Way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies!

¹² Do not surrender me to the will of my oppressors! For false witnesses have risen against me and breathe out violence.

¹³ Surely, I am convinced that I shall see the goodness

of the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait eagerly for the LORD! **Have courage! Let your heart prove to be strong!** Wait eagerly for the LORD!

28

Of David

¹ I am calling to You, O LORD. My Rock, do not be deaf to me! Otherwise, if You were deaf to me, I should be like those who go down to the pit.

² Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy when I cry to You for help, when I lift up my hands toward Your innermost sanctuary!

³ Do not drag me away with wicked people and with evildoers, who speak in peaceful ways to their neighbours while malice is in their hearts!

⁴ Pay them back according to what they have done and according to their evil deeds! Pay them back according to what their hands have done! Bring back on them what they deserve!

⁵ Because they have no regard for the works of the LORD or for what His hands have made, He will tear them down and will not rebuild them.

⁶ Blessed be the LORD! For He has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

⁷ The LORD is my Strength and my Shield. My heart has been trusting in Him, and I have been helped. My heart is rejoicing greatly, and I am praising Him with my song.

⁸ The LORD is their Strength and is the saving Stronghold of His anointed one.

⁹ Save Your people and bless Your heritage! Be their Shepherd and carry them for ever!

29

A psalm of David

¹ Give to the LORD, heavenly beings, give to the LORD glory and strength!

² Give to the LORD the glory due to His name! Worship the LORD in holy splendour!

³ The voice of the LORD is over the waters. **The God of glory** causes it to thunder. The LORD is over many waters.

⁴ The voice of the LORD is powerful. The voice of the LORD is majestic.

⁵ The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars. The LORD shatters the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶ He makes Lebanon skip about like a calf. He makes Sirion skip about like a young wild ox.

⁷ The voice of the LORD flashes out with flames of fire.

⁸ The voice of the LORD makes the wilderness tremble. The LORD makes the Wilderness of Kadesh tremble.

⁹ The voice of the LORD causes the fallow deer to be in labour and strips the forest bare. In His Temple everyone is saying, "Glory!"

¹⁰ The LORD sat enthroned over the Deluge and the LORD has for ever been sitting as King.

¹¹ The LORD will give strength to His people. The LORD will bless His people with peace.

30

A psalm of David, a song at the dedication of the Temple

¹ I shall extol You, O LORD. For You have lifted me up and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

² O LORD, my God, I cried to You for help, and You healed me.

³ O LORD, You have brought my soul up from Sheol. You have kept me alive from among those who go down to the pit.

⁴ Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His, and give thanks to the memorial of His holiness!

⁵ For His anger lasts for only a moment. In His favour there is life. Weeping may last for the evening, but there is a shout of joy in the morning.

⁶ When I was at ease, I said, "I shall never be shaken."

⁷ LORD, by Your favour, You have made my mountain stand strong. When You hid Your face, I was terrified.

⁸ I shall call out to You, O LORD. I shall plead to the LORD for grace: ⁹ "What profit is there if my blood is shed, if I go down into the pit? Will dust praise You? Will it proclaim Your truth?"

¹⁰ "Hear, O LORD, and have mercy on me! LORD, be my Helper!"

¹¹ You have changed for me my rites of mourning into dancing. You have removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, ¹² that what is glorious may praise You with music and may not be silent. O LORD, my God, I shall praise You for ever.

31

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ In You, O LORD, I have been taking refuge. Let me never be ashamed! Deliver me because of Your righteousness!

² Bend Your ear down towards me! Rescue me quickly! Be a Rock of Refuge for me, a Mountain-Fortress, to save me!

³ For You are my Rock and my Fortress. For the sake of Your name, You lead me and guide me.

⁴ You will take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me. For You are my Refuge.

⁵ **I commit my spirit into Your hand.** You have redeemed me, O LORD, God of truth.

⁶ I hate those who keep useless idols. However, I myself trust in the LORD.

⁷ Let me be glad and rejoice in Your mercy! For You have seen my misery. You have known my soul in its troubles, ⁸ and have not surrendered me to the hand of the enemy. You have set my feet in a spacious place.

⁹ Be gracious to me, O LORD! For I am in distress.

My eye has become weak from irritation, my soul and my body also.

¹⁰ For sorrow has consumed my life, and groaning has consumed my years. My strength has failed because of my iniquity, and my bones have become weak.

¹¹ Because of all my enemies, I have become a disgrace, especially to my neighbours. I have become an object of dread to my acquaintances. Those who see me on the street have been running away from me.

¹² I have been forgotten in people's minds like one who is dead. I have become like a broken vessel.

¹³ For I have heard the defamation of many people. There is terror on every side while they conspire together against me. They have been plotting to take my life.

¹⁴ Nevertheless, I myself trust in You, O LORD. I have been saying, "You are my God."

¹⁵ My times are in Your hand. Deliver me from the hands of my enemies and from those who persecute me!

¹⁶ Make Your face shine on Your servant! Save me by Your mercy!

¹⁷ O LORD, let me not be put to shame! For I have been calling on You. Let wicked people be put to shame, and let them be silent in Sheol!

¹⁸ Let the lying lips be speechless! They speak insolently against the righteous person, with haughtiness and contempt.

¹⁹ How great is Your kindness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, and which You have performed for those who take refuge in You in the presence of the descendants of Adam!

²⁰ You will hide them in the secret place of Your presence away from the plots of man. You will protect them in a shelter from quarrelsome tongues.

²¹ Blessed be the LORD! For He has wondrously shown His mercy to me in a besieged city.

²² I myself had said, when I was hurrying away in fear, "I have been cut off from Your sight." Nevertheless, You heard the voice of my pleas for favour when I cried out to You for help.

²³ Love the LORD, all you His devout people! The LORD protects faithful people but repays exceedingly the one who acts haughtily.

²⁴ **Be strong, and let your hearts be courageous,** all you who wait for the LORD!

32

A *Maskil*, of David

¹ **Blessed is the person whose transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered!**

² **Blessed is the person whose iniquity the LORD does not count against him,** and in whose spirit is no deceit!

³ When I kept silent, my bones became brittle because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ For Your hand lay heavily on me by day and by

night. The dry heat of summer overturned my energy.
Selah

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to You and did not conceal my iniquity. I said, "I shall confess my rebellious acts to the LORD," and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. *Selah*

⁶ For this reason let every devout person pray to You in a time when You may be found. Surely, when great floodwaters come they will not reach him.

⁷ You are a hiding place for me. You will protect me from trouble. You will surround me with shouting over deliverance. *Selah*

⁸ "I shall instruct you. I shall teach you in the Way that you should go. I shall advise you with My eye on you.

⁹ "Do not be like a horse or mule, which cannot understand! They must be restrained with a bit and bridle, as their ornaments, or they will not stay near you."

¹⁰ The wicked man will have many pains, but mercy will surround the one who trusts in the LORD.

¹¹ Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous people! Ring out a shout of joy, all you who are upright in heart!

33

¹ Shout for joy to the LORD, you righteous people! Praise is appropriate for upright people.

² Give thanks to the LORD with a lyre! Make music to Him with a ten-stringed harp!

³ **Sing to Him a new song!** Play skilfully on the strings with a shout of joy!

⁴ For the Word of the LORD is upright, and everything that He has done is reliable.

⁵ He loves righteousness and justice. The earth is full of the mercy of the LORD.

⁶ The Word of the LORD made the heavens, and the Breath of His mouth made their entire starry host.

⁷ He gathers the waters of the sea like a dam and puts the deep waters in storehouses.

⁸ Let the whole earth fear the LORD, and let all the inhabitants of the world be afraid of Him!

⁹ For He Himself spoke, and it came to be. He Himself commanded, and it stood firm.

¹⁰ **The LORD frustrates the plans of the nations. He thwarts the schemes of the peoples.**

¹¹ The plan of the LORD will stand firm for ever. The purposes of His heart will stand firm through all generations.

¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people that He has chosen for His own inheritance!

¹³ The LORD looks down from heaven. He sees all the descendants of Adam.

¹⁴ From His dwelling-place He gazes on all the inhabitants of the earth.

¹⁵ The One who forms their hearts individually is the One who pays attention to everything that they do.

¹⁶ No king is victorious because of a large army. No warrior saves himself by great strength.

¹⁷ A horse is a vain hope for deliverance. Its great strength will not save anyone.

¹⁸ Look! The eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, on those who wait in hope for His mercy, ¹⁹ that He may rescue their souls from death and to keep them alive during a famine.

²⁰ Our souls have been waiting for the LORD. He is our Help and our Shield.

²¹ For our hearts rejoice in Him, because we trust in His holy name.

²² Let Your mercy, O LORD, be on us, even as we hope in You!

34

Of David, when he pretended to be insane in the presence of Abimelech. Abimelech drove him out. So, David left.

¹ Let me bless the LORD at all times! His praise will continually be in my mouth.

² My soul will boast about the LORD. Humble people will hear it and rejoice.

³ Magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together!

⁴ When I questioned the LORD, He answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

⁵ People have looked to Him and have been radiant, and their faces should never be ashamed.

⁶ This poor man called out. The LORD heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.

⁷ The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him and delivers them.

⁸ **Taste and see that the LORD is good!** Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

⁹ Fear the LORD, you who are His holy people! For those who fear Him do not lack anything.

¹⁰ Young lions lack food and go hungry, but those who are intent on the LORD will not lack any good thing.

¹¹ Come, you children, listen to me! I shall teach you the fear of the LORD.

¹² Who is the man who **delights in life and loves a long life, that he may see good?**

¹³ **Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceitfully!**

¹⁴ **Turn away from evil and do what is good! Try to find peace and pursue it!**

¹⁵ **The eyes of the LORD are on righteous people, and His ears are attentive to their cry.**

¹⁶ **The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,** to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

¹⁷ People have been crying out, and the LORD has been hearing them and has been rescuing them out of all their troubles.

¹⁸ The LORD is near to those who have broken hearts and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

¹⁹ The righteous person has many troubles, but the LORD rescues him from them all.

²⁰ He protects all his **bones**. **Not one** of them is **broken**.

²¹ Evil will kill the wicked person, and those who hate the righteous person will suffer punishment.

²² The LORD redeems the lives of His servants, and none who take refuge in Him will suffer punishment.

35

Of David

¹ Conduct the case against my adversaries, O LORD! Fight against those who are fighting against me!

² Take hold of shield and buckler and rise up to help me!

³ Draw a spear and a javelin against those who are pursuing me! Say to my soul, "I am your salvation!"

⁴ Let those who are trying to kill me be put to shame and disgraced! Let those who are plotting to hurt me be turned back and be disgraced!

⁵ Let them be like chaff before the wind, as the angel of the LORD drives them away!

⁶ Let their path be dark and slippery, as the angel of the LORD pursues them!

⁷ For without cause they have secretly laid their net for me. Without cause they have been digging a hole to take my life.

⁸ Let destruction come on him unexpectedly! Let his net, which he has secretly laid, catch himself! Let him fall into it and be destroyed!

⁹ Then my soul will shout for joy in the LORD and will rejoice in His salvation.

¹⁰ All my bones will say: "O LORD, who is like You? You deliver the wretched person from the man who is too strong for him and the poor man and needy man from the one who robs him."

¹¹ Ruthless witnesses are rising up. They are questioning me about things about which I do not know anything.

¹² They are repaying me evil for good, and my soul is bereaved.

¹³ Yet when they were sick, my own clothing was sackcloth, and I used to humble myself with fasting. Yet my prayer kept returning to my own chest.

¹⁴ I walked around as if it were my friend or my brother. I used to dress in mourning clothes and stoop down as if I were in mourning for my mother.

¹⁵ However, when I stumbled, they rejoiced and gathered together. They gathered against me. Broken men whom I did not know tore at me without stopping.

¹⁶ Like ungodly people who were scoffing at a feast, they kept gnashing their teeth against me.

¹⁷ O Lord, how long will You look on? Rescue my life from their ravages, my precious life from the lions!

¹⁸ I shall give You thanks in the large assembly. Among throngs of people I shall praise You.

¹⁹ Let those who are wrongfully my enemies not re-

joice over me! Let **those who hate me without a reason** not maliciously wink their eyes!

²⁰ For they are not speaking about peace but have been devising deceitful schemes against those who live quietly in the land.

²¹ They have also been opening their mouths wide against me and have been saying: "Aha! Aha! Our own eyes have seen it."

²² O LORD, You have seen this. Do not remain silent! O Lord, do not be far away from me!

²³ Awake and be active in giving me justice, O my God and my Lord, in conducting my case!

²⁴ Vindicate me in Your righteousness, O LORD, my God, and let them not rejoice over me!

²⁵ Let them not think, "Aha, just what we have wanted!" Let them not say, "We have swallowed him up!"

²⁶ Let those who rejoice over my trouble be thoroughly put to shame and disgraced! Let those who exalt themselves against me be clothed with shame and insults!

²⁷ Let those who delight when I receive justice shout for joy and be glad! Let them always say: "Great is the LORD, who delights in the welfare of His servant!"

²⁸ Then my tongue will speak about Your righteousness and express Your praise all the day long.

36

For the choir director, of David, the servant of the LORD

¹ An Oracle is inside my heart concerning the rebellion of the wicked man: **There is no fear of God before his eyes.**

² For he has been flattering himself in his own eyes so much that he does not detect his guilt or hate it.

³ The words of his mouth are wicked and deceitful. He has ceased to act wisely and do good.

⁴ He plots evil while on his bed. He sets himself on a course that is not good. He does not reject evil.

⁵ O LORD, Your mercy reaches the heavens, and Your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

⁶ Your righteousness is like the mountains of God. Your judgments are like the great deep. You preserve human beings and animals, O LORD.

⁷ How precious is Your mercy, O God! The descendants of Adam take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

⁸ They are refreshed with the fatness of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your delights.

⁹ For with You is the fountain of life. In Your light we see light.

¹⁰ Continue Your mercy to those who know You and Your righteousness to those who are upright in heart!

¹¹ Let the feet of proud people not come against me, and let the hands of wicked people not drive me away!

¹² There the evildoers have fallen. They have been thrown down and cannot rise.

37

Of David

¹ Do not become agitated because of evildoers! Do not envy those who act wickedly!

² For they will quickly fade like the grass and wither like a green plant.

³ Trust in the LORD and do good! Live in the land and live in security!

⁴ Take great delight in the LORD! He will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the LORD! Trust Him, and He will act!

⁶ He will bring out your righteousness like the light and your just cause like the noon.

⁷ Be silent before the LORD and wait expectantly for Him! Do not be agitated because someone is successful in his way, because someone carries out evil schemes!

⁸ Refrain from anger! Stop raging! Do not be agitated! It only causes evil.

⁹ For evildoers will be cut down, but those who wait eagerly for the LORD will inherit the earth.

¹⁰ After a little while the wicked person will be no more. Although you carefully examine his place, it will not be there.

¹¹ **Humble people will inherit the land** and enjoy abundant peace.

¹² The wicked man plots against the righteous man and gnashes his teeth at him.

¹³ The Lord laughs at him, because He has seen that his day will come.

¹⁴ Wicked men have been drawing their swords and bending their bows to bring down the wretched and needy man and to slaughter those whose conduct is upright.

¹⁵ Their swords will pierce their own hearts, and their bows will be broken.

¹⁶ The little that the righteous person has is better than the wealth of many wicked people.

¹⁷ For the arms of wicked people will be broken, but the LORD supports righteous people.

¹⁸ The LORD knows the days of blameless people, and their inheritance will last for ever.

¹⁹ They will not be put to shame in a bad time, and in days of famine they will eat all they want.

²⁰ However, wicked people will perish, and the enemies of the LORD are like the glory of the pastures. They will vanish. They will vanish in smoke.

²¹ A wicked man borrows and does not pay back, but a righteous man is generous and gives.

²² For those who are blessed by Him will inherit the land, but those who are cursed by Him will be cut down.

²³ The LORD has established a man's steps and delights in his way.

²⁴ When he falls down, he will not be hurled down,

because the LORD holds his hand.

²⁵ I have been young and now I am old but have not seen a righteous person forsaken or his children begging for bread.

²⁶ He is always generous and lends, and his children are a blessing.

²⁷ Turn away from evil! Do good and dwell for ever!

²⁸ For the LORD loves justice and will not abandon His devout people. They will be kept safe for ever, but the children of wicked people will be cut down.

²⁹ Righteous people will inherit the land and will dwell on it for ever.

³⁰ The mouth of the righteous person utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is just.

³¹ The Teaching of his God is in his heart, and his steps do not slip.

³² The wicked person lies in ambush for the righteous person and seeks to kill him.

³³ The LORD will not abandon the righteous person to his power or condemn him when he is brought to trial.

³⁴ Wait eagerly for the LORD and keep His Way! He will exalt you, that you may inherit the land. You will watch when wicked people are cut down.

³⁵ I have seen a wicked man being tyrannical, spreading out like a leafy tree in its native soil.

³⁶ However, he has moved on, and, look, he is no more. When I searched for him, he could not be found.

³⁷ Notice a blameless person and observe an upright person! For the man of peace has a future.

³⁸ However, rebels will be completely destroyed. The future of wicked people will be cut off.

³⁹ The salvation of righteous people comes from the LORD. He is their fortress in a time of trouble.

⁴⁰ The LORD helps them and rescues them. He rescues them from wicked people and saves them, because they have taken refuge in Him.

38

A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.

¹ O LORD, do not reprove me in Your anger or discipline me in Your wrath!

² For Your arrows have gone deeply into me, and Your hand has been pressing down on me.

³ There is no sound spot in my body because of Your indignation. There is no health in my bones because of my sin.

⁴ For My offences have gone over my head. Like a heavy load, they are too heavy for me.

⁵ My wounds have become stinking and festering because of my foolishness.

⁶ I have bowed down and been bending down very low. I have been going about in mourning clothes all the day long.

⁷ For my sides are filled with burning fever, and there is no sound spot in my body.

⁸ I have become faint and been crushed. I have been

groaning because of the tumult in my heart.

⁹ O Lord, everything that I desire is before You, and my sighing has not been hidden from You.

¹⁰ My heart has been beating violently. My strength has forsaken me, and even the light of my eyes has gone from me.

¹¹ My loved one and **friends** are standing back from my affliction, and my relatives have been **standing far away**.

¹² Those who are trying to take my life have been laying snares for me, and those who are trying to harm me have been uttering threats. They are making deceitful plans all day long.

¹³ However, I am like a deaf man. I do not hear. I am like a speechless man, who does not open his mouth.

¹⁴ I have become like a man who does not hear anything and who has no recriminations in his mouth.

¹⁵ Nevertheless, I have been standing in wait for You, O LORD. You will answer, O Lord, my God.

¹⁶ For I have been saying: "Let them not rejoice over me! They have been exalting themselves over me when my foot slips."

¹⁷ For I am ready to stumble, and my pain is constantly before me.

¹⁸ For I declare my guilt. I am anxious because of my sin.

¹⁹ My enemies are vigorous and powerful, and those who hate me without any reason are numerous.

²⁰ They are repaying me with evil for good and are hostile towards me because I pursue what is good.

²¹ Do not abandon me, O LORD! O my God, do not be far away from me!

²² Come quickly to help me, O Lord, my Saviour!

39

For the choir director, for Jeduthun, a psalm of David

¹ I have been saying: "Let me guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue! Let me restrain my mouth with a muzzle while a wicked person is in my presence!"

² I have remained speechless and still. I have kept silent about anything good. My anguish has become more intense.

³ My heart grew hot inside me. The fire was blazing up while I was meditating. Then I spoke with my tongue: ⁴ "Make me know my end, O LORD, and what the measure of my days is! Let me know how fleeting I am!"

⁵ "Indeed, You have made my days like handbreadths, and my lifetime is like nothing before You. Certainly, every human being stands like a mere breath. *Selah*

⁶ "Certainly a man walks about like a shadow. Certainly, they bustle about for no reason. They accumulate riches without knowing who will gather them."

⁷ "And now, Lord, for what am I waiting? My hope is in You.

⁸ "Rescue me from all my rebellious acts! Do not

make me the scorn of the fool!

⁹ "I have been remaining speechless. I am not opening my mouth, because it has been You who have been doing this.

¹⁰ "Remove Your affliction from me! The blow of Your hand has consumed me.

¹¹ "When You disciplined a man for his sin with stern warnings, You consumed what was precious to him, like a moth. Certainly, every human being is a mere breath. *Selah*

¹² "Hear my prayer, O LORD! Open Your ear to my cry for help! Do not be silent to my tears! For I am living like a **foreigner** with You, a **sojourner**, as all my fathers have been.

¹³ "Look away from me, that I may be cheerful again before I depart and am no more!"

40

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ I have been waiting eagerly for the LORD, and He has bent down to me and heard my cry for help.

² He has lifted me out of a desolate pit, out of the muddy clay. He has set my feet on a rock and made my steps secure.

³ He has put a **new song** in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many people will see it, be afraid and trust in the LORD.

⁴ Blessed is the person who has placed his trust in the LORD, and who has not turned to arrogant people or to those who turn aside to falsehood!

⁵ O LORD, my God, You have done many things, Your wonderful works and Your plans for us. No one can be compared to You. If I were to report and speak about them, they would be too many to recount.

⁶ **You have not taken pleasure in sacrifice and offering.** You have opened ears for Me. **You have not asked for a burnt offering or a sin-offering.**

⁷ **Then I said: "Look! I have come. It has been written about Me in the scroll of the Book.**

⁸ I delight to do Your will, O My God, and Your Teaching is inside My inner being."

⁹ I have announced the good news of righteousness in the great assembly. Look! I shall not keep my lips closed, O LORD. You Yourself know it.

¹⁰ I have not concealed Your righteousness inside my heart. I have spoken about Your faithfulness and Your salvation. I have not hidden Your mercy and Your truth from the great assembly.

¹¹ You Yourself, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me. Your mercy and Your truth will continually protect me.

¹² For evils without number have surrounded me. My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I cannot see. They outnumber the hairs on my head, and my heart has failed me.

¹³ Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me! O LORD, come quickly to help me!

¹⁴ Let those who are trying to snatch away my life be disgraced and utterly confounded! Let those who desire to harm me be driven back and be humiliated!

¹⁵ Let those who say to me, “Aha! Aha!” be horrified because of their shame!

¹⁶ Let all who are intent on You rejoice and be glad in You! Let those who love Your salvation constantly say, “May the LORD be magnified!”

¹⁷ However, I am afflicted and needy. May the LORD plan for me! You are my Help and my Deliverer. O my God, do not delay!

41

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ Blessed is the one who pays close attention to the poor person! The LORD will rescue him in the day of trouble.

² The LORD will preserve him and keep him alive, and he will be called fortunate in the land. Do not surrender him to what enemies want!

³ The LORD will support him on his sickbed. When he is ill, You will transform all his bedridden condition.

⁴ I myself have been saying: “O LORD, be gracious to me! Heal my soul! For I have been sinning against You.”

⁵ My enemies are asking maliciously about me: “When will he die, and when will his name disappear?”

⁶ When one of them comes to visit me, he speaks what is worthless. His heart gathers what is evil. Then he goes outside and talks about it.

⁷ All who hate me are whispering together about me. They are planning harm for me and saying, ⁸ “A devilish disease is being poured out for him. He will never get up again from the place where he has lain down.”

⁹ Even My close friend, whom I trust, **who has been eating My bread, has lifted up his heel against Me.**

¹⁰ Nevertheless, You, O LORD, be gracious to me and raise me up, that I may repay them!

¹¹ In this way I know that You take pleasure in me, that my enemy will not shout in triumph over me.

¹² However, as for me, You have firmly grasped me in my integrity and You will set me in Your presence for ever.

¹³ **Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,** from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.

BOOK TWO (PSALMS 42-72)

42

For the choir director, a Maskil of the sons of Korah

¹ My soul is longing for You, O God, as a deer longs for streams of water.

² My soul is thirsting for God, for the living God. When may I come and **appear** before **God**?

³ My tears have been my food day and night, while people ask me all day long, “Where is your God?”

⁴ I remember these things as I pour out my soul. For I used to walk with the crowd and lead them in procession to the house of God, with the sound of joyful shouting and thanksgiving — with a crowd celebrating a festival.

⁵ Why are you **cast down, my soul**? Why are you restless inside me? Hope in God! For I shall again praise Him for the deliverance that His presence brings.

⁶ O my God, **my soul is downcast** inside me. Therefore, I remember You from the land of Jordan and from the heights of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

⁷ One deep is calling to another at the sound of Your waterfalls. All Your breakers and Your waves have been going over me.

⁸ The LORD commands His mercy during the day, and in the night His song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

⁹ Let me ask God, my Rock: “Why have You forgotten me? Why must I go mourning because the enemy is oppressing me?”

¹⁰ As if my bones were being crushed, my enemies have been taunting me while they are asking me all day long, “Where is your God?”

¹¹ Why are you **downcast, O my soul**, and why are you restless inside me? Hope in God! For I shall again praise Him, my Saviour and my God.

43

¹ Vindicate me, O God, and plead my case against a nation that is not devout! Rescue me from the deceitful and unruly man!

² For You are the God who gives me refuge. Why have You been rejecting me? Why must I walk around dressed in mourning attire because of the oppression of the enemy?

³ Send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me! Let them bring me to Your holy mountain and to Your dwelling-place!

⁴ Then let me go to the altar of God, to God, my Joy and my Delight, that I may give thanks to You on the lyre, O God, my God!

⁵ Why are you **downcast, my soul**, and why are you restless inside me? Hope in God! For I shall again praise Him, my Saviour and my God.

44

For the choir director, a *Maskil* of the sons of Korah

¹ O God, we have heard it with our own ears. Our fathers have told us about the work that You accomplished in their days, in the days long ago.

² You drove out nations with Your own hand and planted our fathers. You treated nations badly and let our fathers go free.

³ For they did not gain possession of the land by their own swords, and their own arms did not save them. Rather, Your right hand saved them, Your arm and the light of Your face, because You were well disposed

towards them.

⁴ You are my King, O God. Keep on commanding victories for Jacob!

⁵ Through You we shall knock down our enemies. Through Your name we shall trample under foot those who rise up against us.

⁶ For I do not rely on my bow, and my sword does not save me.

⁷ Rather, You have saved us from our enemies or put to shame those who hate us.

⁸ We have been praising our God all the day long and shall glorify Your name for ever. *Selah*

⁹ Yet You have been rejecting us and have been bringing disgrace on us. You also refrain from going out with our armies.

¹⁰ You are making us retreat from the enemy, and those who hate us have been taking plunder for themselves.

¹¹ You have been surrendering us to be eaten like sheep and have been scattering us among the nations.

¹² You keep selling Your people for a pittance and have not been making any profit from selling them.

¹³ You have been making us a taunt of our neighbours and an object of derision and ridicule to those around us.

¹⁴ You are making us a byword among the nations, so that the peoples do not refrain from shaking their heads at us.

¹⁵ All the day long my disgrace is before me, and shame has been covering my face, ¹⁶ because of the voice of him who keeps ridiculing and slandering me, because of the enemy and the one who is bent on revenge.

¹⁷ All this has been coming on us. Nevertheless, we have not forgotten You or been treating Your Covenant falsely.

¹⁸ Our hearts have not turned back, and our steps have not turned aside from Your path.

¹⁹ Yet You have crushed us in a place for jackals and covered us with deep darkness.

²⁰ If we had forgotten the name of our God and had spread out our hands to a foreign god, ²¹ would God not have spied this out, since He knows the secrets of the heart?

²² Indeed, **because of You we are being killed all day long. We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.**

²³ Wake up! Why are You asleep, O Lord? Awake! Do not keep on rejecting us for ever!

²⁴ Why are You hiding Your face and forgetting our misery and oppression?

²⁵ For our souls have been sinking down to the dust, and our bodies have been clinging to the ground.

²⁶ Rise up to help us and redeem us because of Your mercy!

45

For the choir director, according to "The Lilies," a *Maskil* of the sons of Korah. A love song

¹ My heart is stirred up with a good theme. I am reciting what I have been composing to the King. My tongue is the stylus of a skilful writer.

² You are the most handsome of the descendants of Adam. Grace has been poured out on Your lips. Therefore, God has blessed You for ever.

³ O Warrior, strap Your sword to Your side, in Your majesty and splendour!

⁴ In Your splendour ride on victoriously in the cause of truth, humility and righteousness! Let Your right hand teach You awesome things!

⁵ Your arrows are sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies. The nations are falling beneath You.

⁶ **Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever. The sceptre of Your Kingdom is a sceptre of uprightness.**

⁷ **You love righteousness and hate wickedness. Therefore, God, Your God, has anointed You more than Your companions, with the Oil of Joy.**

⁸ All Your robes are fragrant with myrrh, aloes and cassia. From ivory palaces, stringed instruments make You glad.

⁹ The daughters of kings are among Your women of honour. The queen has taken her place at Your right hand in gold from Ophir.

¹⁰ Listen, O daughter, look closely, turn your ear to me and forget your people and your father's house, ¹¹ that the King may long for your beauty! Since He is your Lord, bow down to Him!

¹² The people of Tyre, the richest of people, will try to obtain Your favour with gifts.

¹³ The daughter of the King has all valuable things inside her chamber. Her clothing is embroidered with gold.

¹⁴ She is led to the King wearing fabric of many colours. The virgins, her companions, who are following her, are presented to You.

¹⁵ With joy and gladness they are brought in. They enter the palace of the King.

¹⁶ Your sons will take the place of Your fathers. You will make them princes over all the earth.

¹⁷ Let me cause Your name to be remembered through all generations! Therefore, the peoples will praise You for ever and ever.

46

For the choir director, a song of the sons of Korah, according to *Alamoth*

¹ God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in troubles.

² Therefore, we shall not be afraid, although the earth quakes and the mountains topple into the middle of the seas, ³ although its water roars and foams, and the mountains quake with its surging. *Selah*

⁴ There is a river, and its streams make the city of God

glad, the holy dwelling-place of the Most High.

⁵ God is inside it. It will not be shaken. God will help it when the morning dawns.

⁶ Nations rage, kingdoms totter. He utters His voice, the earth melts.

⁷ The LORD of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

⁸ Come! See the works of the LORD! He has brought devastation on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease to the end of the earth. He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in pieces. He burns the chariots with fire.

¹⁰ "Cease striving and know that I am God! I shall be exalted among the nations. I shall be exalted in the earth."

¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge. *Selah*

47

For the choir director, a psalm of the sons of Korah

¹ Clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with a joyful voice!

² For the LORD Most High is awesome. He is the great King over all the earth.

³ May He subjugate peoples under us and nations under our feet!

⁴ He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom He loves. *Selah*

⁵ God has gone up with a shout, the LORD, with the sound of a trumpet.

⁶ Sing praise to God! Sing praise! Sing praise to our King! Sing praise!

⁷ For God is the King of all the earth. Sing a psalm of instruction!

⁸ God has been reigning over the nations. **God** has been **sitting on His holy throne**.

⁹ The nobles of the peoples have gathered together as the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God. He is greatly exalted.

48

A song, a psalm of the sons of Korah

¹ The LORD is great. He should be highly praised in the city of our God, His holy mountain!

² It is lovely in its height, the joy of the whole earth. Mount Zion is on the northern flanks. It is **the city of the great King**.

³ God is in its palaces. He has made Himself known as a stronghold.

⁴ For look! The kings have assembled. They have passed through together.

⁵ As soon as they themselves saw it, they were astounded. They were terrified and hurried away in fear.

⁶ Trembling seized them there, pain like that of a woman in labour.

⁷ You were smashing the ships of Tarshish with an

east wind.

⁸ As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God. God will establish it for ever. *Selah*

⁹ We have been pondering about Your mercy, O God, inside Your Temple.

¹⁰ Like Your name, O God, Your praise reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with righteousness.

¹¹ Let Mount Zion rejoice! Let the daughters of Judah be glad because of Your judgments!

¹² Walk around Zion! Go around it! Count its towers!

¹³ Examine its ramparts! Wander through its citadels, that you may tell the next generation!

¹⁴ For this is God, our God, for ever and ever. He will lead us beyond death.

49

For the choir director, a psalm of the sons of Korah

¹ Hear this, all you peoples! Listen, all who live in the world, ² both common people and important people, rich people and poor people together!

³ My mouth will speak wise sayings, and the thinking of my heart will give insight.

⁴ I shall turn my ear to a proverb. I shall disclose my riddle with a lyre.

⁵ Why should I be afraid in days of trouble, when iniquity surrounds my heels?

⁶ They trust in their wealth and boast of their great riches.

⁷ Certainly none of them will redeem his brother or pay a ransom to God for him.

⁸ For the redemption of their souls is costly, and he will always despair ⁹ of living on for ever and not seeing the pit.

¹⁰ For he sees that wise people die and that the foolish person and the stupid person perish alike and leave their wealth to others.

¹¹ Their inner thought was that their homes were eternal, their dwelling-places from generation to generation, although they have named lands after themselves.

¹² However, a human being will not continue by means of his precious things. He is like the animals that have perished.

¹³ This is their way. They are self-confident. Yet after them people approve of what they have said. *Selah*

¹⁴ They have been appointed for Sheol like sheep. Death will be their shepherd. Upright people will rule over them in the morning. Their forms will waste away in Sheol, far away from their lofty dwelling.

¹⁵ Nevertheless, God will redeem my life from the power of Sheol. For He will receive me. *Selah*

¹⁶ Do not be afraid when someone becomes rich, when the splendour of his house increases!

¹⁷ For he will not take anything with him when he dies. His splendour will not go down after him.

¹⁸ For, even though he counts himself blessed while he is alive, and although people may praise you while you are prospering, ¹⁹ his soul will go to the generation of his fathers, who will never see light again.

²⁰ A human being who has precious possessions without understanding is like animals that have perished.

50

A psalm of Asaph

¹ The Mighty One, God, the LORD, has spoken. He has summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

² Out of Zion, which is perfect in beauty, God has shone forth.

³ Our God will come and will not remain silent. A fire will devour before Him. It will be very stormy around Him.

⁴ He will summon the heavens above and the earth, that He may judge His people: ⁵ “Gather around Me, My devout people, who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice!”

⁶ The heavens have been proclaiming His righteousness. For God Himself is Judge. *Selah*

⁷ “Listen, My people, that I may speak! Listen, Israel, that I may admonish you! I am God, your God.

⁸ “I shall not reproach you for your sacrifices or your burnt offerings, which are constantly before Me.

⁹ “I shall not accept a young bull from your household or any male goats from your pens.

¹⁰ “For every animal in the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.

¹¹ “I know every bird that is in the mountains, and the small creatures of the field are Mine.

¹² “If I were hungry, I should not tell you, because the world and all that it contains are Mine.

¹³ “Shall I eat the meat of bulls or drink the blood of goats?

¹⁴ **“Offer thanksgiving to God as a sacrifice! Fulfil your vows to the Most High!**

¹⁵ “Call on Me in a day of trouble! I shall deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.”

¹⁶ However, God has been asking the wicked person: “What right have you to recite My prescriptions and take My Covenant in your mouth?

¹⁷ “You hate discipline and cast My Words behind you.

¹⁸ “When you saw a thief, you made friends with him and have been keeping company with adulterers.

¹⁹ “You have given free rein to your mouth for evil and hitch your tongue up to deceit.

²⁰ “You sit and malign your own brother. You slander your own mother’s son.

²¹ “You have been doing these things, and I have remained silent. You imagined that I was just like you. I shall rebuke you, that I may lay a case against you to your face.

²² “Please understand, you who forget God, or I shall

tear you in pieces, and no one will rescue you!

²³ “He who offers **thanksgiving as a sacrifice** will honour Me, and to him who orders his conduct I shall show the salvation of God.”

51

For the choir director, a psalm of David when the prophet Nathan came to him after David’s adultery with Bathsheba

¹ Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your mercy! According to Your great compassion blot out my rebellious acts!

² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and declare me clean from my sin!

³ For I acknowledge my rebellious acts, and my sin is always before me.

⁴ I have sinned against You, You only, and I have done what is evil in Your sight, **that You may be just when You speak, that You may be blameless when You judge.**

⁵ Indeed, I was born in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

⁶ Indeed, You desire truth in the inner parts and in the secret being You are teaching me wisdom.

⁷ Purify me from sin with hyssop, and I shall be clean! Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow!

⁸ Cause me to hear joy and gladness! Let the bones that You have crushed rejoice!

⁹ Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities!

¹⁰ Create in me **a clean heart**, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit inside me!

¹¹ Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me!

¹² Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and support me with a willing spirit!

¹³ I shall teach Your Ways to those who are rebellious, and sinners will return to You.

¹⁴ Rescue me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, my saving God, and my tongue will joyfully proclaim Your righteousness!

¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise!

¹⁶ For You will not delight in sacrifice or I would give it. You will not take pleasure in a burnt offering.

¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and crushed heart, O God, You will not despise.

¹⁸ Treat Zion kindly in Your good pleasure! May You build up the walls of Jerusalem!

¹⁹ Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, in burnt offering and in whole burnt offering. Then people will offer bulls on Your altar.

52

For the choir director, a Maskil, a psalm of David, when Doeg the Edomite went and told Saul, “David has gone to the house of Ahimelech”

¹ How you boast about evil, mighty man! The mercy

of God lasts all day long.

² Your tongue, like a sharpened razor, is planning ruin, deceitful worker.

³ You love evil instead of good. You prefer lying to saying what is right. *Selah*

⁴ You love every kind of talk that causes confusion, treacherous tongue.

⁵ God will also demolish you for ever. He will take you away and tear you out of your tent. He will uproot you from the land of the living. *Selah*

⁶ Then righteous people will look on him and be afraid. They will laugh at him and say: ⁷ “Look at the man who would not make God his fortress but trusted his great wealth! He was taking refuge in the ruin that he caused.”

⁸ Nevertheless, I am like a flourishing olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

⁹ I shall praise You for ever, because You have done it. In the presence of Your devout people, I shall wait eagerly for Your name. For it is good.

53

For the choir director, according to *Mahalath*, a *Maskil* of David

¹ A fool has been saying in his heart, “There is no God.” They have been causing ruin and committing abominable injustice. **There is no one who is doing good.**

² God has been looking down from heaven on the children of Adam to see if **there is anyone who understands and who is coming to God for help.**

³ **All of them have turned away. Together they have become corrupt. There is no one who does good. There is not even one.**

⁴ Have all evildoers no knowledge, who are devouring My people as if they were devouring food, and who have not been calling on God?

⁵ They have been trembling with terror, where there has been nothing about which to be terrified. For God has scattered the bones of the one who had pitched a camp against you. You have put them to shame, because God has rejected them.

⁶ If only salvation for Israel would come from Zion! When God turns back the captivity of His people, let Jacob rejoice! Let Israel be glad!

54

For the choir director, on stringed instruments, a *Maskil* of David, when people from Ziph went and asked Saul, “Is not David hiding among us?”

¹ O God, save me by Your name and bring justice to me by Your strength!

² O God, hear my prayer and open Your ears to the words from my mouth!

³ For strangers have risen up against me, and violent men have been trying to take my life. They have not set God before themselves. *Selah*

⁴ Surely, God is my Helper. The Lord is with those who support my life.

⁵ He will repay my enemies for their evil. Destroy them in Your truth!

⁶ Let me sacrifice a freewill offering to You! I shall praise Your name, O LORD, because it is good.

⁷ For He has delivered me out of every trouble, and my eye has been gloating over my enemies.

55

For the choir director, on stringed instruments, a *Maskil* of David

¹ Open Your ears to my prayer, O God, and do not hide Yourself from my plea for favour!

² Pay attention to me and answer me! I am being restless in my concern and am distraught, ³ because of what the enemy is saying, because of the oppression of a wicked man. For people are causing trouble to crash down on me and are angrily harbouring hostility against me.

⁴ My heart is trembling inside me, and the horrors of death have fallen on me.

⁵ Fear and trembling are coming on me, and shuddering has overwhelmed me.

⁶ I have been saying: “If only I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and settle down.”

⁷ Indeed, I would flee far away. I would stay in the wilderness. *Selah*

⁸ I would hurry to my place of refuge away from the raging wind, away from the gale.

⁹ Destroy them, O Lord! Divide their tongues! For I have seen violence and strife in the city.

¹⁰ They keep going around it on its walls by day and by night. Calamity and trouble are inside it.

¹¹ Destruction is inside it. Oppression and fraud do not withdraw from its public squares.

¹² However, it is not an enemy who is insulting me. I could endure that. It is not one who hates me and who has exalted himself against me. Otherwise, I could hide from him.

¹³ Rather, it is you, a man of my own rank, my close friend and one whom I have known well.

¹⁴ We used to engage in sweet and confidential conversation together and walk to the house of God when there was unrest.

¹⁵ May death take them by surprise! May they go down alive to Sheol! For there are troubles in their storage rooms and inside them.

¹⁶ I myself shall call to God, and the LORD will save me.

¹⁷ In the evening, in the morning and at noon I shall complain and groan, but He hears my voice.

¹⁸ He has redeemed my soul in peace from the battle against me, although there have been many opposing me.

¹⁹ God will hear and He who has been enthroned from of old will humble them. *Selah*

For they never change and do not fear God.

²⁰ My companion has stretched out his hand on those who had been at peace with him and violated his covenant.

²¹ His speech has been smoother than butter, but war has been in his heart. His words have been softer than olive-oil but have been drawn swords.

²² **Cast your burden on the LORD!** He will support you. He will never permit the righteous person to stagger.

²³ Nevertheless, You, O God, will bring them down to the pit of the grave. Men who murder and are treacherous will not live out half their days. However, I shall trust in You.

56

For the choir director, according to "A Silent Dove far away," a *Miktam* of David, when the Philistines captured him in Gath

¹ Be gracious to me, O God! For a man has been pestering me. He is fighting and opposing me all day long.

² My adversaries have been pestering me all day long. For many are arrogantly fighting against me.

³ When I am afraid, I shall trust in You.

⁴ In God (I shall praise His Promise) **in God I trust.** I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?

⁵ They distort my words all day long. All they think about is how to harm me.

⁶ They are conspiring. They are lurking. They are watching my steps while they are lying in wait for my life.

⁷ Because of their sin, will they escape? In anger, cast down the peoples, O God!

⁸ You have been recording my wandering. You Yourself, put my tears in Your water-skin! Are they not in Your book?

⁹ Then my enemies will turn back on the day when I call. This I know, that God is for me.

¹⁰ In God, whose Word I praise, in the LORD, whose Word I praise, ¹¹ **in God I trust.** I shall not be afraid. What can a human being do to me?

¹² I am obligated by vows to You, O God. I shall fulfil them by thank-offerings to You.

¹³ For You have rescued my life from death. Have You not rescued my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life?

57

For the choir director, "Do not Destroy," a *Miktam* of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave
— compare v. 7-11 with Ps 108:1-5

¹ Be gracious to me, O God! Be gracious to me! For my soul has been taking refuge in You. I shall take refuge in the shadow of Your wings until destruction passes by.

² I keep calling to God, the Most High, to the God who takes revenge for me.

³ He will send help from heaven and save me. He has confused the man who was pestering me. *Selah*
God will send out His mercy and His truth.

⁴ My soul is among lions. Let me lie down with those who devour the sons of Adam! Their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongues are sharp swords.

⁵ Be exalted above the heavens, O God! Let Your glory be over all the earth!

⁶ They have prepared a net for my steps. He has oppressed my soul. They have dug out a pit in front of me but have fallen into it. *Selah*

⁷ My heart is steadfast, O God. My heart is steadfast. Let me sing and make music!

⁸ Wake up, my glory! Wake up, O harp and lyre! Let me waken the dawn!

⁹ I shall praise You among the peoples, O Lord. I shall sing praises to You among the nations.

¹⁰ For Your mercy is great, as far as the heavens, and Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

¹¹ Be exalted above the heavens, O God! Let Your glory be over all the earth!

58

For the choir director, according to "Do not Destroy," a *Miktam* of David.

¹ Can you people really speak in silence what is just? Do you judge the descendants of Adam fairly?

² No! You practise dishonesty in your hearts and are making a way for violence in the land with your hands.

³ Wicked people have been turning aside since the womb. They have been going astray from their birth, speaking lies.

⁴ They have venom like the venom of a snake. They are like a deaf cobra, which stops up its ears, ⁵ and which does not hear the voices of the charmers, who are experts in casting spells.

⁶ O God, knock their teeth out of their mouths! Tear out the jaw-bones of the young lions, O LORD!

⁷ Let them disappear like water that runs away by itself. When he shoots his arrows let them be like things that dry up!

⁸ Let them be like a snail, which melts away as it moves along, like a woman's stillborn child, let them not see the sun!

⁹ Before your cooking-pots can feel the heat of the box-thorns, may He carry them off in a gale, even the green ones, and also in burning anger!

¹⁰ The righteous person will be glad when he has seen recompense. He will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked person, ¹¹ so that human beings will say: "Surely the righteous person will have a reward! Surely there is a God who judges on the earth!"

59

For the choir director, according to "Do not Destroy," a *Miktam* of David, when Saul sent men, and they watched his house to kill him

¹ Deliver me from my enemies, O my God! Protect me from those who are rising up against me!

² Deliver me from evildoers and save me from blood-thirsty men!

³ For look! They have been lying in ambush for my life. Powerful men are attacking me but not for any rebellion or sin of mine, O LORD.

⁴ Although I have done no wrong, they are running and getting ready. Stir Yourself to come to me and see!

⁵ You, LORD, God of hosts, God of Israel, awake to punish all the nations! Show no mercy to any who act treacherously and unjustly! *Selah*

⁶ They are returning in the evening. They are howling like a dog. They are prowling around the city.

⁷ Look! They are gushing out with their mouths. Swords are on their lips. For they think, "Who can hear us?"

⁸ However, You Yourself laugh at them, O LORD. You ridicule all the nations.

⁹ Let me watch for You, O You who are the Strength of this person! For God is my Stronghold.

¹⁰ My merciful God will go ahead of me. God will let me gloat over my enemies.

¹¹ Do not kill them, that my people may not forget! By Your power make them homeless wanderers and bring them down, O Lord, our Shield, ¹² because of the sin of their mouths and the words of their lips, that they may be caught in their arrogance! Because of the curses and lies that they are uttering, ¹³ consume them in anger! Consume them that they may be no more! Let people know as far as the ends of the earth that God is ruling over Jacob! *Selah*

¹⁴ They are returning in the evening. They are howling like a dog. They are prowling around the city.

¹⁵ They roam about for food and, if they are not satisfied, they growl.

¹⁶ Nevertheless, I myself shall sing about Your strength and in the morning I shall joyfully proclaim Your mercy. For You have been my Fortress and my Place of Refuge when I have been in trouble.

¹⁷ O my Strength, let me sing praise to You! For God is my Stronghold, my merciful God.

60

For the choir director, according to "The Lily of Testimony," a *Miktam* of David, for instruction, when he carried on a quarrel against the Arameans of Mesopotamia and the Arameans of Zobah, and when Joab came back and struck down twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt — compare v. 5-12 with Ps 108:6-13

¹ O God, You have rejected us. You have broken out against us. You have been angry. May You restore us!

² You have made the land quake. You have split it open. Heal its fractures! For it has been tottering.

³ You have made Your people suffer hardships. You have given us wine to drink that makes us stagger.

⁴ You have given a banner to those who fear You that

they may rally to it before the archers. *Selah*

⁵ That those who are dear to You may be rescued, save us by Your right hand and answer us!

⁶ God has promised by His holiness: "I shall be very glad. I shall divide up Shechem and measure out the Valley of Succoth.

⁷ "Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine. Ephraim is a helmet on My head. Judah is My sceptre.

⁸ "Moab is My washbasin. I shall throw My sandal over Edom. Because of Me, O Philistia, shout in triumph!"

⁹ Who will bring me into a fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom?

¹⁰ Is it not You, O God, who have rejected us? You, O God, are not going out with our armies.

¹¹ Give us help against the enemy! Human deliverance is useless.

¹² With God we shall do great things. He Himself will trample down our enemies.

61

For the choir director, on a stringed instrument, of David

¹ Listen to my cry, O God! Pay attention to my prayer!

² From the ends of the earth I am calling to You while my heart is growing faint. Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I am!

³ You have been a refuge for me, a strong tower against the enemy.

⁴ Let me reside in Your tent for ever! Let me take refuge under Your wings as a hiding place! *Selah*

⁵ For You, O God, have heard my vows. You have given me the inheritance that belongs to those who fear Your name.

⁶ You will prolong the king's life, so that his years are like many generations.

⁷ May he sit enthroned in the presence of God for ever! Appoint mercy and truth, that they may protect him!

⁸ Therefore, let me sing praise to Your name for ever, that I may perform my vows day after day!

62

For the choir director, according to *Jeduthun*, a psalm of David

¹ My soul waits silently for God alone. My salvation comes from Him.

² He alone is my Rock and my Salvation. He is my Stronghold. I shall not stagger greatly.

³ How long will you people attack a person? How long will all of you be intent on murdering him, as though he were a leaning wall or a tottering stone fence?

⁴ People are planning only to force him down from his high position. They take delight in lying. They are blessing with their mouths but inwardly they are cursing. *Selah*

⁵ Wait quietly for God alone, my soul! For my hope comes from Him.

⁶ He alone is my Rock and my Salvation, my High Refuge. I shall not stagger.

⁷ My salvation and my glory rest on God, my strong Rock, and my refuge is in God.

⁸ Trust Him at all times, you people! Pour out your hearts in His presence! God is our Refuge. *Selah*

⁹ Surely the descendants of Adam are only breath. The sons of man are an illusion. When they go up on a pair of scales, they are altogether lighter than breath.

¹⁰ Do not trust in extortion or put false hope in robbery! If riches increase, do not set your hearts on them!

¹¹ God has spoken once. I have heard this twice, that power belongs to God, ¹² and that mercy belongs to You, O Lord. For You **repay a person according to what he has done.**

63

A psalm of David when he was in the Wilderness of Judah

¹ O God, You are my God, I shall eagerly be intent on You. My soul has been thirsting for You. My body has been longing for You in a dry and weary land, where there is no water.

² Therefore, I have been looking for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory.

³ Because Your mercy is better than life, my lips will glorify You.

⁴ Therefore, I shall bless You all my life. In Your name I shall lift up my hands.

⁵ My soul will be satisfied as with fat and with rich food, and my mouth will praise You with lips that shout for joy.

⁶ When I remember You on my couch, I meditate about You during the night watches, ⁷ because You have been my Help. I shall shout for joy in the shadow of Your wings.

⁸ My soul has been following close behind You. Your right hand has taken hold of me.

⁹ However, may those who are trying to destroy my life go into the depths of the earth!

¹⁰ People will pour them out by means of the sword. They will become prey for jackals.

¹¹ Nevertheless, the king will rejoice in God. Everyone who swears by Him will boast. However, the mouths of those who speak lies will be silenced.

64

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ Hear my voice, O God, when I complain! Protect my life from dread of the enemy!

² Hide me from the secret plotting of men who are acting wickedly, from the noisy crowd of evildoers!

³ They have been sharpening their tongues like swords and have been aiming bitter words as their arrows ⁴ to

shoot at an innocent man from their hiding-places. They are shooting at him suddenly, without any fear.

⁵ They are encouraging one another in their evil plan. They are talking about how to hide traps. They have been asking, "Who will see them?"

⁶ They are devising wicked actions: "We have perfected a secret plan."

Both the inward thoughts of a man and his heart are impenetrable.

⁷ However, God has shot them with an arrow. Their wounds have come on them suddenly.

⁸ He has caused them to stumble. Their own tongues are against them. All who see them are shuddering over them.

⁹ All human beings have become afraid and have been declaring, "This is the work of God." They have gained insight into what He has done.

¹⁰ Let the righteous person be glad in the LORD and take refuge in Him! Let all those who are upright in heart offer praise!

65

For the choir director, a psalm of David, a song

¹ You receive praise in silence in Zion, O God, and vows to You will be fulfilled.

² O You who hear prayer, to You all human beings will come.

³ Iniquitous things have been prevailing over me. You Yourself will provide atonement for our rebellious actions.

⁴ Blessed is the person whom You choose and whom You bring near, that he may dwell in Your courts! We shall be satisfied with the good things of Your house, the holiness of Your Temple.

⁵ You answer us in righteousness with awesome deeds, O our saving God, the Confidence of all the ends of the earth and of the most distant sea.

⁶ He is the One who sets the mountains in place by His strength, the One who puts on strength like a waistcloth.

⁷ He is the One who calms **the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves** and the turmoil of the peoples.

⁸ Those who live at the ends of the earth have been in awe of Your miraculous signs. You make the places where morning dawns and the places where evening fades shout for joy.

⁹ You have taken care of the land and have caused it to overflow. You have enriched it abundantly. The stream of God is filled with water. You are providing their grain. For that is how You have prepared it.

¹⁰ You have given its furrows their fill of drink and levelled off the edges of its furrows. You soften it with gentle rain and bless its growth.

¹¹ You have crowned the year of Your goodness, and Your wheel-tracks drip with fat.

¹² The pastures in the desert overflow. The hills are

robed with joy.

¹³ The meadows are clothed with flocks, and the valleys are covered with grain. They are shouting for joy. Indeed, they are singing.

66

For the choir director, on stringed instruments, a song, a psalm

¹ Shout joyfully to God, all the earth!

² Sing the glory of His name! Make His praise glorious!

³ Say to God: "How awesome are Your deeds! Because of Your great power, Your enemies will pretend to be obedient to You.

⁴ "All the earth will worship You and sing praise to You. They will sing praise to Your name." *Selah*

⁵ Come and see what God has done! He is awesome in what He has done for the descendants of Adam.

⁶ He turned the sea into dry land. They crossed the river on foot. There let us rejoice in Him! *Selah*

⁷ He rules by His power for ever. His eyes observe the nations. Let rebellious people not be haughty!

⁸ Bless our God, you peoples, and cause the sound of His praise to be heard!

⁹ He is keeping our souls among the living and has not allowed our feet to slide.

¹⁰ For You have tested us, O God. You have refined us as silver is refined.

¹¹ You have brought us into the net. You have laid hardship on our backs.

¹² You have let men ride over our heads. We have gone through fire and through water. Nevertheless, You have brought us out to abundance.

¹³ I shall go into Your Temple with burnt offerings. I shall fulfil to You my vows, ¹⁴ which my lips promised, and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble.

¹⁵ I shall sacrifice fat animals to You with the sacrificial smoke of rams. I shall prepare bulls and goats. *Selah*

¹⁶ Come and listen, all you who fear God, that I may declare what He has done for my soul!

¹⁷ I cried to Him with my mouth, and my tongue has given high praise.

¹⁸ If I had been aware of injustice in my heart, the Lord would not have listened, ¹⁹ but God has certainly heard me. He has paid attention to the sound of my prayer.

²⁰ Blessed be God, who has not rejected my prayer or turned His mercy away from me!

67

For the choir director, on stringed instruments, a psalm, a song

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us! May He make His face shine on us — *Selah* — ² that Your Way may be known on the earth, and **Your salvation among all nations!**

³ Let the peoples praise You, O God! Let all the peoples praise You!

⁴ Let the nations be glad and shout for joy! For You will judge the peoples justly and will lead the nations on the earth. *Selah*

⁵ Let the peoples praise You, O God! Let all the peoples praise You!

⁶ The earth has produced its yield. God, our God, will bless us.

⁷ God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear Him.

68

For the choir director, a psalm of David, a song

¹ God will arise. His enemies will scatter, so that those who hate Him will flee from Him.

² As smoke is blown away, You will blow them away. As wax melts before the fire, wicked people will perish before God.

³ Nevertheless, righteous people will be glad. They will rejoice before God. They will be glad and rejoice.

⁴ Sing to God! Sing praise to His name! Prepare a road for Him who rides through the deserts! His name is the LORD. Be very glad in His presence!

⁵ God, who is in His holy dwelling-place, is the Father of the fatherless and the Defender of widows.

⁶ God places lonely people in homes. He leads prisoners out into prosperity, but rebellious people live in a scorched land.

⁷ O God, when You went out before Your people, when You marched through the wilderness — *Selah*, — ⁸ the earth quaked, the heavens indeed poured down rain before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel.

⁹ You caused a plentiful rain to fall, O God. You firmly established Your weary inheritance.

¹⁰ It was Your dwelling-place in which they settled. Out of Your goodness, O God, You prepared for needy people.

¹¹ The Lord was issuing the Word. The women who were announcing the good news were a large company.

¹² The kings of armies were fleeing. They were fleeing. The woman who was staying at home was dividing the plunder.

¹³ Although you men were lying down among the saddle-bags, you were like the wings of a dove covered with silver, which had its feathers covered with yellow gold.

¹⁴ When the Almighty was scattering the kings in the land, it was snowing on Zalmon.

¹⁵ The Mount of Bashan is God's majestic mountain. Mount Bashan is a mountain with many peaks.

¹⁶ You mountains with many peaks, why do you gaze with hostility at the mountain where God has desired to dwell, yes, where the LORD will dwell for ever?

¹⁷ The chariots of God are twenty thousand, thousands

in their sublimity. The Lord is among them, as at Sinai, in the Holy Place.

¹⁸ **You have gone up to the highest place. You have taken prisoners captive.** You have received **gifts from people**, even from rebellious people, that the LORD God may dwell there.

¹⁹ Blessed be the Lord! Each day He keeps on carrying our load. God is our salvation. *Selah*

²⁰ Our God is a God who acts to deliver. Escape from death belongs to GOD, the Lord.

²¹ Surely, God will smite the heads of His enemies and the hairy crown of the one who continues in his guilty deeds.

²² The Lord has said: "I shall bring them back from Bashan. I shall bring them back from the depths of the sea, ²³ that your foot may smite them in blood, and the tongues of your dogs may have their share from the enemies."

²⁴ People have seen Your festal processions, O God, the processions of my God, my King, into the Holy Place.

²⁵ The singers have been walking in front. The musicians are behind them. Among them maidens are beating tambourines.

²⁶ Bless God in the assemblies! Bless the LORD from the fountain of Israel!

²⁷ There is Benjamin, the least of them, leading them. There are the princes of Judah, and their great throng. There are the princes of Zebulun and the princes of Naphtali.

²⁸ Your God has commanded that you should be strong. Show Your strength, O God, in what You have been doing for us!

²⁹ Because of Your Temple at Jerusalem kings will bring tribute to You.

³⁰ Rebuke the beast among the reeds, the herd of bulls among the calves of the peoples! Rebuke the one who treads on pieces of silver! Scatter the peoples who delight in battles!

³¹ Bronze objects will come out of Egypt. Cush will quickly stretch out its hands to God.

³² You kingdoms of the earth, sing to God! Sing praise to the Lord — *Selah* — ³³ to Him who rides on the ancient heavens of the heavens! Listen! He is uttering His voice, His powerful voice.

³⁴ Ascribe power to God! His majesty is over Israel, and His power is in the clouds.

³⁵ O God, You are awe-inspiring from Your holy places. The God of Israel Himself gives power and strength to His people. Blessed be God!

69

For the choir director, according to "The Lilies," of David

¹ Save me, O God! For the water has come up to My neck.

² I have sunk in deep mud, where there is no footing. I

have come into deep waters, and a flood has swept over Me.

³ I have become weary from My crying out. My throat has become hoarse. My eyes have become dim from waiting for My God.

⁴ Those who **hate Me without cause** outnumber the hairs on My head. My deceitful enemies, who would destroy me, are powerful. Although I have not stolen, I must repay.

⁵ O God, You Yourself know My foolishness, and My guilty acts have not been hidden from You.

⁶ Let those who hope in You not be put to shame because of Me, O Lord, GOD of hosts! Let those who are intent on You not be disgraced because of Me, O God of Israel!

⁷ For it is because of You that I have endured abuse. Disgrace has covered My face.

⁸ I have become alienated from My brothers and a foreigner to My mother's children.

⁹ For **jealous love for Your house has consumed Me, and the taunts of those who taunt You have fallen on Me.**

¹⁰ When I wept, and My soul was fasting, I was insulted for it.

¹¹ When I made sackcloth My garment, I became a byword for them.

¹² Those who sit at the gate are talking about Me, and those who drink liquor make mocking songs about Me.

¹³ As for Me, My prayer comes to You, O LORD, at an acceptable time, O God. In Your great mercy, answer Me, in the truth of Your salvation!

¹⁴ Rescue Me from the wet clay! Let Me not sink into it! Let Me be rescued from those who hate Me and from the deep waters!

¹⁵ Let floodwaters not sweep over Me! Let the deep not swallow Me up, and let the pit not close its mouth over Me!

¹⁶ Answer Me, O LORD! For Your mercy is good. According to Your great compassion, turn to Me!

¹⁷ Do not hide Your face from Your Servant! For I am in trouble. Answer Me quickly!

¹⁸ Come close to My soul! Redeem it! Ransom Me because of My enemies!

¹⁹ You Yourself know My disgrace, My shame and My humiliation. All those who are hostile to Me are before You.

²⁰ Insult has broken My heart, and I am sick. I looked for sympathy, but there was none and for people to comfort Me but I found no one.

²¹ They gave Me poison for My food, and **for My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.**

²² **Let the table set before them become a trap and a snare** for their friends!

²³ **Let their eyes become darkened that they may not see, and make their loins shake constantly!**

²⁴ **Pour Your indignation out on them!** Let the glow

of Your anger overtake them!

25 Let their camp be made desolate! Let there be no one to dwell in their tents!

26 For they have been persecuting the One whom You Yourself have struck down and talk about the pain of those whom You have pierced.

27 Add guilt to their guilt, and let them not enter Your righteousness!

28 Let them **be blotted out of the book of the living**, and let them **not be recorded** with righteous people!

29 However, I am wretched and in pain. Let Your salvation protect Me, O God!

30 Let Me praise the name of God with a song, and let Me magnify Him with thanksgiving!

31 This will please the LORD more than an ox, more than a bull with its horns and hoofs.

32 When humble people have seen this, they will rejoice. You who are intent on God, may your hearts revive!

33 For the LORD listens to the needy. He has not despised His captive people.

34 Let heaven and earth praise Him, the seas and everything that moves in them!

35 For God will save Zion and will rebuild the cities of Judah, that people may dwell there and possess it.

36 The descendants of His servants will inherit it, and those who love His name will dwell in it.

70

For the choir director, of David, to bring remembrance

1 O God, come quickly to deliver me! O LORD, come quickly to help me!

2 Let those who are trying to take my life be put to shame and confounded! Let those who desire to harm me be turned back and disgraced!

3 Let those who say, "Aha! Aha!" turn back because of their shame!

4 Let all who are intent on You rejoice and be glad in You! Let those who love Your salvation also constantly say, "Let God be great!"

5 However, I am afflicted and needy, O God. Come to me quickly! You are my Help and my Deliverer. O LORD, do not delay!

71

1 In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge. Let me never be ashamed!

2 In Your righteousness rescue me and deliver me! Turn Your ear to me and save me!

3 Be a rock of refuge for me, where I may go continually! You have given the command to save me. For You are my Rock and my Fortress.

4 O my God, deliver me from the hand of a wicked person, from the grasp of one who is unjust and cruel!

5 For You are my Hope, O Lord GOD. You have been my Confidence since I was young.

6 I have been leaning on You from birth. You took me

from my mother's womb. My praise is continually about You.

7 I have become like an unsettling sign to many people, but You are my strong Refuge.

8 My mouth is filled with Your praise, with Your honour all day long.

9 Do not cast me away in the time of old age! Do not forsake me when my strength fails!

10 For my enemies have been speaking about me. Those who are watching to take my life have been consulting together.

11 They are saying: "God has forsaken him. Pursue him and take hold of him! For there is no one to rescue him."

12 O God, do not be far away from me! O my God, come quickly to help me!

13 Let the adversaries against my life be ashamed! Let them come to an end! Let those who want to harm me be covered with scorn and disgrace!

14 However, I myself shall wait continually and praise You more and more.

15 My mouth will tell about Your righteousness, about Your salvation all day long, although I do not know how to write them down.

16 I shall come with the powerful deeds of the Lord GOD. I shall proclaim Your righteousness, Yours alone.

17 O God, You have taught me since I have been young, and to this day I am declaring Your marvellous deeds.

18 Even until I am old and grey, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim Your strength to the next generation and Your power to all who are to come!

19 Your righteousness, O God, reaches to the place on high. You have done great things. O God, who is like You?

20 Although You have shown me many troubles and calamities, You will revive me again. You will bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

21 You will increase my greatness and give me comfort again.

22 I shall also praise You for Your faithfulness with a stringed instrument, O my God. I shall sing praise to You with a lyre, O Holy One of Israel.

23 My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to You, my soul also, which You have redeemed.

24 My tongue will also talk about Your righteousness all day long. For those who have been trying to harm me have become ashamed. For they have been put to confusion.

72

Of Solomon

1 O God, give Your judgments to the king and Your righteousness to the King's Son!

2 Let Him judge Your people with righteousness and Your poor people with justice!

³ May the mountains bring peace to the people, and may the hills bring righteousness!

⁴ May He award justice to those who are poor among the people! May He save the children of needy people and crush the oppressor!

⁵ May they fear You for as long as the sun endures and for as long as the moon endures, throughout all generations!

⁶ May He come down like rain on mown grass, like showers that sprinkle the earth!

⁷ May the righteous person flourish in His days, and may there be widespread peace until the moon is no more!

⁸ May He rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth!

⁹ May people in the dry land **bend their knees before Him!** May His enemies lick the dust!

¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and the coastlands bring a gift! May the kings from Sheba and Seba **bring tribute!**

¹¹ May all kings **bow down to Him!** May all nations serve Him!

¹² Indeed, may He rescue the needy person who cries out for help, the afflicted person and the person who has no helper!

¹³ May He look compassionately on weak and needy people, and may He save the lives of the poor!

¹⁴ May He redeem their lives from oppression and violence, and may their blood be precious in His sight!

¹⁵ May He live long and may gold from Sheba be given to Him! May people pray for Him continually! May they bless Him all day long!

¹⁶ May there be plenty of grain in the land! May it rustle on the mountain tops! May its fruit be like that of Lebanon! May people from the city flourish like the grass on the ground!

¹⁷ May His name endure for ever! May His name sprout before the sun! May all nations be blessed through Him! May they call Him blessed!

¹⁸ **Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,** who alone does marvellous deeds!

¹⁹ May His glorious name be blessed for ever! May the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen.

²⁰ The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are concluded.

BOOK THREE (PSALMS 73-89)

73

A psalm of Asaph

¹ Truly, God is good to Israel, to **those who are pure in heart.**

² However, as for me, my feet had almost slipped. My steps had almost slipped away.

³ For I was envious of arrogant people. I kept on seeing the prosperity of wicked people.

⁴ They suffer no pains when they die. Their bellies are fat.

⁵ They have no trouble like ordinary people. They are not plagued like other human beings.

⁶ That is why they wear arrogance like a necklace, and violence wraps them like a garment.

⁷ Their eyes bulge because of fatness, and fanciful thoughts pass through their minds.

⁸ They ridicule. They speak maliciously. They arrogantly threaten oppression.

⁹ They set their mouths against heaven, and their tongues keep marching through the earth.

¹⁰ That is why His people turn back to them and why they swallow plenty of water.

¹¹ They keep asking: "How does God know? Does the Most High know anything?"

¹² Look! These are wicked people. They are always free from worry. They increase in wealth.

¹³ Surely, it has been to no purpose that I have been keeping my heart pure and that I have been washing my hands in innocence.

¹⁴ I have been plagued all day long, and every morning my reproach comes again.

¹⁵ If I had said, "I shall continue to talk like that," look! I should have been treating the generation of Your children faithlessly.

¹⁶ When I considered how to understand this, it seemed too difficult for me, ¹⁷ until I went into God's Holy Place. Then I understood how they would end.

¹⁸ Surely You put them in slippery places and have cast them down to ruin.

¹⁹ How they have been suddenly brought to destruction! They have completely ended in sudden terror.

²⁰ Like a dream after someone awakes, so, O Lord, when You awake, You will despise them as a fantasy.

²¹ When my heart was filled with bitterness and, when I felt sharply stabbed in my inmost being, ²² I was senseless and did not understand. I was an unthinking animal in Your presence.

²³ Nevertheless, I am continually with You. You have taken hold of my right hand.

²⁴ You are guiding me with Your advice and, in the end, You will take me to glory.

²⁵ Whom have I in heaven? Indeed, if You are with me, I desire nothing else on earth.

²⁶ If my body and my heart have failed, God is the solid Foundation of my heart and my Portion for ever.

²⁷ For, indeed, those who are far from You will perish. You have been destroying all who are unfaithful to You.

²⁸ However, as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Lord GOD my Refuge, that I may declare everything that You have done.

74

A *Maskil*, of Asaph

¹ O God, why have You rejected us for ever? Why does Your anger keep on smoking against **the sheep** of Your pasture?

² Remember **Your congregation, which You bought** long ago! You have redeemed it as the tribe that is Your own possession. This is Mount Zion, where You have made Your home.

³ Lift up Your steps to this lasting heap of rubble! The enemy has damaged everything in the sanctuary.

⁴ Your foes have been roaring inside Your meeting place. They have set up their own emblems as banners.

⁵ They were like men who were raising up their axes in a thicket of trees.

⁶ Then in a group they were breaking down its carved panelling with axes and crowbars.

⁷ They have set Your Holy Place on fire. They have utterly defiled the dwelling-place of Your name.

⁸ They have been thinking, "We shall oppress them completely." They have burnt all the meeting places of God in the land.

⁹ We have no longer been seeing our miraculous signs. There is no prophet any longer, and there is no one with us who knows how long this will last.

¹⁰ How long, O God, will the foe mock? Will the enemy insult Your name for ever?

¹¹ Why do You withdraw Your hand, even Your right hand? Take it from inside the fold of Your garment and destroy them!

¹² Yet from long ago God has been my King, performing acts of salvation throughout the land.

¹³ Your Yourself used Your power to stir up the sea. You were smashing the heads of sea-monsters on the waters.

¹⁴ You have smashed the heads of Leviathan, that You may give it as food to the creatures of the desert.

¹⁵ You split open springs and streams. You dried up ever-flowing rivers.

¹⁶ The day is Yours and the night is also Yours. You have established the light-giving bodies and the sun.

¹⁷ You have set all the boundaries of the earth. You have formed summer and winter.

¹⁸ Remember this, that the enemy has mocked the LORD, and that a foolish nation has insulted Your name!

¹⁹ Do not surrender the life of Your dove to the wild beast! Do not forget the lives of Your wretched people for ever!

²⁰ Have regard for the Covenant! For the dark places in the land are full of the habitations of violence.

²¹ Let the oppressed person not turn away in disgrace! Let the wretched man and the poor man praise Your name!

²² Arise, O God! Conduct Your own lawsuit! Remember the insults that fools bring against You all day long!

²³ Do not forget the shouting of Your adversaries, the din of those who are attacking You that goes up continually!

75

For the choir director, according to "Do not destroy," a psalm of Asaph, a song

¹ We give thanks to You, O God. We give thanks. Your name is near. People tell about Your wonderful deeds.

² "When I choose the appointed time, I Myself shall judge fairly.

³ "When the earth and all its inhabitants begin to sway back and forth, it is I who hold its pillars steady." *Selah*

⁴ "I have told those who were arrogant, 'Do not be arrogant!' and those who were wicked, 'Do not lift up your horns!

⁵ 'Do not lift your horns up against heaven! Do not speak insolently with a haughty neck!'"

⁶ For raising up does not come from the east, from the west or from the wilderness.

⁷ Rather, God is the Judge. He humiliates one person and raises up another.

⁸ For there is a **cup** in the hand of the LORD. It is full of foaming **wine** and has been thoroughly **mixed**. He will pour it out of it, and all the wicked people of the earth will surely drink it and will drain it down to its dregs.

⁹ However, I myself shall declare this for ever. I shall sing praises to the God of Jacob.

¹⁰ "I shall cut off all the horns of wicked people, but the horns of righteous people will be lifted up."

76

For the choir director, on stringed instruments, a psalm of Asaph, a song

¹ God is known in Judah. His name is great in Israel.

² His tent is in Salem. His dwelling-place is in Zion.

³ There He has broken the flaming arrows of the bow, the shield, the sword and the weapons of war. *Selah*

⁴ You are radiant and more majestic than mountains full of prey.

⁵ Brave-hearted men have been plundered and have sunk into their sleep. None of the fighting men have found the use of their hands.

⁶ Because of Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, chariots and horses have been stunned.

⁷ You, You must be feared! Who may stand in Your presence after You have become angry?

⁸ You caused judgment to be heard from heaven. The earth became afraid and remained quiet, ⁹ when God rose to judge, to save all the oppressed people of the earth. *Selah*

¹⁰ Surely the anger of men will praise You. You will put on what is left of their anger as Your belt.

¹¹ Make vows to the LORD, your God, and fulfil

them! Let all those who are around Him bring tribute to the One who is to be feared!

¹² He will humble the spirits of princes. The kings of the earth must fear Him.

77

For the choir director, according to *Jeduthun*, a psalm of Asaph

¹ With my voice let me cry out to God, with my voice to God, and He will listen to me.

² On the day when I was in trouble, I pleaded to the Lord. At night, my hand was stretched out without growing weary. My soul refused to be comforted.

³ When I remember God, I groan. When I meditate, my spirit becomes faint. *Selah*

⁴ You have been holding my eyelids open. I have been so troubled that I cannot speak.

⁵ I have been considering the days of old, the years of ancient times.

⁶ "Let me remember my stringed music during the night! Let me meditate in my heart!" Then my spirit made a careful search: ⁷ "Will the Lord keep on rejecting for ever and will He never be favourable again?"

⁸ "Has His mercy ceased for ever? Has His promise failed for all generations?"

⁹ "Has God forgotten to be gracious or has He in anger shut up His compassion?" *Selah*

¹⁰ Then I said, "I have been pierced with sorrow over this, that the right hand of the Most High should change."

¹¹ I shall remember the deeds of the LORD. Yes, I shall remember Your wonders from long ago.

¹² I shall ponder about all Your work. I meditate on what You have done.

¹³ O God, Your Way is holy. Which god is great like God?

¹⁴ You are the God who works wonders. You have made known Your strength among the peoples.

¹⁵ You have redeemed Your people with Your arm, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*

¹⁶ The waters saw You, O God. The waters saw You and began to tremble. Yes, the depths were shaking.

¹⁷ The clouds poured down water. The skies gave out their thunder, and Your arrows also darted back and forth.

¹⁸ The sound of Your thunder was in the whirlwind. Lightning flashes lit up the world. The earth trembled and shook.

¹⁹ Your road went through the sea, and Your path was through great waters, and yet Your footprints could not be known.

²⁰ You led Your people like a flock by the hands of Moses and Aaron.

78

A *Maskil* of Asaph

¹ Open your ears to my teaching, my people! Turn your ears to the words from my mouth!

² **Let me open my mouth in a parable! Let me utter riddles from long ago,** ³ which we have heard and known and which our fathers have told us!

⁴ We shall not keep them hidden from their children. We shall tell the next generation about the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, His power and the wonderful things that He has done.

⁵ He has established a Testimony in Jacob and has appointed a Teaching in Israel, which He has commanded our fathers to make known to their children,

⁶ that the next generation may know them, the children who are yet to be born, that they may grow up and tell their children, ⁷ that they may place their confidence in God and not forget what God has done but keep His Commandments.

⁸ Then they will not be like their ancestors, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose hearts were not steadfast. Their spirits were not faithful to God.

⁹ Although the men of Ephraim were armed with bows and shooting them, they turned back on the day of battle.

¹⁰ They had not been keeping God's Covenant. They had refused to live by His Instruction.

¹¹ They had forgotten what He had done and the wonders that He had shown them.

¹² In the sight of their fathers, God had performed something extraordinary in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan.

¹³ He had divided the sea and caused them to pass through it and had made the water stand up like the wall of a dam.

¹⁴ He had also led them with the cloud in the daytime and throughout the night with a fiery light.

¹⁵ He had split rocks in the wilderness and had given them drink as plentiful as the depths.

¹⁶ He had also made streams come out of a rock. He had made waters flow down like rivers.

¹⁷ However, they sinned against Him still more, rebelling against the Most High in the dry country.

¹⁸ They tested God in their hearts by demanding the food for which they craved.

¹⁹ They spoke against God by asking, "Can God set a table in the wilderness?"

²⁰ "True, He did strike a rock, water did flow out and the streams did flood out. Can He also give us bread or provide meat for His people?"

²¹ Therefore, when the LORD heard this, He became furious. A fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also rose up against Israel, ²² because they did not believe in God and did not trust in His deliverance.

²³ Yet He commanded the clouds above and opened the doors of heaven.

²⁴ He rained **manna** down on them **to eat and gave**

them the grain of heaven.

²⁵ Men ate the bread of the mighty ones, and God sent them a plentiful supply of food.

²⁶ He made the east wind break out in the heavens and drove out the south wind by His power.

²⁷ He rained meat down on them like dust, winged creatures like the sand of the seas.

²⁸ He made the birds fall in the middle of His camp, all around His dwellings.

²⁹ They ate and were well satisfied. He brought them what they had craved.

³⁰ Before they had turned away from their craving, while their food was still in their mouths, ³¹ the anger of God rose against them. He killed some of their stout people. He forced the strongest young men in Israel to bow down.

³² In spite of all this, they continued to sin and did not believe in His wonderful deeds.

³³ Therefore, He brought their days to an end in futility and their years in sudden terror.

³⁴ When He killed some of them, the rest searched for Him. They repented and earnestly looked for God.

³⁵ They remembered that God was their Rock and that the Most High was their Redeemer.

³⁶ However, they deceived Him with their mouths and lied to Him with their tongues.

³⁷ Their **hearts** were **not loyal** to Him or faithful to His Covenant.

³⁸ Yet He was compassionate and atoned for their guilt. He did not destroy them. He turned His anger away many times and did not let all His rage be stirred up.

³⁹ He remembered that they were only flesh, a breeze that goes on and does not return.

⁴⁰ How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness and grieved Him in the desert!

⁴¹ Repeatedly they put God to the test and troubled the Holy One of Israel.

⁴² They did not remember His power or the day when He redeemed them from their adversary, ⁴³ when He performed His miraculous signs in Egypt, His signs in the region of Zoan.

⁴⁴ He **turned their rivers into blood**, and they could not drink from their streams.

⁴⁵ He sent a swarm of flies among them, which devoured them, and frogs, which ruined them.

⁴⁶ He gave their crops to grasshoppers and the produce of their labour to locusts.

⁴⁷ He killed their vines with hail and their sycamore-fig trees with a flood.

⁴⁸ He also surrendered their cattle to the hail and their livestock to bolts of lightning.

⁴⁹ He sent His burning anger, wrath, fury and anguish against them. He sent angels to cause them calamity.

⁵⁰ He cleared a path for His anger. He did not spare their souls from death. He gave their lives over to the

plague.

⁵¹ He struck down every first-born in Egypt, their first progeny in the tents of Ham.

⁵² He led His people out like sheep and guided them like a flock through the wilderness.

⁵³ He led them on safely, so that they were not afraid; but the sea covered their enemies.

⁵⁴ Then He brought them to His holy territory, this mountain, which His right hand had acquired.

⁵⁵ He drove out nations before them and apportioned their inheritance by a measuring line. He settled the tribes of Israel in their own tents.

⁵⁶ Yet they put the Most High God to the test, rebelled against Him and did not keep His Testimonies.

⁵⁷ They became disloyal and acted unfaithfully like their fathers. They failed to function, like a slack bow.

⁵⁸ They provoked Him to anger with their high places. They aroused Him to jealousy with their idols.

⁵⁹ When God heard, He became furious. He strongly rejected Israel.

⁶⁰ He abandoned the Tabernacle at Shiloh, the tent that He had set up among human beings.

⁶¹ He delivered His strength into captivity and His splendour into the hand of an oppressor.

⁶² He surrendered His people to the sword and was very angry with His inheritance.

⁶³ Fire consumed their young men, and His maidens received no praise.

⁶⁴ Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows could not lament.

⁶⁵ Then the Lord woke up as if from sleep, like a warrior sobering up from wine.

⁶⁶ He struck His enemies in the back and reduced them to everlasting disgrace.

⁶⁷ He rejected the tent of Joseph. He did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, ⁶⁸ but chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which He loved.

⁶⁹ He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth, which He had established for ever.

⁷⁰ He also chose David, His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds.

⁷¹ He brought him from tending suckling ewes, to shepherd Jacob, His people, and Israel, His inheritance.

⁷² He shepherded them with a pure heart and guided them with his skilful hands.

79

A psalm of Asaph

¹ O God, the nations have invaded Your inheritance. They have defiled Your holy Temple. They have made Jerusalem heaps of rubble.

² They have given the dead bodies of Your servants to the birds of the sky for food, the flesh of Your devout people to the wild animals.

³ They have **poured out** their **blood** like water all around Jerusalem, and there has been no one to bury

them.

⁴ We have become an object of scorn to our neighbours, a source of derision and ridicule to those who are around us.

⁵ **How long, O LORD?** Will You be angry for ever? Will Your jealousy keep on burning like fire?

⁶ Pour out Your wrath on **the nations who do not know You** and on the kingdoms that have not been calling on Your name!

⁷ For they have been devouring Jacob and have been making his settlement desolate.

⁸ Do not remember the sins of former generations against us! Let Your compassion come quickly to meet us! For we have become very small.

⁹ Help us, O God, our Saviour, because of Your glorious name! Deliver us and provide atonement for our sins, for Your name's sake!

¹⁰ Why should the nations ask, "Where is their God?" May Your vengeance for the blood of Your servants that has been shed become known among the nations before our eyes!

¹¹ Let the groaning of the prisoners come before You! With Your strong arm preserve those who have been condemned to die!

¹² Pay back our neighbours seven times over, into their own laps, for their insults, with which they have been reproaching You, O Lord!

¹³ Then we ourselves, who are Your people and the sheep of Your pasture, shall give thanks to You for ever. We shall declare Your praise to all generations.

80

For the choir director, according to "The Lilies," a testimony of Asaph, a psalm

¹ Listen, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock! You, who are enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth ² before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh! Stir up Your strength and come to save us!

³ Restore us, O God, and cause Your face to shine, that we may be saved!

⁴ O LORD, God of hosts, how long will You smoulder in anger against the prayers of Your people?

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them a third of a measure of tears to drink.

⁶ You cause us to have strife with our neighbours, and our enemies are laughing among themselves.

⁷ O God of hosts, restore us and cause Your face to shine, that we may be saved!

⁸ You uprooted a vine from Egypt. You drove the nations out and planted it.

⁹ You cleared the ground for it. It put down its roots and filled the land.

¹⁰ The mountains were covered with its shade, and the mighty cedars with its branches.

¹¹ It sent out its branches to the Sea and its shoots to the River.

¹² Why have You broken down its walls, so that all

who pass along the way have been plucking its fruit?

¹³ The wild boar from the forest is ravaging it, and the small creatures of the field are feeding in it.

¹⁴ O God of hosts, please return! Look down from heaven and see! Take care of this vine, ¹⁵ of the rootstock that Your right hand has planted and of the cutting that You have let grow strong for Yourself!

¹⁶ The vine has been burnt with fire and cut down. They are perishing at the rebuke of Your countenance.

¹⁷ Let Your hand be on the man at Your right hand, the son of man whom You have let grow strong for Yourself!

¹⁸ Then we shall not be disloyal to You. Give us life again! Then we shall call on Your name.

¹⁹ O LORD, God of hosts, restore us! Make Your face shine, that we may be saved!

81

For the choir director, according to the *Gittith*, of Asaph

¹ Sing aloud to God, our Strength! Shout loudly to the God of Jacob!

² Begin to sing a melody and play the tambourine, the delightful lyre and the harp!

³ Blow the horn at the new moon, at the full moon and on the day of our Feast!

⁴ For this is a Prescription for Israel, a Decision of the God of Jacob.

⁵ He set it in place as a Testimony for Joseph, when he went throughout the land of Egypt. I used to hear a language that I did not understand: ⁶ "I have removed the burden from his shoulder. His hands have been freed from the basket.

⁷ "When you were in trouble, you called out, and I rescued you. I answered you in the secret place of thunder. I tested you at the water of Meribah. *Selah*

⁸ "Listen, My people, that I may admonish you, O Israel, if you will listen to Me!

⁹ "There shall be no strange god among you. You shall not worship any foreign god.

¹⁰ "I am the LORD, your God, and I have brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, that I may fill it!

¹¹ "However, My people have not been listening to My voice. Israel has not been willing to accept Me.

¹² "Therefore, I have given them over to their own stubborn hearts. They are following their own counsels.

¹³ "If only My people would listen to Me! If only Israel would walk in My Ways!

¹⁴ "I should quickly humble their enemies. I should turn My hand against their oppressors.

¹⁵ "Those who hate the LORD would pretend submission to Him, and the time of their punishment would last for ever.

¹⁶ "However, He would feed Israel with the finest wheat. I should satisfy you with honey from a rock."

82

A psalm of Asaph

¹ God has taken His place in the divine assembly. He pronounces judgment among the “gods.”

² “How long will you judge unfairly? How long will you show partiality to wicked people?” *Selah*

³ Provide justice to the helpless person and the orphan! Protect the rights of the afflicted person and the poor person!

⁴ Rescue the helpless person and the poor person! Deliver them from the hands of wicked people!

⁵ Wicked people do not know or understand anything. They walk around in the dark. All the foundations of the earth are shaken.

⁶ **I Myself have said: “You are gods.** You are all the sons of the Most High.

⁷ “Nevertheless you will die like human beings and fall like one of the princes.”

⁸ Arise, O God! Judge the earth! For You will inherit all the nations.

83

A song, a psalm of Asaph

¹ O God, do not be silent! Do not be deaf and do not be quiet, O God!

² For, look, Your enemies are making an uproar, and those who hate You have been lifting their heads up.

³ They are concocting a crafty plan against Your people and are consulting together against those whom You treasure.

⁴ They have been saying, “Come! Let us make them disappear as a nation, that the name of Israel may not be remembered any longer!”

⁵ For they have conspired together with one mind. They are making an alliance against You — ⁶ the tents of Edom, the Ishmaelites, Moab, the people of Hagar,

⁷ Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Philistia and those who live at Tyre.

⁸ Assyria also has joined them. They have been the arm of Lot’s descendants. *Selah*

⁹ Deal with them as You did with Midian, as You did with Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon River.

¹⁰ They were destroyed at Endor. They became fertiliser for the ground!

¹¹ Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb and all their leaders like Zebah and Zalmunna!

¹² They said, “Let us take the pasturelands of God for our own possession!”

¹³ O my God, make them like tumbleweed, like stubble before the wind!

¹⁴ As a fire burns a forest and as a flame scorches the mountains, ¹⁵ so may You pursue them with Your gale and terrify them with Your windstorm!

¹⁶ Fill their faces with shame, that they may be intent on Your name, O LORD!

¹⁷ Let them be ashamed and terrified for ever! Let

them be disgraced and perish, ¹⁸ that they may acknowledge that You, whose name alone is the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth!

84

For the choir director, according to the *Gittith*, a psalm of the sons of Korah

¹ How lovely is Your dwelling-place, O LORD of hosts!

² My soul has been deeply longing, — indeed, it has been yearning, for the courts of the LORD. My heart and my flesh are shouting for joy to the living God.

³ Even a sparrow has found a home, and a swallow a nest for herself, where she has settled her young, near Your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.

⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are constantly praising You. *Selah*

⁵ Blessed are the people whose strength is in You! Your paths are in their hearts.

⁶ As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they turn it into a place of springs. The early rain also covers it with blessings.

⁷ They go from strength to strength. Each one appears before God in Zion.

⁸ O LORD, God of hosts, hear my prayer! Listen, O God of Jacob! *Selah*

⁹ Look at our shield, O God! Look on the face of Your anointed one!

¹⁰ For one day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather lie at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

¹¹ For the LORD God is a Sun and a Shield. The LORD will give grace and glory. He will not hold back anything good from those whose conduct is honest.

¹² O LORD of hosts, blessed is the person who trusts in You!

85

For the choir director, a psalm of the sons of Korah

¹ LORD, You have been favourable to Your land. You have brought Jacob back from captivity.

² You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people. You have covered all their sin. *Selah*

³ You have taken back all Your fury. You have turned away from Your fierce anger.

⁴ Restore us, O God, You who save us! Withhold Your indignation toward us!

⁵ Will You be angry with us for ever? Will You prolong Your anger through all generations?

⁶ Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?

⁷ Show us Your mercy, O LORD, and grant us Your salvation!

⁸ Let me hear what God, the LORD, will speak! For He will promise peace to His people, to His devout

people. However, let them not become foolish again!

⁹ Surely His salvation is near those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰ Mercy and truth have met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

¹¹ Truth will sprout up from the earth, and righteousness will look down from heaven.

¹² The LORD will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its produce.

¹³ Righteousness will go before Him, to prepare a way for His footsteps.

86

A prayer of David

¹ Turn Your ear toward me, O LORD! Answer me! For I am wretched and needy.

² Protect my life! For I am faithful to You. Save Your servant, who trusts in You! You are my God.

³ Be gracious to me, O Lord! For I am calling out to You all day long.

⁴ Make the soul of Your servant glad! For to You, O Lord, I am lifting up my soul.

⁵ For You, O Lord, are kind and ready to forgive and very merciful toward all who call on You.

⁶ Listen, O LORD, to my prayer! Pay attention to the voice of my pleas for favour!

⁷ In the day of my distress I am calling out to You. For You will answer me.

⁸ There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, and there are no deeds like Yours.

⁹ **All the nations** that You have made **will come and worship** before You, O Lord. They will honour Your name.

¹⁰ For You are great and do wonderful things. You alone are God.

¹¹ Teach me Your Way, O LORD! I shall walk in Your truth. Make my heart concentrate on fearing Your name!

¹² I shall praise You, O Lord, my God, with all my heart. I shall honour Your name for ever.

¹³ For Your mercy toward me is great, and You will rescue my soul from the depths of Sheol.

¹⁴ O God, arrogant people have been attacking me, and a band of ruthless people have been trying to take my life and have had no regard for You.

¹⁵ However, You, O Lord, are **a compassionate and gracious God**, slow to become angry and abundant in mercy and truth.

¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me! Give Your strength to Your servant and save the son of Your female servant!

¹⁷ Grant me a sign of Your goodness, that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame! For You, O LORD, have been helping me and comforting me.

87

A psalm of the sons of Korah, a song

¹ His foundation is on the holy mountains.

² The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the other dwellings of Jacob.

³ Glorious things are said about you, O city of God. *Selah*

⁴ "I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who acknowledge Me. There is Philistia, as well as Tyre, along with Cush. They will say, 'This one has been born there.'"

⁵ However, it will be said about Zion: "This one and that one were born in it. The Most High Himself will establish it."

⁶ The LORD will record when He registers the peoples: "This one has been born there." *Selah*

⁷ Singers and dancers alike will say, "All my springs are in you."

88

A song, a psalm of the sons of Korah, to the choir director, according to *Mahalath Leannoth*, a *Maskil* of Heman the Ezrahite

¹ O LORD, my saving God, by day and by night I have been crying out before You.

² Let my prayer come before You! Turn Your ear to my cry!

³ For my soul has had enough troubles, and my life has come close to Sheol.

⁴ I have been counted with those who are going down to the pit. I have become like a man who has no strength.

⁵ I have been released among the dead. I am like those who have been slain, who lie in the grave, whom You do not remember any longer, and who have been cut off from Your hand.

⁶ You have put me in the lowest part of the pit, in dark places, in deep places.

⁷ Your wrath has come over me, and You have overwhelmed me with all Your waves. *Selah*

⁸ You have **distanced** my **friends** from me. You have made me disgusting to them. I am shut in and cannot get out.

⁹ My eye has become dim from misery. I have been calling to You every day, O LORD. I have been spreading out my hands to You.

¹⁰ Do You perform wonders for the dead? Do departed spirits rise up and praise You? *Selah*

¹¹ Is Your mercy proclaimed in the grave or Your faithfulness in the place of destruction?

¹² Are Your wonders known in the darkness or Your righteousness in the land of oblivion?

¹³ Nevertheless, I myself have been crying out to You for help, O LORD, and in the morning my prayer comes before You.

¹⁴ Why do You reject my soul, O LORD? Why do You hide Your face from me?

¹⁵ I have been afflicted and close to death from my youth. I have been enduring Your terrors. I am in des-

pair.

¹⁶ Your wrath has been sweeping over me. Your horrors have been silencing me.

¹⁷ All day long they have been surrounding me like water. They have been engulfing me from every side.

¹⁸ You have distanced my loved one and my friend from me, and darkness has become my only acquaintance.

89

A *Maskil* of Ethan the Ezrahite — compare 2 Sm 7:8-16.

¹ Let me sing about the merciful acts of the LORD for ever! With my mouth I shall proclaim Your faithfulness to all generations.

² For I have been saying: “Mercy will be built up for ever. You will establish Your faithfulness in the heavens.”

³ You have said: “I have made a Covenant with My chosen one. I have **sworn** an oath to My servant **David**: ⁴ “I shall establish **your Descendant** for ever and build up **your throne** for all generations.” *Selah*

⁵ Let the heavens praise Your wonders, O LORD, and also Your faithfulness, in the assembly of the holy ones!

⁶ For who in the clouds can compare with the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD?

⁷ God is greatly to be feared in the council of **the holy ones**. He is more awe-inspiring than all who surround Him.

⁸ O LORD, God of hosts, who is as strong as You are, O LORD? Your faithfulness surrounds You.

⁹ You rule over the raging sea. When its waves rise, You still them.

¹⁰ You have crushed Rahab, like one who is slain. You have **scattered** Your enemies **with** Your powerful **arm**.

¹¹ The heavens are Yours. The earth is also Yours. You have laid the foundations of the world and everything that is in it.

¹² You have created the north and the south. Tabor and Hermon shout for joy at Your name.

¹³ You have a mighty arm. Your hand is strong. Your right hand is lifted high.

¹⁴ Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne. Mercy and truth go before You.

¹⁵ Blessed are the people who know the shout of joy! O LORD, they walk in the light of Your presence.

¹⁶ They rejoice in Your name all day long and are exalted in Your righteousness.

¹⁷ For You are their glorious Strength, and by Your favour our horn is raised high.

¹⁸ For our shield belongs to the LORD, our king to the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁹ Once in a vision You said to Your devout people: “I have granted help to a Warrior. I have raised up One chosen from the people.

²⁰ “**I have found David**, My Servant. I have anointed

Him with My holy oil.

²¹ “Therefore, with Him My hand will be secure. Indeed, My arm will make Him strong.

²² “No enemy will deceive Him, and no wicked person will subdue Him.

²³ “I shall crush His enemies before Him and strike down those who hate Him.

²⁴ “My faithfulness and mercy will be with Him, and in My name His horn will be raised high.

²⁵ “I shall extend His power over the sea and His right hand over the rivers.

²⁶ “He **will call to Me**: ‘You are My **Father**, my God, and the Rock of My salvation.’

²⁷ “Yes, I myself shall make Him **the First-born**. He will be **the Most High to the kings of the earth**.

²⁸ “I shall keep My mercy for Him for ever, and My Covenant will stand firm for Him.

²⁹ “I shall set His Offspring up for ever, and His throne like the days of heaven.

³⁰ “If His sons forsake My Instruction and do not follow My Decisions, ³¹ if they profane My Statutes and do not keep My Commandments, ³² then I shall call their rebellion to account with the rod and their iniquity with blows.

³³ “However, I shall not annul My mercy toward Him or deceive Him about My faithfulness.

³⁴ “I shall not violate My Covenant or change what has gone forth from My lips.

³⁵ “Once for all I have sworn an oath by My holiness. I shall certainly not lie to David.

³⁶ “His Offspring will last for ever, and His throne will be like the sun before Me.

³⁷ “Like the moon He will be established for ever and a reliable witness in the clouds.”

³⁸ Nevertheless, You Yourself have discarded and rejected Him and have become enraged with Your Anointed One.

³⁹ You have repudiated the covenant with Your Servant. You have defiled His crown to the ground.

⁴⁰ You have broken through all His walls. You have reduced His fortified cities to ruins.

⁴¹ All who were passing along the way have plundered Him. He has become a taunt that His neighbours use.

⁴² You have exalted the right hands of His oppressors. You have made all His enemies rejoice.

⁴³ Indeed, You are turning back His rock-hard sword and have not made Him stand in the battle.

⁴⁴ You have put an end to His splendour. You have cast His throne down to the ground.

⁴⁵ You have cut short the days of His youth. You have covered Him with shame. *Selah*

⁴⁶ How long, O LORD? Will You hide Yourself for ever? Will Your anger continue to burn like fire?

⁴⁷ Remember how short the time of my life is! For what futility You have created all the descendants of

Adam!

⁴⁸ What man can go on living and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of Sheol? *Selah*

⁴⁹ Where are Your former acts of mercy, O Lord, which You swore to David in Your faithfulness?

⁵⁰ Remember, O Lord, the disgrace of Your servants. I am carrying in My heart the insults of all the many nations, ⁵¹ with which Your enemies have been mocking, O LORD, with which they have been **mocking** the footsteps of **Your Anointed One**.

⁵² **Blessed be the LORD** for ever! Amen and Amen!

BOOK FOUR (PSALMS 90-106)

90

A prayer of Moses, the man of God

¹ O LORD, You have been our dwelling-place in all generations.

² Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity You are God.

³ You turn mankind back to dust and say, "Return, children of Adam!"

⁴ For **a thousand years** in Your sight are **like yesterday** when it passes, like a watch in the night.

⁵ You end their lives while they sleep. They are like grass that is fresh in the morning.

⁶ In the morning it flourishes and is fresh. In the evening it withers and dries up.

⁷ For we have been consumed by Your anger and terrified by Your fury.

⁸ You have set our iniquities before You, our secret sins in the light of Your presence.

⁹ For all our days have passed away in Your wrath. We finish our years like a sigh.

¹⁰ The days of our lives have seventy years in them or, if we are strong, they are eighty years. Their pride is only toil and trouble. For life quickly passes, and we fly away.

¹¹ Who knows the power of Your anger? For Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due to You.

¹² Teach us to count our days correctly, that we may gain wise hearts!

¹³ Return, O LORD! How long? Have compassion on Your servants!

¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with Your mercy, that we may shout with joy and be glad all our days!

¹⁵ Make us glad for as many days as You have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen calamity!

¹⁶ Let Your work be seen by Your servants, and Your splendour by their children!

¹⁷ Moreover, let the favour of the LORD, our God, be on us! Establish for us the work of our hands! Yes, establish the work of our hands!

91

¹ The one who lives under the shelter of the Most High will stay for the night in the shadow of the Al-

mighty.

² I shall say to the LORD, "My Refuge and my Fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

³ For He Himself will rescue you from the fowler's snare and from the destructive plague.

⁴ He will cover you with His feathers, and you will take refuge under His wings. His truth will be your Shield and Buckler.

⁵ You will not be afraid of the terror of the night or of the arrow that flies by day ⁶ or of the plague that stalks in darkness or of the pestilence that lays waste at midday.

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

⁸ You will only look with your eyes and see the retribution on wicked people.

⁹ For You, O LORD, are my Refuge. You have made the Most High your Dwelling-place.

¹⁰ No harm will happen to you. No plague will come near your tent.

¹¹ **For He will command His angels about you, to protect you in all your ways.**

¹² **They will lift you up on their hands that you may not strike your foot against a stone.**

¹³ You **will tread** on the lion and the **cobra**. You will trample on the young lion and the snake.

¹⁴ "Because he is devoted to Me, I shall rescue him. I shall protect him, because he knows My name.

¹⁵ "When he calls to Me, I shall answer him. I shall be with him in trouble. I shall rescue him and honour him.

¹⁶ "I shall satisfy him with a long life and show him My salvation."

92

A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day

¹ It is good to give thanks to the LORD and to sing to praise Your name, O Most High, ² to proclaim Your mercy in the morning and Your faithfulness at night,

³ with a ten-stringed harp, with a lute, with the music of a lyre.

⁴ For You have made me rejoice, O LORD, by what You have done. I shall shout for joy about what Your hands have done.

⁵ How great Your works are, O LORD! Your thoughts are very deep.

⁶ A stupid person does not know, and a fool does not understand this: ⁷ that, although wicked people sprout up like grass, and all evildoers flourish, they will be destroyed for ever.

⁸ Nevertheless, You, O LORD, are exalted for ever.

⁹ For indeed Your enemies, O LORD, for indeed Your enemies will perish, and all evildoers will be scattered.

¹⁰ However, You have lifted up my horn like those of an Arabian antelope. I have been anointed with fresh olive-oil.

¹¹ My eye has been gloating over my enemies. My ears are hearing the cry among the evildoers who have risen up against me.

¹² The righteous person will flourish like the palm-tree and grow tall like a cedar in Lebanon.

¹³ They have been planted in the house of the LORD. They will bloom in the courts of our God.

¹⁴ They will still bear fruit when they are old. They will be fresh and luxuriant, ¹⁵ to declare that the LORD is upright. He is my Rock and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

93

¹ **The LORD reigns. He** is robed with majesty. The LORD is robed. He has fastened on strength as His belt. Surely the world is firmly established. It will not be moved.

² Your throne has been established from of old. You are from eternity.

³ The rivers have lifted up, O LORD, the rivers have lifted up their voices. The rivers are lifting up their pounding waves.

⁴ The LORD in His place on high is mightier than **the sounds of many waters**, mightier than the breakers of the sea.

⁵ Your Testimonies are very reliable. Holiness adorns Your house, O LORD, for days without end.

94

¹ O God of vengeance, O LORD, O God of vengeance, appear in radiance!

² Rise, O Judge of the earth! Bring retaliation back on haughty people!

³ How long, O LORD, will wicked people, how long will wicked people rejoice?

⁴ They keep on gushing forth. They keep on speaking insolently. All evildoers keep on boasting.

⁵ They are crushing Your people, O LORD, and are oppressing Your inheritance.

⁶ They kill the widow and the resident-foreigner and murder orphans.

⁷ Yet they say: "The LORD does not see it. The God of Jacob does not pay attention."

⁸ Pay attention, stupid persons among the people! You fools also, when will you gain insight?

⁹ Will He who has planted the ear not hear? Will He who has formed the eye not see?

¹⁰ Will He who instructs nations, will He who teaches human beings knowledge, not discipline?

¹¹ **The LORD knows that the thoughts of human beings are futile.**

¹² Blessed is the man whom You discipline, O LORD, and whom You teach from Your instruction, ¹³ that You may provide him peace from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked person!

¹⁴ For **the LORD will not abandon His people** and will not forsake His own inheritance.

¹⁵ For legal decisions will become just again, and all who are upright in heart will follow justice.

¹⁶ Who will rise up against those who bring trouble on my behalf? Who will take his stand for me against evildoers?

¹⁷ If the LORD had not helped me, my soul would soon have been dwelling in silence.

¹⁸ If I said, "My foot has been slipping," Your mercy, O LORD, kept on supporting me.

¹⁹ When I had many disquieting thoughts inside me, Your consolations kept on delighting my soul.

²⁰ Will a corrupt throne that shapes misfortune against the Law ally itself with You?

²¹ They band together against the life of a righteous man and condemn innocent blood.

²² Nevertheless, the LORD has been my Stronghold, and my God has been a Rock that protects me.

²³ He has turned their own injustice back on them and will use their own evil to destroy them. The LORD, our God, will silence them.

95

¹ Come! Let us shout joyfully to the LORD! Let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation!

² Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving! Let us shout joyfully to Him with songs!

³ For the LORD is the great God and the great King above all gods.

⁴ In His hand are the unexplored depths of the earth, and the peaks of the mountains belong to Him.

⁵ The sea is His, and He has made it, and His hands have formed the dry land.

⁶ Come, let us worship and bow down! Let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

⁷ For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.

"Today, if you hear His voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness, ⁹ "when your fathers tested Me and tried Me, although they had seen what I had done!

¹⁰ "For forty years I was disgusted with that generation. So, I said: 'They are a people whose hearts go astray. They have not known My Ways.'

¹¹ "Therefore, in My anger I swore an oath: 'They will certainly not enter My rest!'"

96

— compare v. 1-13 with 1 Chronicles 16:23-33

¹ **Sing to the LORD a new song!** Sing to the LORD, all the earth!

² Sing to the LORD! Bless His name! Proclaim His salvation from day to day!

³ Declare His glory among the nations, His marvellous deeds among all the peoples!

⁴ For the LORD is great and very worthy of praise. He should be feared above all gods.

⁵ For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the

LORD has made the heavens.

⁶ Splendour and majesty are before Him. Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

⁸ Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name! Present an offering and come into His courts!

⁹ Worship the LORD in holy splendour! Tremble before Him, all the earth!

¹⁰ Say among the nations: “**The LORD reigns.** The world also is firmly established. It will not be moved. He will judge the peoples justly!”

¹¹ Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice! Let the sea, and all that fills it roar!

¹² Let the fields and everything in them be jubilant! Then all the trees of the forest will shout with joy ¹³ before the LORD.

For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. **He will judge the world with righteousness** and the peoples with His truth.

97

¹ The LORD reigns. Let the earth rejoice! Let the many coastlands rejoice!

² Clouds and darkness surround Him. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.

³ Fire is going in front of Him and burning up His foes on every side.

⁴ His flashes of lightning are lighting up the world. The earth is watching and trembling.

⁵ The mountains are melting like wax before the LORD, before the LORD of all the earth.

⁶ The heavens are proclaiming His righteousness, and all the peoples are seeing His glory.

⁷ All who worship images and who boast about false gods will be put to shame. **Worship Him, all you gods!**¹²¹

⁸ Zion is listening and rejoicing, and the daughters of Judah are rejoicing because of Your judgments, O LORD.

⁹ For You, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth. You are exalted far above all gods.

¹⁰ You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the lives of His devout people and delivers them from the hands of wicked people.

¹¹ Light is sown for the righteous person, and joy for those who are upright in heart.

¹² Rejoice in the LORD, righteous people, and praise the remembrance of His holiness!

98

A psalm

¹ **Sing a new song to the LORD!** For He has done wonderful things. His right hand and His holy arm have gained salvation for Him.

² The LORD has made His salvation known. He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

³ He **has remembered His mercy** and His faithfulness to the family of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

⁴ Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth! Break forth, shout for joy and sing praise!

⁵ Sing praise to the LORD with a lyre, with a lyre and the sound of music, ⁶ with trumpets and the sound of a horn! Shout joyfully before the King, the LORD!

⁷ Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the world and those who live in it!

⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands, and let the mountains shout for joy together ⁹ before the LORD! For He is coming to judge the earth. **He will judge the world righteously** and the peoples justly.

99

¹ The LORD reigns. Let the peoples tremble! He is enthroned above the cherubim. Let the earth quake!

² The LORD is great in Zion and is high above all the peoples.

³ Let them praise Your great and awesome name! He is holy.

⁴ The mighty King loves justice. You have established fairness. You have established justice and righteousness in Jacob.

⁵ Exalt the LORD, our God, and worship at **His footstool!** He is holy.

⁶ Moses and Aaron were among His priests. Samuel was also among those who called on His name. They called to the LORD, and He answered them.

⁷ He spoke to them in a pillar of cloud. They kept His Testimonies and the Ordinance that He had given them.

⁸ O LORD, our God, You answered them. You were a God who forgave them but who took revenge on their wrongdoings.

⁹ Exalt the LORD, our God, and worship at His holy mountain! For the LORD, our God, is holy.

100

A psalm of thanksgiving

¹ Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth!

² Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into His presence with joyful singing!

³ Know that the LORD is God! It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

⁴ Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him, and bless His name!

⁵ For the LORD is good. His mercy endures for ever, and His faithfulness through all generations.

101

A psalm of David

¹ I shall sing about mercy and justice. I shall sing

¹²¹ gods – or “angels” (Heb 1:6).

praise to You, O LORD.

² I shall pay close attention to an honest way. Oh, when will You come to me? I shall live with integrity of heart inside my house.

³ I shall not put any wicked thing in front of my eyes. I hate the committing of transgressions. It will not cling to me.

⁴ A perverse heart will depart from me. I shall not experience evil.

⁵ I shall silence anyone who uses his tongue to slander his neighbour secretly. I shall not tolerate anyone who has haughty eyes or an arrogant heart.

⁶ My eyes will be on the faithful people in the land, that they may live with me. The person who walks on an honest way is the one who may serve me.

⁷ No one who acts deceitfully may live inside my home. No one who tells lies may remain in my presence.

⁸ Every morning I shall put to silence all wicked people in the land, that I may cut off all evildoers from the city of the LORD.

102

A prayer of a suffering person, who is weary and pours out his complaint before the LORD

¹ O LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry for help come to You!

² Do not hide Your face from me in the day when I am in distress! Turn Your ear to me! Answer me quickly when I call!

³ My days have disappeared in smoke, and my bones have been burnt up as in a furnace.

⁴ My heart has been struck down like grass and has withered. Indeed, I have forgotten to eat my food.

⁵ Because of my loud groaning my bones cling to my flesh.

⁶ I have become like a desert owl, like an owl among ruins.

⁷ I have been keeping awake and have been like a bird all alone on a roof.

⁸ All day long my enemies have been taunting me. Those who make a mockery of me have been using my name as a curse.

⁹ For I have been eating ashes like bread and have been mixing tears with my drink, ¹⁰ because of Your indignation and Your anger. For You have taken me and thrown me away.

¹¹ My days are like a lengthening shadow, and I am withering away like grass.

¹² Nevertheless, You Yourself, O LORD, will be enthroned for ever, and Your fame will endure to all generations.

¹³ You Yourself will rise and have compassion on Zion, because it is time to be gracious to it. Indeed, the appointed time has come.

¹⁴ For Your servants have taken pleasure in its stones and have taken pity on its rubble.

¹⁵ Nations will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth will fear Your glory.

¹⁶ For the LORD will build up Zion. He will appear in His glory.

¹⁷ He will turn His attention to the prayer of naked people, and He will not despise their prayer.

¹⁸ Let this be written down for a future generation, that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD!

¹⁹ For the LORD will look down from His Holy Place on high. From heaven the LORD will look at the earth, ²⁰ to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release those who have been condemned to die, ²¹ that they may declare the name of the LORD in Zion and His praise in Jerusalem, ²² when peoples and kingdoms gather together to serve the LORD.

²³ He has broken my strength along the road. He has cut short my days.

²⁴ I keep on saying: "My God, do not take me away in the middle of my days! Your years go on through all generations.

²⁵ **"Long ago You laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands.**

²⁶ **"They will perish, but You will endure. They will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will be discarded.**

²⁷ **"Nevertheless, You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.**

²⁸ "The children of Your servants will dwell securely, and their descendants will be established before You."

103

Of David

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul and, all my inmost being, bless His holy name!

² Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all His benefits!

³ He forgives all your iniquities. He heals all your diseases.

⁴ He redeems your life from the pit. He crowns you with mercy and compassion.

⁵ He satisfies what adorns you with good things, so that you renew your youth like the eagle.

⁶ The LORD carries out acts of righteousness and of justice for all who are oppressed.

⁷ He has made known His Ways to Moses, His deeds to the people of Israel.

⁸ **The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to become angry and abounding in mercy.**

⁹ He will not always accuse and will not keep on being angry for ever.

¹⁰ He has not treated us as our sins deserve and has not paid us back according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His **mercy toward those who fear Him.**

¹² As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

¹³ As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has had compassion on those who fear Him.

¹⁴ He certainly knows what He has fashioned. He remembers that we are dust.

¹⁵ A human being's days are like grass. He flourishes like a flower of the field.

¹⁶ For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place no longer recognises it.

¹⁷ However, the **mercy** of the LORD is **from everlasting** to everlasting **on those who fear Him**, and His righteousness belongs to children's children, ¹⁸ to those who keep His Covenant and to those who remember to carry out His Directions.

¹⁹ The LORD has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over everything.

²⁰ Bless the LORD, you His angels, who are mighty and strong, who carry out His Word, and who listen to His spoken Word!

²¹ Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, you His servants, who carry out His will!

²² Bless the LORD, all His works, in all the places of His dominion! Bless the LORD, O my soul!

104

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD, my God, You are very great. You are clothed with majesty and splendour.

² You cover Yourself with light as with a cloak. You stretch out the heavens like a tent-curtain.

³ He lays the beams of His upper rooms on the waters. He makes the clouds His chariot. He walks on the wings of the wind.

⁴ **He makes the winds His angels, flames of fire His servants.**

⁵ He has established the earth on its foundations. It will never be moved.

⁶ You covered it with the deep ocean as with a garment. The waters were standing above the mountains.

⁷ Because of Your rebuke the waters fled. Because of the sound of Your thunder, they hurried away.

⁸ The mountains were rising, and the valleys were sinking down to the place that You had allocated for them.

⁹ You have set a boundary that they will not cross over. They will not come back to cover the earth.

¹⁰ You send springs into the stream-beds. They flow between the mountains.

¹¹ They give water to all the wild animals. The wild donkeys quench their thirst.

¹² The **birds of the sky live** beside the streams. They sing in the thick foliage.

¹³ He waters the mountains from His upper rooms. The earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your labour.

¹⁴ You make grass grow for the cattle and green plants for mankind to cultivate, to bring forth food from the earth, ¹⁵ wine that cheers the heart of a human being,

olive-oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen the heart of a human being.

¹⁶ The trees of the LORD have enough to drink, the cedars of Lebanon, which He has planted.

¹⁷ The birds make their nests in them. The stork makes its home in the juniper trees.

¹⁸ The high mountains are for the wild goats. The rocks are places of refuge for the rock-badgers.

¹⁹ He has made the moon for appointed times. The sun knows its time to set.

²⁰ You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest creep about.

²¹ The young lions roar for their prey and try to get their food from God.

²² When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie down in their dens.

²³ Man goes out to his work and to his labour until the evening.

²⁴ O LORD, how many are the things that You have made! In wisdom You have made them all. The earth is full of Your property.

²⁵ Over there is the great sea, vast and wide, with countless numbers of creatures, living things both large and small.

²⁶ There the ships sail about, and Leviathan, which You have formed to play in it.

²⁷ All of them wait for You to give them their food at the right time.

²⁸ You give it to them, and they gather it up. You open Your hand, and they are satisfied with good things.

²⁹ You hide Your face, and they are terrified. You take away their breath, and they expire and return to their dust.

³⁰ You send out Your Spirit, and they are created, and You renew the surface of the earth.

³¹ May the glory of the LORD endure for ever! May the LORD rejoice in what He has made!

³² He looks at the earth, and it trembles. He touches the mountains, and they smoke.

³³ Let me sing to the LORD throughout my life! Let me sing praise to my God all my life!

³⁴ May my meditation be pleasing to Him! I shall rejoice in the LORD.

³⁵ May sinners perish from the earth, and may there no longer be any wicked people! Bless the LORD, O my soul! **Praise the LORD!**^{*122}

105

— compare v. 1-15 with 1 Chronicles 16:8-22

¹ Give thanks to the LORD! Call on His name! Proclaim among the peoples what He has done!

² Sing to Him! Sing praise to Him! Loudly tell about all His marvellous deeds!

³ Glory in His holy name! Let the hearts of those who are intent on the LORD rejoice!

¹²² The Hebrew here as in many following Psalms is the word Hallelujah.

⁴ Be intent on the LORD and His strength! Be intent on His face constantly!

⁵ Remember His marvellous deeds, which He has done, His wonders and the Decisions that He has uttered, ⁶ you descendants of Abraham, His servant, you descendants of Jacob, His chosen ones!

⁷ He is the LORD, our God. His Decisions are in all the earth.

⁸ **He remembers His Covenant for ever**, the Word that He has commanded for a thousand generations, ⁹ the Covenant that He made **with Abraham** and **His oath to Isaac**.

¹⁰ He confirmed it as a Prescription for Jacob, as an everlasting Covenant for Israel, ¹¹ saying, "I shall give you the land of Canaan, as the portion that you will inherit," ¹² when they were few in number, few indeed, and temporary residents in it.

¹³ They wandered from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another nation.

¹⁴ He permitted no one to oppress them and reproved kings because of them: ¹⁵ "Do not touch My anointed people and do not harm My prophets!"

¹⁶ He called a famine down on the land. He broke off their store of bread.

¹⁷ He sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

¹⁸ They afflicted his feet with chains, and a collar of iron was put on his throat, ¹⁹ until the time when what He had said came true. The Word of the LORD refined him.

²⁰ The king sent for him and allowed the chains on his feet to be broken. The ruler of the peoples let him go free.

²¹ **He made him the master of his palace and the ruler** over all his property, ²² to imprison his high officials as he pleased, and he kept on teaching his elders wisdom.

²³ Then Israel came to Egypt, and Jacob lived as a foreigner in the land of Ham.

²⁴ The LORD made His people very fruitful. He made them more numerous than their enemies.

²⁵ He changed their hearts to hate His people, to behave deceitfully with His servants.

²⁶ He sent Moses, His servant, and Aaron, whom He had chosen.

²⁷ They performed His acts as miraculous signs among them and wonders in the land of Ham.

²⁸ He sent darkness and made the land dark. Had the Egyptians not been stubbornly resisting His Words?

²⁹ He turned their water into blood and caused their fish to die.

³⁰ Their land teemed with frogs, even in the dark rooms of their kings.

³¹ He spoke, and swarms of flies came, and gnats throughout their territory.

³² He gave them hail instead of rain, with flaming fire

in their land.

³³ He struck their vines and fig trees and smashed the trees in their territory.

³⁴ He spoke, and locusts came, wingless locusts without number.

³⁵ They devoured all the green plants in their land. They devoured the produce of their soil.

³⁶ He struck every first-born in their land, the first of all their generative power.

³⁷ He brought Israel out with silver and gold, and no one among His tribes stumbled.

³⁸ Egypt was glad when they departed, because dread of Israel had fallen on them.

³⁹ He spread out a cloud as a covering, and fire to give light by night.

⁴⁰ When the people asked, He brought quail and satisfied them with bread from heaven.

⁴¹ He opened a rock, and water gushed out. It flowed through the dry places like a river.

⁴² For He remembered His holy promise to Abraham, His servant.

⁴³ He brought His people out with rejoicing, His chosen ones with a shout of joy.

⁴⁴ He gave them the lands of the nations, and they inherited what other peoples had toiled over, ⁴⁵ that they might keep His Prescriptions and observe His Instructions. **Praise the LORD!**

106

— compare v. 47-48 with 1 Chronicles 16:35-36

¹ Praise the LORD! Give thanks to the LORD! For He is good. For His mercy endures for ever.

² Who can declare the mighty deeds of the LORD and proclaim all His praise?

³ Blessed are those who act justly and the person who does what is right at all times!

⁴ Remember me, O LORD, when You show favour to Your people! Come to help me with Your salvation,

⁵ that I may see the prosperity of Your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the joy of Your nation, that I may boast with Your inheritance!

⁶ We have sinned together with our fathers. We have been doing wrong. We have been making ourselves guilty.

⁷ Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders. They did not remember Your numerous acts of mercy. They rebelled beside the sea, the Red Sea.

⁸ Yet He saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power known.

⁹ He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up. He led them through the deep water as through a desert.

¹⁰ He **saved them from the hand of the one who hated them** and redeemed them **from the hand of the enemy**.

¹¹ Water covered their adversaries. Not one of them survived.

¹² Then they believed what He had said. They were

singing His praise.

¹³ They quickly forgot what He had done. They did not wait for His advice.

¹⁴ They had a strong craving in the wilderness and put God to the test in the desert.

¹⁵ He gave them what they were asking for but sent a wasting disease on their lives.

¹⁶ They became envious of Moses in the camp and of Aaron, the holy one of the LORD.

¹⁷ The ground opened and swallowed Dathan and covered the company of Abiram.

¹⁸ Fire blazed up in their company. Flames burned up the wicked people.

¹⁹ They made a calf in Horeb and worshipped a cast image.

²⁰ They **exchanged their Glory for an image** of a bull, which eats grass.

²¹ They forgot God, their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt, ²² wonders in the country of Ham and awesome deeds at the Red Sea.

²³ He said that He would destroy them and would have, if Moses, whom He had chosen, had not stood before Him in the breach, to turn His wrath away, to prevent Him from destroying them.

²⁴ They rejected the pleasant land. They did not believe His promise.

²⁵ They made sullen accusations in their tents. They did not listen to the voice of the LORD.

²⁶ He raised His hand to make an oath to them that He would make them fall in the wilderness, ²⁷ to make their descendants fall among the nations and to scatter them among the lands.

²⁸ They attached themselves to the Baal of Peor and ate what had been sacrificed to lifeless gods.

²⁹ They provoked God to anger by what they did, and a deadly plague broke out among them.

³⁰ Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stopped.

³¹ It was credited to him as righteousness, to all generations, for ever.

³² They roused God to anger beside the water of Meribah, and trouble came to Moses because of them.

³³ For they rebelled against His Spirit, so that Moses spoke rashly with his lips.

³⁴ They did not destroy the peoples whom the LORD had told them to destroy, ³⁵ but mingled with the nations and learned to do as they were doing.

³⁶ They worshipped their images, which became a snare for them.

³⁷ They **sacrificed** their sons and daughters to **demons**.

³⁸ They poured out innocent blood, the blood of their own sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the images of Canaan, and the land was defiled with blood.

³⁹ They became unclean because of their actions.

They prostituted themselves by their own deeds.

⁴⁰ Therefore, the anger of the LORD became hot against His people, and He abhorred His own inheritance.

⁴¹ He delivered them into the hands of the nations, and those who hated them ruled over them.

⁴² Their enemies oppressed them, and they were subdued under their power.

⁴³ Many times He rescued them, but they were rebellious in their purposes and sank down through their guilt.

⁴⁴ Nevertheless, He looked at their distress when He heard their cry.

⁴⁵ **He remembered His Covenant** with them and relented, in keeping with His great mercy.

⁴⁶ He made all those who had taken them captive regard them with compassion.

⁴⁷ Save us, O LORD, our God, and gather us from the nations, that we may give thanks to Your holy name and may pride ourselves in praising You!

⁴⁸ **Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel**, from everlasting to everlasting! Let all the people also say "Amen!" **Praise the LORD!**

BOOK FIVE (PSALMS 107-150)

107

¹ Give thanks to the LORD! For He is good. For His mercy endures for ever.

² Let the people whom the LORD has redeemed proclaim that He has redeemed them from the hand of the oppressor, ³ and has gathered them from the other lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south!

⁴ They wandered around the desolate wilderness without finding a city where they could live.

⁵ They were hungry and thirsty. Their souls grew faint inside them.

⁶ When they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, He used to deliver them from their afflictions.

⁷ He led them on a straight road that they might go to a city where they could live.

⁸ Let them give thanks to the LORD for His mercy and for His wonderful deeds to the descendants of Adam!

⁹ For He satisfied their withered souls and **filled their hungry souls with good things**.

¹⁰ Those who **lived in the darkness and deep gloom** were prisoners to misery and iron chains, ¹¹ because they had rebelled against the Words of God and had despised the advice of the Most High.

¹² He humbled their hearts by calamity. They fell, and there was no one to help them.

¹³ When they cried out to the LORD in their distress, He used to save them from their afflictions.

¹⁴ He used to bring them out of the darkness and deep gloom and tear their chains apart.

¹⁵ Let them give thanks to the LORD for His mercy and His wonderful deeds to the descendants of Adam!

¹⁶ For He shattered bronze gates and cut through iron bars.

¹⁷ Foolish people suffered affliction because of their rebellious conduct and because of their sins.

¹⁸ Their souls loathed all food, and they went close to the gates of death.

¹⁹ When they cried out to the LORD in their distress, He used to save them from their afflictions.

²⁰ He used to **send His Word** and heal them and rescued them from their pit.

²¹ Let them give thanks to the LORD for His mercy and for His wonderful deeds to the descendants of Adam!

²² Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, and let them declare what He has done with shouts of joy!

²³ Those who sail on the sea in ships, who conduct business on the mighty waters, ²⁴ have seen the works of the LORD and His wonders in the deep.

²⁵ He spoke and raised a stormy wind and made the waves of the sea rise high.

²⁶ The sailors were **rising up to the sky**. They were **going down into the depths**. Their souls were melting away because of their trouble.

²⁷ They were reeling and staggering like a drunken man, and all their skill was proving itself confused.

²⁸ When they cried out to the LORD in their distress, He used to save them from their afflictions.

²⁹ He reduced the storm to a whisper, and the waves of the sea became calm.

³⁰ They were glad that the waves became quiet. Then He guided them to the harbour that they desired.

³¹ Let them give thanks to the LORD for His mercy and for His wonderful deeds to the descendants of Adam!

³² Let them exalt Him in the assembly of the people and praise Him in the session of the elders!

³³ He turns rivers into a desert, springs of water into thirsty ground, ³⁴ and a fruitful land into a salty wasteland, because of the wickedness of those who live there.

³⁵ He turns a desert into pools of water and dry land into springs of water.

³⁶ There He settles hungry people, and they establish a city where they can live.

³⁷ They sow fields and plant vineyards, which yield a fruitful harvest.

³⁸ When He blesses them, their numbers increase greatly, and He does not diminish the number of their cattle.

³⁹ When they have become few and have been brought low because of oppression, calamity and sorrow, ⁴⁰ He pours contempt on nobles and makes them wander around in trackless wastes.

⁴¹ Nevertheless, He raises needy people out of affliction

and makes their families like a flock.

⁴² Upright people see this and rejoice, but everything that is perverse has been shutting its mouth.

⁴³ Let whoever is wise pay attention to these things! Let them closely consider the merciful acts of the LORD!

108

A song, a Psalm of David — *compare v. 1-5 with Ps 57:7-11, and v. 6-13 with Ps 60:5-12.*

¹ My heart is steadfast, O God. Let me sing and make music! Indeed, that is my honour.

² Wake up, O harp and lyre! Let me waken the dawn!

³ Let me praise You among the peoples, O LORD! Let me sing praise to You among the nations!

⁴ For Your mercy is higher than the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

⁵ Be exalted above the heavens, O God! Let Your glory also be over all the earth!

⁶ That those who are dear to You may be rescued, save with Your right hand and answer me!

⁷ God has promised in His sanctuary: "I shall be exultant. I shall divide up Shechem and measure out the Valley of Succoth.

⁸ "Gilead is Mine. Manasseh is Mine. Ephraim is a helmet on My head. Judah is My sceptre.

⁹ "Moab is My washbasin. I shall throw My sandal on Edom, I shall shout in triumph over Philistia."

¹⁰ Who will bring me into the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom?

¹¹ Have You not rejected us, O God? O God, You refrain from going out with our armies.

¹² Give us help against the enemy! Human deliverance is useless.

¹³ With God we shall do great things, and He will trample down our enemies.

109

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ O God, whom I praise, do not be silent!

² For a wicked mouth and a deceitful mouth have opened against me. They have been speaking against me with lying tongues.

³ They have been surrounding me with hateful words and have been fighting against me without a reason.

⁴ In return for my love they are accusing me. Nevertheless, I continue to pray.

⁵ They have been inflicting evil on me in return for good and hatred in return for my love.

⁶ Appoint a wicked man over him! Let an accuser stand at his right hand!

⁷ When he is tried, let him come away guilty! Let his prayer become a sin!

⁸ Let his days be few, and **let someone else take over his appointed position!**

⁹ Let his children become orphans, and his wife a widow!

¹⁰ Let his children continually roam around and beg, and let them look for help far from their places of rubble!

¹¹ Let a moneylender seize everything that he has, and let foreigners plunder what he has gained by his labour!

¹² Let no one extend mercy to him, and let no one take pity on his fatherless children!

¹³ Let the line of his descendants be cut off, and let their name be wiped out in the next generation!

¹⁴ May the guilt of his fathers be remembered before the LORD, and may the sin of his mother not be wiped out!

¹⁵ May they be before the LORD continually, and may He cut off the memory of them from the earth!

¹⁶ For he has not remembered to show mercy but has hunted down the wretched, needy and broken-hearted man, to kill him.

¹⁷ He has loved to curse, and a curse will come on him. He has taken no pleasure in blessing, and a blessing will be far from him.

¹⁸ He has worn cursing like his clothing. It will enter his body like water and into his bones like olive-oil.

¹⁹ Let it become like a garment that he wraps around himself! Let him always put it around himself like a girdle!

²⁰ Let this be the retribution from the LORD to those who accuse me and to those who speak evil against me!

²¹ Nevertheless, You Yourself, O GOD, my Lord, deal with me for Your name's sake! Because Your mercy is good, deliver me!

²² For I am wretched and needy, and my heart has been pierced inside me.

²³ I have passed away like a lengthening shadow. I have been shaken off like a locust.

²⁴ My knees have been giving way because of my fasting, and my body has become lean, without any fat.

²⁵ I myself have become an object of scorn to them. When they look at me they **shake their heads**.

²⁶ Help me, O LORD, my God! Save me according to Your mercy, ²⁷ that people may know that this is Your hand, that You, O LORD, have done it.

²⁸ They may curse, but You Yourself will bless. When they rise up, they will be ashamed, but Your servant will rejoice.

²⁹ Let those who accuse me be clothed with disgrace, and let them cover themselves with their shame as with a robe!

³⁰ I shall use my mouth to thank the LORD fervently and shall praise Him among many people.

³¹ For He stands at the right hand of the needy person, to save his life from those who condemn him.

110

A psalm of David

¹ **The LORD has said to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet!"**

² The LORD will send forth Your mighty sceptre from Zion. Rule in the middle of Your enemies!

³ Your people will be volunteers in the day of Your armed power. In holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn, the dew of Your youth belongs to You.

⁴ **The LORD has sworn an oath and will not relent: "You are a priest for ever in the order of Melchizedek."**

⁵ The Lord is at Your right hand. He will crush kings on the day of His anger.

⁶ He will judge among the nations. He will fill them with corpses. He will crush the leaders over the wide world.

⁷ He will drink from a brook beside the road. Therefore, He will hold His head high.

111

¹ **Praise the LORD!** I shall give thanks to the LORD with all my heart, in the company of upright people and in the congregation.

² The works of the LORD are great. They are studied by all who delight in them.

³ His work is splendid and majestic, and **His righteousness endures for ever**.

⁴ He has caused His miraculous acts to be remembered. The LORD is gracious and compassionate.

⁵ He has given food to those who fear Him. He will remember His Covenant for ever.

⁶ He has shown His powerful works to His people by giving to them the inheritance of the nations.

⁷ The works of His hands are faithful and just. All His Precepts are trustworthy.

⁸ They are firm for ever and ever. They have been made in truth and uprightness.

⁹ He has sent redemption to His people. He has ordained His Covenant for ever. His name is holy and awesome.

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. All who observe His Precepts have good understanding. His praise endures for ever.

112

¹ **Praise the LORD!** Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who takes great delight in His Commandments!

² His descendants will be mighty in the land. The generation of upright people will be blessed.

³ There will be wealth and riches in his home, and his righteousness continues for ever.

⁴ Light will shine in the darkness for upright people. He is merciful, compassionate and just.

⁵ All will go well for the man who is generous and lends and conducts his affairs justly.

⁶ He will surely never be shaken. A righteous man

will be remembered for ever.

⁷ He will not be afraid of bad news. His heart is steadfast, full of confidence in the LORD.

⁸ His heart is firm. He will have no fear, until he looks in triumph on his adversaries.

⁹ **He has distributed freely. He has given to the poor. His righteousness endures for ever.** His horn will be lifted high in honour.

¹⁰ The wicked person will see it and be annoyed. He will gnash his teeth and melt away. The desire that wicked people have will come to nothing.

113

¹ **Praise the LORD!** Praise, servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD!

² Let the name of the LORD be blessed both now and for ever!

³ From the rising of the sun to its setting let the name of the LORD be praised!

⁴ The LORD is high above all nations. His glory is above the heavens.

⁵ Who is like the LORD, our God, who is seated on high, ⁶ who stoops down to look at the heavens and the earth?

⁷ He raises the poor person from the dust and lifts the needy person from the ash heap, ⁸ that He may seat him with princes, with the princes of His people.

⁹ He settles a childless woman in her home as the joyful mother of her children. **Praise the LORD!**

114

¹ When Israel came out of Egypt, when Jacob's family left a people who were speaking a foreign language,

² Judah became His sanctuary. Israel became His dominion.

³ The sea looked and **fled**. The Jordan turned back.

⁴ The mountains skipped about like rams, the hills like lambs.

⁵ What was the matter with you, O sea, that you were fleeing, O Jordan, that you were turning back, ⁶ O mountains, that you were skipping about like rams, O hills, like lambs?

⁷ **O earth, tremble at the presence of the Lord,** in the presence of the God of Jacob!

⁸ He turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water.

115

¹ Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory, because of Your mercy, because of Your truth.

² Why should the nations ask, "Where, then, is their God?"

³ Our God is in heaven. He has done whatever He has desired.

⁴ Their idols **are silver and gold. Human hands have made them.**

⁵ They have mouths but do not speak. They have eyes but **do not see.**

⁶ They have ears but **do not hear.** They have noses but do not smell.

⁷ They have hands but do not feel. They have feet but **do not walk.** They do not make a sound with their throats.

⁸ Those who make them will be like them. So will everyone who trusts in them.

⁹ Israel, trust the LORD!

He is their Help and their Shield.

¹⁰ Family of Aaron, trust the LORD!

He is their Help and their Shield.

¹¹ You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD!

He is their Help and their Shield.

¹² The LORD has remembered us. He will bless us.

He will bless the family of Israel. He will bless the family of Aaron.

¹³ He will bless **those who fear** the LORD, both the **small and the great.**

¹⁴ May the LORD make you increase, both you and your children!

¹⁵ May you be blessed by the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth!

¹⁶ The heavens are the heavens belonging to the LORD, but He has given the earth to the descendants of Adam.

¹⁷ It is not those who are dead who praise the LORD, nor do any who go down into silence.

¹⁸ Nevertheless, we shall bless the LORD, both now and for ever. **Praise the LORD!**

116

¹ I love the LORD, because He hears my voice, my plea for mercy.

² Because He has turned His ear to me, I shall call on Him all my life.

³ The cords of death had entangled me. The distresses of Sheol had taken hold of me. I was encountering affliction and anguish.

⁴ However, I kept on calling on the name of the LORD: "O LORD, I pray, save my life!"

⁵ The LORD is gracious and righteous. Our God is compassionate.

⁶ The LORD protects simple people. When I was weak, He saved me.

⁷ Return to your resting place, O my soul! For the LORD has been good to you.

⁸ For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears and my feet from stumbling.

⁹ I shall walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁰ **I believed** even when **I said**, "I am severely afflicted."

¹¹ I myself said, when I was alarmed, "**Every human being is a liar.**"

¹² What shall I repay to the LORD for all the good that He has done to me?

¹³ I shall lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.

¹⁴ I shall fulfil my vows to the LORD, right in the presence of all His people.

¹⁵ The death of His faithful people is precious in the sight of the LORD.

¹⁶ O LORD, I am indeed Your servant. I am Your servant, the son of Your maidservant. You have undone the chains on my feet.

¹⁷ I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to You and call on the name of the LORD.

¹⁸ I shall fulfil my vows to the LORD, right in the presence of all His people, ¹⁹ in the courts of the house of the LORD, in the middle of you, O Jerusalem. **Praise the LORD!**

117

¹ **Praise the LORD**, all you nations! Glorify Him, all you peoples!

² For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the LORD endures for ever. **Praise the LORD!**

118

¹ Give thanks to the LORD! For He is good. For His mercy endures for ever.

² Let Israel say: "For His mercy endures for ever!"

³ Let the house of Aaron say, "His mercy endures for ever!"

⁴ Let those who fear the LORD say, "His mercy endures for ever!"

⁵ Out of my distress I called on the LORD. The LORD answered me and set me in a spacious place.

⁶ **The LORD is on my side. I shall not be afraid. What can any human being do to me?**

⁷ The LORD is on my side as my Helper. I myself shall look in triumph at those who hate me.

⁸ It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in human beings.

⁹ It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

¹⁰ All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the LORD I kept warding them off.

¹¹ They surrounded me. Yes, they surrounded me. In the name of the LORD I certainly kept warding them off.

¹² They surrounded me like bees. They were extinguished like a fire among thorns. In the name of the LORD I kept defeating them.

¹³ You pushed me down violently to make me fall, but the LORD helped me.

¹⁴ The LORD is my Strength and my Song and has become my Salvation.

¹⁵ The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of righteous people. The right hand of the LORD does mighty things.

¹⁶ The right hand of the LORD is raised high. The right hand of the LORD does mighty things.

¹⁷ I shall not die but live and I shall proclaim what the LORD has done.

¹⁸ The LORD **disciplined** me severely but **did not give me over to death.**

¹⁹ Open to me the gates of righteousness! I shall enter through them. I shall give thanks to the LORD.

²⁰ This is the gate of the LORD, through which righteous people will enter.

²¹ I shall give thanks to You. For You have answered me and You have become my Salvation.

²² **The Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone.**

²³ **This has come from the LORD. It is marvellous in our eyes.**

²⁴ This is the day that the LORD has made. **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

²⁵ **Save us, we pray,** ¹²³ O LORD! O LORD, please give us success!

²⁶ **Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!** We have blessed you all from the house of the LORD.

²⁷ The LORD is God and has given us light. Tie the festive procession together with leafy branches as far as the horns of the altar!

²⁸ You are my God, and I shall give thanks to You. You are my God. Let me honour You highly!

²⁹ Give thanks to the LORD! For He is good. For His mercy endures for ever.

119

Aleph

¹ Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the Instruction of the LORD!

² Blessed are those who observe His Testimonies! They are intent on Him with all their hearts.

³ Indeed, they do nothing wicked. They walk in His Ways.

⁴ You Yourself have commanded us to keep Your Directions carefully.

⁵ Oh that my ways were steadfast, to keep Your Prescriptions!

⁶ Then I should not be ashamed when I look at all Your Commandments.

⁷ I shall praise You with an upright heart when I learn Your righteous Decisions.

⁸ I shall keep Your Prescriptions. Do not utterly forsake me!

Beth

⁹ How will a young man keep his behaviour pure? By keeping it according to Your Word.

¹⁰ I have been searching for You with all my heart. Do not let me go astray from Your Commandments!

¹¹ I have treasured Your Word in my heart, that I may

¹²³ The Hebrew gives the word "Hosanna."

Psalms

not sin against You.

¹² Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your Prescriptions!

¹³ With my lips I have proclaimed all the Decisions of Your mouth.

¹⁴ I have been rejoicing in the way of Your Testimonies as much as in all riches.

¹⁵ Let me meditate on Your Directions, and let me examine Your Ways!

¹⁶ I shall delight in Your Statutes. I shall not forget Your Word.

Gimel

¹⁷ Deal generously with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your Word.

¹⁸ Uncover my eyes, that I may see wonderful things out of Your Instruction!

¹⁹ I am a resident-foreigner on the earth. Do not hide Your Commandments from me!

²⁰ My soul has been worn down with longing for Your Decisions at all times.

²¹ You have rebuked arrogant people, who are cursed, who go astray from Your Commandments.

²² Remove insult and contempt from me! For I have been keeping Your Testimonies.

²³ Even though officials have also been sitting and speaking together against me, Your servant will meditate on Your Prescriptions.

²⁴ Indeed, Your Testimonies are my delight. They are the ones that give me advice.

Daleth

²⁵ My soul has been clinging to the dust. Keep me alive according to Your Word!

²⁶ When I declared my ways, You answered me. Teach me Your Prescriptions!

²⁷ Make me understand the way of Your Directions, that I may meditate on Your wonderful deeds!

²⁸ My soul has been weeping because of grief. Strengthen me according to Your Word!

²⁹ Turn a deceitful way aside from me, and graciously provide me with Your Instruction.

³⁰ I have chosen the way of Truth. I have set Your Decisions before me.

³¹ I have been clinging to Your Testimonies. O LORD, do not let me be put to shame!

³² I shall run in the path of Your Commandments. For You will **enlarge my heart**.

He

³³ Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your Prescriptions, that I may keep it to the end!

³⁴ Give me understanding, that I may observe Your Instruction and that I may keep it with my whole heart!

³⁵ Lead me on the path of Your Commandments! For I have been taking pleasure in it.

³⁶ Turn my heart toward Your Testimonies, and not toward dishonest gain!

³⁷ Turn my eyes away from looking at worthless

things! Preserve my life through Your Ways!

³⁸ Confirm Your Word to Your servant, that I may fear You!

³⁹ Take away my disgrace, of which I have been afraid! For Your Decisions are good.

⁴⁰ Look! I have been longing for Your Directions. Preserve my life through Your righteousness!

Waw

⁴¹ Let Your merciful acts come to me, O LORD, Your salvation, according to Your Word, ⁴² that I may have an answer for the one who insults me! For I trust in Your Word.

⁴³ Do not snatch the Word of Truth from my mouth in any way! For I wait for Your Decisions.

⁴⁴ Let me constantly keep Your Instruction, for ever and ever.

⁴⁵ Let me walk freely in a spacious place! For I have been searching for Your Directions.

⁴⁶ Let me speak about Your Testimonies in the presence of kings! Then I shall not be ashamed.

⁴⁷ Let me find delight in Your Commandments, which I love.

⁴⁸ I shall lift up my hands to Your Commandments, which I love, that I may meditate on Your Prescriptions.

Zayin

⁴⁹ Remember the Word that You have given to Your servant, on which You have made me hope!

⁵⁰ This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your Word has been preserving my life.

⁵¹ Arrogant people have been ridiculing me greatly. Yet I have not turned away from Your Instruction.

⁵² I remember Your Decisions from long ago, O LORD, and I have taken comfort.

⁵³ Rage has taken hold of me because of wicked people, who forsake Your Instruction.

⁵⁴ Your Prescriptions have become my songs in the house where I reside.

⁵⁵ I remember Your name at night, O LORD, that I may keep Your Instruction.

⁵⁶ This benefit has come to me, that I have been keeping Your Directions.

Heth

⁵⁷ You are my Portion, O LORD. I have promised to keep Your Words.

⁵⁸ I have asked for Your favour with all my heart. Be gracious to me according to Your Word!

⁵⁹ I have been considering my ways and turned my feet back to Your Testimonies.

⁶⁰ I have been hurrying and have not been delaying, to keep Your Commandments.

⁶¹ Although the ropes of wicked people have been wrapped around me, I have not forgotten Your Instruction.

⁶² At midnight I shall rise to give thanks to You because of Your righteous Decisions.

⁶³ I am a companion of all who fear You and of those

Psalms

who keep Your Directions.

⁶⁴ The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy. Teach me Your Prescriptions!

Teth

⁶⁵ You have been treating Your servant well, O LORD, according to Your Word.

⁶⁶ Teach me good judgment and knowledge! For I trust in Your Commandments.

⁶⁷ Before I was afflicted, I used to sin thoughtlessly but now I have been keeping Your Word.

⁶⁸ You are good and do what is good. Teach me Your Prescriptions!

⁶⁹ Although arrogant people have smeared me with lies, I shall keep Your Directions with all my heart.

⁷⁰ Their hearts are as insensitive as fat, but I have taken delight in Your Instruction.

⁷¹ It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your Prescriptions.

⁷² The Instruction from Your mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Yod

⁷³ Your hands have made me and fashioned me. Make me understand, that I may learn Your Commandments!

⁷⁴ Those who fear You will see me and rejoice, because I have been putting my hope in Your Word.

⁷⁵ I know, O LORD, that Your Decisions are righteous and that You have been afflicting me in faithfulness.

⁷⁶ Let Your mercy, I pray, serve to comfort me, according to Your Promise to Your servant!

⁷⁷ Let Your compassion come to me that I may live! For Your Instruction is my delight.

⁷⁸ Let arrogant people be ashamed! For they have misled me with lies. I myself shall meditate on Your Directions.

⁷⁹ Let those who fear You turn to me, those who know Your Testimonies!

⁸⁰ Let my heart be blameless regarding Your Prescriptions, that I may not be ashamed!

Kaph

⁸¹ My soul has been longing for Your salvation. I have been waiting for Your Word.

⁸² My eyes have become weak from looking for Your Promise. I ask, "When will You comfort me?"

⁸³ Although I have become like a wineskin in the smoke, I have not forgotten Your Prescriptions.

⁸⁴ How many are the days of Your servant? When will You carry out judgment on those who are persecuting me?

⁸⁵ Arrogant people have dug pits for me, which are contrary to Your Instruction.

⁸⁶ All Your Commandments are sure. Help me! People have been persecuting me with falsehood.

⁸⁷ They had almost brought me to an end on the earth, but I have not forsaken Your Directions.

⁸⁸ Preserve my life according to Your mercy, that I

may keep the Testimony from Your mouth!

Lamedh

⁸⁹ O LORD, Your Word has been established for ever in heaven.

⁹⁰ Your faithfulness endures to all generations. You have established the earth, and it continues to stand.

⁹¹ They have continued to stand firmly today because of Your Decisions. For they are all Your servants.

⁹² If Your Teaching had not been my delight, I should have perished in my affliction.

⁹³ I shall never forget Your Directions, because You have preserved my life through them.

⁹⁴ I belong to You. Save me! For I have been intent on Your Directions.

⁹⁵ Wicked people have been lying in wait for me to destroy me. However, I am giving my attention to Your Testimonies.

⁹⁶ I have seen a limit to all perfection, but Your Commandment is exceedingly broad.

Mem

⁹⁷ Oh, how I love Your Instruction! It is my meditation all day long.

⁹⁸ Your Commandments make me wiser than my enemies. For they are always with me.

⁹⁹ I have had more insight than all my teachers. For Your Testimonies are my meditation.

¹⁰⁰ I have been behaving more intelligently than the old men, because I have been keeping Your Directions.

¹⁰¹ I have kept my feet back from every evil path that I may keep Your Word.

¹⁰² I have not turned away from Your Decisions. For You Yourself have taught me.

¹⁰³ How delicious are Your Words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

¹⁰⁴ Because of Your Directions I behave perceptively. Therefore, I hate every false path.

Nun

¹⁰⁵ Your Word is a lamp for my feet and a light to my path.

¹⁰⁶ I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to keep Your righteous Decisions.

¹⁰⁷ I have been severely afflicted, O LORD. Preserve my life according to Your Word!

¹⁰⁸ Please treat favourably the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me Your Decisions!

¹⁰⁹ My life is constantly in my hand, but I do not forget Your Instruction.

¹¹⁰ Wicked people have set a trap for me, but I have not gone astray from Your Directions.

¹¹¹ I have taken possession of Your Testimonies for ever. Indeed, they are the joy of my heart.

¹¹² I have directed my heart to carry out Your Prescriptions for ever, to the very end.

Samekh

¹¹³ I hate double-minded people but love Your Instruction.

Psalms

¹¹⁴ You are my Hiding Place and my Shield. I have put my hope in Your Word.

¹¹⁵ Go away from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the Commandments of my God!

¹¹⁶ Support me according to Your Promise, that I may live, and do not let me be ashamed of my hope!

¹¹⁷ Hold me, that I may be safe, that I may always pay attention to Your Prescriptions.

¹¹⁸ You have treated all who go astray from Your Prescriptions as worthless. For their deceit is a lie.

¹¹⁹ You have removed all wicked people of the earth as dross. That is why I love Your Testimonies.

¹²⁰ My flesh prickles from fear of You, and I am afraid of Your Decisions.

'Ayin

¹²¹ I have done what is righteous and just. Do not abandon me to those who oppress me!

¹²² Be responsible for the well-being of Your servant! Let arrogant people not oppress me!

¹²³ My eyes have become weak from looking for Your salvation and for Your righteous Promise.

¹²⁴ Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy, and teach me Your Prescriptions!

¹²⁵ I am Your servant. Make me perceptive, that I may know Your Testimonies!

¹²⁶ It is time for the LORD to act. People have broken Your Instruction.

¹²⁷ Therefore, I love Your Commandments more than gold, even more than pure gold.

¹²⁸ Therefore, I have carefully observed all Your Precepts about all things. I hate every false path.

Pe

¹²⁹ Your Testimonies are wonderful. Therefore, my soul has observed them.

¹³⁰ The revelation of Your Words gives light. It gives understanding to simple people.

¹³¹ I have opened my mouth wide and have been panting, because I have been longing for Your Commandments.

¹³² Turn toward me and be gracious to me, as Your custom is toward those who love Your Name!

¹³³ Make my steps steady by Your Promise, and let no misdeed gain power over me!

¹³⁴ Redeem me from human oppression, that I may keep Your Directions!

¹³⁵ Make Your face shine on Your servant and teach me Your Prescriptions!

¹³⁶ Streams of tears have been running down from my eyes, because people have not been keeping Your Instruction.

Tzade

¹³⁷ **You are righteous, O LORD, and Your Decisions are right.**

¹³⁸ You have laid down Your Testimonies, which are righteous and very trustworthy.

¹³⁹ My zeal has silenced me, because my adversaries forget Your Words.

¹⁴⁰ Your Promise has been well refined and Your servant loves it.

¹⁴¹ I am insignificant and despised. Yet I do not forget Your Directions.

¹⁴² Your righteousness is righteous for ever, and Your Instruction is true.

¹⁴³ Distress and hardship have overtaken me, but Your Commandments are my delight.

¹⁴⁴ Your Testimonies are righteous for ever. Make me perceptive, that I may live!

Qoph

¹⁴⁵ I have been calling out with all my heart. Answer me, O LORD! Let me keep Your Prescriptions!

¹⁴⁶ I have been calling to You. Save me, that I may keep Your Testimonies!

¹⁴⁷ I arose early before dawn and cried out for help. I have put my hope in Your Word.

¹⁴⁸ My eyes have been the first to look at the night-watches, that I may meditate on Your Promise.

¹⁴⁹ Hear my voice according to Your mercy! O LORD, preserve my life according to Your Decision!

¹⁵⁰ Those who are following an evil purpose have come close. They are far away from Your Instruction.

¹⁵¹ You are near, O LORD, and all Your Commandments are true.

¹⁵² Long ago I learned from Your Testimonies that You have firmly founded them for ever.

Resh

¹⁵³ Look at my affliction and rescue me! For I have not forgotten Your Instruction.

¹⁵⁴ Defend my case and redeem me! Preserve my life according to Your Promise!

¹⁵⁵ Salvation is far from wicked people. For they have not been intent on Your Prescriptions.

¹⁵⁶ Your acts of compassion are many, O LORD. Preserve my life according to Your Decisions!

¹⁵⁷ My persecutors and my adversaries are many, but I have not turned away from Your Testimonies.

¹⁵⁸ I have seen those who act faithlessly and have been loathing them. For they have not been keeping Your Word.

¹⁵⁹ See how I love Your Directions! O LORD, preserve my life according to Your mercy!

¹⁶⁰ The summary of Your Word is Truth. Every one of Your righteous Decisions endures for ever.

Sin and Shin

¹⁶¹ High officials have been persecuting me without a reason, but my heart has been trembling because of Your Word.

¹⁶² I rejoice over Your Promise like someone who brings out much plunder.

¹⁶³ I hate falsehood and loathe it but love Your Instruction.

¹⁶⁴ Seven times a day I have been praising You because of Your righteous Decisions.

¹⁶⁵ Those who love Your Instruction have great peace, and nothing makes them stumble.

¹⁶⁶ I have been hoping for Your salvation, O LORD, and have been carrying out Your Commandments.

¹⁶⁷ My soul has been keeping Your Testimonies. I love them very much.

¹⁶⁸ I have been keeping Your Directions and Your Testimonies. For all my ways are before You.

Taw

¹⁶⁹ Let my cry for help come near into Your presence, O LORD! Make me perceptive according to Your Word!

¹⁷⁰ Let my plea for favour come before You! Rescue me according to Your Promise!

¹⁷¹ Let my lips pour out praise! For You teach me Your Prescriptions.

¹⁷² Let my tongue sing about Your Promise! For all Your Commandments are righteous.

¹⁷³ Let Your hand become my help! For I have chosen Your Directions.

¹⁷⁴ I have been longing for Your salvation, O LORD, and Your Instruction is my delight.

¹⁷⁵ May my soul live, that it may praise You! May Your Decisions help me!

¹⁷⁶ I have gone astray like a lost sheep. Search for Your servant! For I do not forget Your Commandments.

120

A song for ascending processions

¹ In my distress I have been calling to the LORD, and He has answered me.

² O LORD, rescue my soul from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue!

³ What will He give you and what more will He do to you, you deceitful tongue?

⁴ A warrior's sharpened arrows and glowing coals of the broom shrub!

⁵ How awful for me, that I have been living as a foreigner in Meshech, that I have been dwelling among the tents of Kedar!

⁶ My soul has been dwelling for too long with one who hates peace.

⁷ I am for peace, but, when I speak, they are for war.

121

A song for ascending processions

¹ I shall lift up my eyes to the hills. From where will my help come?

² My help comes from the LORD, who has made heaven and earth.

³ May He not allow your foot to slip! Let Him who keeps you not fall asleep!

⁴ Indeed, He who watches over Israel will neither fall asleep nor slumber.

⁵ The LORD is your Keeper. The LORD is your Shade on your right hand.

⁶ **The sun will not strike you by day** or the moon by night.

⁷ The LORD will protect you from all harm. He will protect your life.

⁸ The LORD will keep you as you go out and come in, both now and for ever.

122

A song of David for ascending processions

¹ I was glad when people told me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!"

² Our feet have been standing inside your gates, O Jerusalem, ³ Jerusalem, you who have been built like a city that has been firmly joined together, ⁴ where the tribes, the tribes of the LORD, have been going up. This is a regulation for Israel, to praise the name of the LORD.

⁵ For thrones for judgment have been set there, the thrones of the family of David.

⁶ Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May those who love you have peace!"

⁷ May there be peace inside your walls, and security in your fortresses!"

⁸ For the sake of my brothers and friends, let me say, "May there be peace in you!"

⁹ Because of the house of the LORD, our God, I shall be intent on your good.

123

A song for ascending processions

¹ I have been lifting up my eyes to You, O You who are enthroned in heaven.

² Indeed, as the eyes of servants look to the hands of their masters, as the eyes of a maidservant look to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD, our God, until He shows favour to us.

³ Show favour to us, O LORD, show favour to us! For we have had more than enough contempt.

⁴ Our souls have had more than enough derision from those who are at ease and derision from those who are proud.

124

A song of David for ascending processions

¹ "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side," Israel should say, ² "if it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when human beings rose up against us, ³ then they would have swallowed us alive when their anger blazed against us.

⁴ Then the waters would have engulfed us. The stream would have swept over our lives.

⁵ Then the raging water would have swept over our lives."

⁶ Blessed be the LORD, who has not given us up as prey to their teeth!

⁷ Our lives have escaped like a bird from the snare of the hunters. The snare is torn, and we have escaped.

⁸ Our help is in the name of the LORD, who has made heaven and earth.

125

A song for ascending processions

¹ Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which will not be shaken, but will remain steady for ever.

² As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people, both now and for ever.

³ For the sceptre of the wicked man will not rest on the land allotted to righteous people, with the result that righteous people do not stretch out their hands to injustice.

⁴ Do good, O LORD, to those who are good and to those who are upright in their hearts!

⁵ However, when people turn aside to their crooked paths, the LORD will lead them away with evildoers.
May peace be on Israel!

126

A song of David for ascending processions

¹ When the LORD brought back the captives of Zion, we were like those who were dreaming.

² Then our mouths were filled with laughter, and our tongues with shouts of joy. Then people said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

³ The LORD has done great things for us, and we are glad.

⁴ Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like watercourses in the Negev!

⁵ Those who sow in tears will harvest with shouts of joy.

⁶ He who continually goes along weeping, carrying his bag of seed, will certainly come back with shouts of joy, carrying his sheaves.

127

A song of Solomon for ascending processions

¹ If the LORD does not build a house, those who have been building it have been labouring over it in vain. If the LORD does not watch over a city, the watchman has been staying alert in vain.

² It is in vain for you to get up early, to stay up until late and to eat hard-won food. For He certainly gives sleep to those whom He loves.

³ Indeed, children are an inheritance from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.

⁴ Children who have been born in one's youth are like arrows in the hand of a warrior.

⁵ Blessed is the man who has filled his quiver with them! Such men will not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies at the city-gate.

128

A song for ascending processions

¹ Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in His Ways!

² You will certainly eat what your own hands have

worked for. You will be blessed, and it will be well with you.

³ Your wife will be like a fruitful vine inside your house. Your children will be like olive shoots around your table.

⁴ This is how the man who fears the LORD will be blessed.

⁵ May the LORD bless you from Zion, that you may see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life!

⁶ May you see your children's children! **Peace be on Israel!**

129

A song for ascending processions

¹ "People have often treated me with hostility from the time when I was young," let Israel say —

² "People have often treated me with hostility from the time when I was young but have not overcome me.

³ "Ploughmen have been ploughing over my back. They have been making their furrows long.

⁴ "The LORD is righteous. He has cut in pieces the ropes of wicked people."

⁵ May all who hate Zion be ashamed and be turned back!

⁶ May they be like grass on the housetops, which withers before anyone pulls it out, ⁷ with which no reaper has filled his hand, with which no harvester has filled his arms, ⁸ with the result that no one who passes by them has said, "May the blessing of the LORD be on you!" or "We have blessed you in the name of the LORD."

130

A song for ascending processions

¹ Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD.

² LORD, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to the sound of my pleas for mercy!

³ If You, LORD, should observe iniquities, O LORD, who would stand?

⁴ Nevertheless, with You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared.

⁵ I have been waiting for the LORD. My soul has been waiting, and I have been putting my hope in His Word.

⁶ My soul waits for the LORD more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him there is very great redemption, ⁸ and **He Himself will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.**

131

A song of David for ascending processions

¹ O LORD, my heart has not been conceited, and my eyes have not been haughty. I have not been occupied with matters too great or things too wonderful for me.

² Instead, I have calmed and quietened myself like a weaned child on its mother. My soul is in me like a weaned child.

³ Israel, hope in the LORD, both now and for ever!

132

A song for ascending processions

¹ O LORD, remember David in all the hardships that he has endured, ² that he swore an oath to the LORD, that he made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob: ³ “I shall certainly not enter the tent of my house, I shall certainly not go up to the couch that is my bed, ⁴ I shall certainly not allow my eyes to sleep or my eyelids to slumber, ⁵ until I **find** a place for the LORD, **a dwelling-place for the Mighty One of Jacob.**”

⁶ Look! We have heard about it in Ephrathah. We have found it in the fields of Jaar.

⁷ Let us go to His dwelling-place! Let us worship at His footstool!

⁸ Come up, O LORD, to Your resting-place, You, and the Ark of Your strength!

⁹ Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness, and let Your godly people shout for joy!

¹⁰ For the sake of Your servant David, do not reject the face of Your anointed one!

¹¹ **The LORD has sworn a sure oath to David**, from which He will not turn back: **“I shall place One of your own offspring on your throne.**

¹² “If your sons keep My Covenant and My Testimonies, which I shall teach them, their descendants will also sit on your throne for ever.”

¹³ For the LORD has chosen Zion. He has desired it for His dwelling-place.

¹⁴ “This is My resting-place for ever. Here I shall dwell, because this is what I have desired.

¹⁵ “I shall certainly bless its food. I shall satisfy its needy people with bread.

¹⁶ “I shall clothe its priests with salvation, and its godly people will certainly shout for joy.

¹⁷ “There I shall **make a Horn sprout up for David**. I have prepared a lamp for My anointed one.

¹⁸ “I shall clothe His enemies with shame, but the crown on Him will gleam.”

133

A song of David for ascending processions

¹ See how good and pleasant it is when brothers live together!

² It is like fine olive-oil on the head, flowing down the beard, down on Aaron’s beard, flowing down on the collar of his robes.

³ It is like the dew of Hermon falling on the mountains of Zion. For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life for ever.

134

A song for ascending processions

¹ Look! Bless the **LORD, all you servants of the LORD**, who stand by night in the house of the LORD!

² Raise your hands in the Holy Place and bless the LORD!

³ May the LORD, who has made heaven and earth, bless you from Zion!

135

¹ **Praise the LORD! Praise** the name of the LORD! Give **praise, you servants of the LORD**, ² you who are standing in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God!

³ **Praise the LORD!** For the LORD is good. Sing praise to His name! For it is pleasant.

⁴ For the LORD has chosen Jacob to be His own, Israel as His personal property.

⁵ Indeed, I know that the LORD is great, that our Lord is greater than all gods are.

⁶ The LORD does whatever He desires, in heaven and on the earth, on the seas and in all the depths.

⁷ He is the One who makes the fogs rise from the end of the earth, who makes lightning for the rain and who brings the wind from His storehouses.

⁸ He is the One who struck down the first-born of Egypt, both people and animals.

⁹ He sent signs and wonders in the middle of you, O Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his officials.

¹⁰ He is the One who struck down many nations and killed mighty kings: ¹¹ Sihon, the king of the Amorites, Og, the king of Bashan and all the kings in Canaan.

¹² He gave their land as an inheritance, an inheritance to His people Israel.

¹³ O LORD, Your name endures for ever. O LORD, Your fame remains throughout all generations.

¹⁴ **The LORD will provide justice for His people** and have compassion on His servants.

¹⁵ **The idols** of the nations are **silver and gold, made by human hands.**

¹⁶ They have mouths but do not speak. They have eyes but **do not see.**

¹⁷ They have ears but **do not hear.** There is also no breath in their mouths.

¹⁸ Those who make them will be like them. So will everyone be who trusts in them.

¹⁹ O family of Israel, bless the LORD! O family of Aaron, bless the LORD!

²⁰ O family of Levi, bless the LORD! O you who fear the LORD, bless the LORD!

²¹ Blessed be the LORD from Zion, He who dwells in Jerusalem! **Praise the LORD!**

136

¹ Give thanks to the LORD! For He is good. For His mercy endures for ever.

² Give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy endures for ever.

³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for His mercy endures for ever; ⁴ to Him who alone does miraculous things, for His mercy endures for ever; ⁵ to Him who by understanding made the heavens, for His mercy endures for ever; ⁶ to Him who spread out the earth on the waters, for His mercy endures for ever; ⁷ to Him who made the great lights, for His mercy endures for ever; ⁸ the sun to rule over the day, for His mercy endures for ever; ⁹ the moon and stars to rule over the night, for His mercy endures for ever; ¹⁰ to Him who struck down the first-born of Egypt! For His mercy endures for ever.

¹¹ He brought Israel out from among them, for His mercy endures for ever; ¹² with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, for His mercy endures for ever; ¹³ to Him who divided the Red Sea in two! For His mercy endures for ever.

¹⁴ He led Israel through the middle of it. For His mercy endures for ever.

¹⁵ He shook off Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea. For His mercy endures for ever; ¹⁶ to Him who led His people through the wilderness, for His mercy endures for ever; ¹⁷ to Him who struck down powerful kings! For His mercy endures for ever.

¹⁸ He killed mighty kings, for His mercy endures for ever; ¹⁹ Sihon, the king of the Amorites, for His mercy endures for ever; ²⁰ and Og, the king of Bashan. For His mercy endures for ever.

²¹ He gave their land as an inheritance, for His mercy endures for ever; ²² as an inheritance to His servant Israel, for His mercy endures for ever; ²³ who remembered us when we were humiliated, for His mercy endures for ever; ²⁴ who dragged us away from our enemies, for His mercy endures for ever; ²⁵ who gives food to every creature. For His mercy endures for ever.

²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures for ever.

137

¹ Beside the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down. Yes, we wept when we remembered Zion.

² On the poplar trees in the middle of it we hung up our lyres.

³ For there those who had taken us captive asked us for words of song, and our oppressors asked us to be cheerful: "Sing us part of a song of Zion!"

⁴ How could we sing the song of the LORD in a foreign land?

⁵ If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill!

⁶ May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not value Jerusalem more highly than my greatest joy!

⁷ Remember, O LORD, the day of Jerusalem against the people of Edom! They kept saying: "Raze it! Raze it, to its foundation!"

⁸ O daughter of Babylon, you who will be laid waste, blessed will be the one who **pays you back** for what you have done to us!

⁹ Blessed will he be who seizes **your infants** and **smashes** them against a rock!

138

Of David

¹ I shall give thanks to You with all my heart; before the gods I shall sing praise to You.

² I shall bow down toward Your holy Temple and give thanks to Your name, because of Your mercy and because of Your truth. For You have made Your name and Your Promise greater than everything else.

³ On the day when I called, You answered me. You used strength to make me confident in my soul.

⁴ **All the kings of the earth** will give You thanks, O LORD, because they have heard the Words of Your mouth.

⁵ May they sing about the Ways of the LORD! For the glory of the LORD is great.

⁶ For, although the LORD is high, He regards lowly people. Yet He knows the haughty person from afar.

⁷ Although I walk in the middle of trouble, You will keep me alive. You will stretch out Your hand against the anger of my enemies, and Your right hand will save me.

⁸ The LORD will fulfil His purpose to protect me. Your mercy, O LORD, endures for ever. Do not forsake the works of Your hands!

139

For the choir director, a psalm of David

¹ O LORD, You have searched me and known me.

² You Yourself know when I sit down and when I rise. You have understood my thoughts from far away.

³ You have been measuring up my path and my lying down and been familiar with all my ways.

⁴ For before there is any statement on my tongue, look! O LORD, You know it completely.

⁵ You have encircled me behind and in front and laid Your hand on me.

⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is unattainable. I cannot reach it.

⁷ Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

⁸ If I climb up into heaven, You are there. If I make my bed in Sheol, You are there.

⁹ If I lift up the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will grip me hard, and the light around me will become night," ¹² even the darkness will not be dark to You, and the night will

shine like the day. For darkness is like light to You.

¹³ For You have acquired my inmost parts. You shaped me in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I praise You, because I have been fearfully and wonderfully made. **Your works are wonderful**, and my soul knows that very well.

¹⁵ My bones were not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place, when I was intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes saw my embryo and the days that had been ordained for me. All of them were being written in Your book before one of them came into being.

¹⁷ How difficult Your thoughts are for me, O God! How numerous their total amount is!

¹⁸ If I were to count them, they would outnumber grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with You.

¹⁹ I wish, O God, that You would kill the wicked person! You murderous people, go away from me!

²⁰ They are speaking against You deceitfully. Your enemies have been lifting themselves up against You in vain.

²¹ Do I not hate those who hate You, O LORD? Do I not loathe those who rise up against You?

²² I hate them with extreme antipathy. They have become my enemies.

²³ Examine me, O God, and know my heart! Test me! Know my troubled thoughts, ²⁴ see if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the everlasting way!

140

For the choir-leader, a psalm of David

¹ Deliver me, O LORD, from evil people! Protect me from men of violent deeds, ² who have been planning evil things in their hearts! Every day they are inciting wars.

³ They have been making their tongues as sharp as a snake's fang. **The poison of a horned viper is under their lips.** *Selah*

⁴ Guard me, O LORD, from the hands of wicked people! Preserve me from men of violent deeds, who have been planning to trip my steps!

⁵ Arrogant men have been hiding a snare for me and spreading out ropes to make a net at the side of the track. They have been setting traps for me. *Selah*

⁶ I have been saying to the LORD: "You are my God, O LORD. Open Your ears to the sound of my pleas for mercy!"

⁷ O LORD God, my strong Saviour, You have covered my head on the day of battle.

⁸ LORD, do not grant what a wicked person desires! Do not grant what he is planning! Otherwise they will become proud. *Selah*

⁹ As for the heads of those who are surrounding me, let the trouble that their lips cause overwhelm them!

¹⁰ Let glowing coals be made to tumble on them! May He make them fall into the fire, into miry pits, that they may not come up again!

¹¹ May no slanderer endure in the land! May calamity hunt down a violent man, blow after blow!

¹² I know that the LORD will defend the right of the afflicted person and the cause of those who are needy.

¹³ Surely, righteous people will praise Your name. Those who are upright will dwell in Your presence.

141

A psalm of David

¹ O LORD, I have been calling out to You. Come quickly to me! Open Your ears to my voice when I call to You!

² Let **my prayer** be set before You **as incense**, the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice!

³ O LORD, set a guard over my mouth! Keep watch over the door of my lips!

⁴ Do not turn my heart away to anything evil, so that I would wickedly perform reckless deeds with men who are evildoers! Let me also not eat their delicacies!

⁵ Let a righteous person strike me! It is a kindness. Let him rebuke me. It is olive-oil for my head. Let my head not refuse it! Even now my prayer is against their evil deeds.

⁶ When their judges have been thrown down the sides of a cliff, they will listen to my words. For they are pleasant.

⁷ As when someone ploughs and breaks up the soil, so our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

⁸ Nevertheless, my eyes are toward You, O LORD God. I have taken refuge in You. Do not pour out my life!

⁹ Protect me from the powerful trap that they have set for me and from the snares of evildoers!

¹⁰ May wicked people fall together into their own nets while I myself go past unharmed!

142

A *Maskil* of David when he was in the cave, a prayer

¹ With my voice I am crying to the LORD. With my voice I am pleading to the LORD for grace.

² I am pouring out my complaint before Him. I am declaring my trouble before Him.

³ When my spirit feels faint inside me, You Yourself know my path. In the way where I am walking, people have hidden a trap for me.

⁴ Look to the right and see! No one considers me kindly. Refuge has failed me. No one cares about my life.

⁵ I have been calling out to You, O LORD. I have been saying, "You are my Refuge, my Portion in the land of the living."

⁶ Pay attention to my cry! For I have become very weak. Rescue me from those who are pursuing me! For they are too strong for me.

⁷ Release my soul from prison, that I may give thanks to Your name! Righteous people will gather around me, because You will treat me well.

143

A psalm of David

¹ O LORD, listen to my prayer! Open Your ears to my pleas for favour! Answer me in Your faithfulness and in Your righteousness!

² Do not bring Your servant into judgment! For **in Your sight there is no one alive who is righteous.**

³ For the enemy has been pursuing my life. He has crushed my life to the ground. He has been making me live in dark places, like those who have died long ago.

⁴ Therefore, my spirit inside me has become faint. My heart inside me has been overcome with numbness.

⁵ I remember the days of long ago. I have been meditating on all that You have done. I am meditating on what Your hands have done.

⁶ I have been spreading out my hands to You. My soul is thirsting for You like a parched land. *Selah*

⁷ Answer me quickly, O LORD! My spirit has been wasting away. Do not hide Your face from me or I shall be like those who are going down into the pit!

⁸ Cause me to hear about Your mercy in the morning! For I trust in You. Cause me to know the way on which I should go! For I have been lifting up my soul to You.

⁹ Rescue me from my enemies, O LORD! I have come to You to conceal myself away.

¹⁰ Teach me to do what You desire! For You are my God. May Your good Spirit lead me on level ground!

¹¹ For Your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life! In Your righteousness, bring my soul out of trouble!

¹² In Your mercy You will silence my enemies and destroy all who are hostile toward me! For I am Your servant.

144

Of David

¹ Blessed be the LORD, my Rock, who has trained my hands for battle, my fingers for war!

² He is my Mercy and my Fortress, my Stronghold and my Deliverer. He is my Shield, and I have been taking refuge in Him. He subdues my people under me.

³ O LORD, what is a human being, that You should care about him? What is a son of man, that You should think about him?

⁴ A human being is like a breath. His days are like a passing shadow.

⁵ O LORD, bend Your heaven low and come down! Touch the mountains, that they may smoke!

⁶ Flash out lightning and scatter them! Shoot Your arrows and throw them into confusion!

⁷ Stretch out Your hands from on high! Rescue and deliver me from many waters, from the hands of foreigners, ⁸ whose mouths have been telling lies and whose right hands are deceptive right hands!

⁹ O God, let me **sing** to You **a new song!** Let me play to You on a harp with ten strings!

¹⁰ He gives victory to kings. He sets His servant David free from a deadly sword.

¹¹ Rescue and deliver me from the hands of foreigners, whose mouths have been telling lies and whose right hands are deceptive right hands!

¹² Then our sons will be like shoots that have grown tall while they have been young. Our daughters will be like carved corner-pillars in the style of a palace.

¹³ Our barns will be full, supplying every kind of produce. Our sheep will produce by the thousands, by the tens of thousands, in our fields.

¹⁴ Our cattle will be heavy with young. There will be no gap in the wall and no miscarriage. There will be no cry of distress in our public squares.

¹⁵ Blessed are the people in such a situation! Blessed is the people whose God is the LORD!

145

A song of praise, of David

¹ I shall exalt You, my God, the King. I shall bless Your name for ever and ever.

² Every day I shall bless You and praise Your name for ever and ever.

³ Great is the LORD and to be highly praised! His greatness is unsearchable.

⁴ One generation will praise what You have done to the next, and they will proclaim Your mighty deeds.

⁵ Let me meditate on the glorious grandeur of Your majesty and on the wonderful things that You have done!

⁶ People will talk about the power of Your awesome deeds, and I shall declare Your greatness.

⁷ They will pour forth the fame of Your great goodness and shout for joy about Your righteousness.

⁸ **The LORD is gracious and compassionate,** slow to become angry and great in mercy.

⁹ The LORD is good to all. His compassion is over all that He has made.

¹⁰ All whom You have made will praise You, O LORD. Your devout people will bless You.

¹¹ They will talk about the glory of Your kingdom and speak about Your power, ¹² to make known to the descendants of Adam the mighty things that He has done and the glorious grandeur of His kingdom.

¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Your dominion endures throughout all generations.

[^{13b} The LORD is faithful in all His works and gracious in all His deeds.*¹²⁴]

¹⁴ The LORD supports all those who are falling. He raises up all who are bowed down.

¹⁵ The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food at the right time.

¹²⁴ Verse 13b does not appear in the Hebrew text. Alphabetical psalms, like this one, have sets of 22 verses and the inclusion of the missing nun verse seems to be justified by the Greek Septuagint and the Syriac version.

¹⁶ You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

¹⁷ **The LORD is righteous in all His Ways and faithful** in everything that He does.

¹⁸ The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth.

¹⁹ He does whatever those who fear Him desire. He hears their cry and saves them.

²⁰ The LORD watches over all who love Him but will destroy all wicked people.

²¹ My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD. Let every living creature bless His holy name for ever and ever!

146

¹ **Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!**

² Let me praise the LORD throughout my life! Let me sing praise to my God all my life!

³ Do not trust in noble people, in a descendant of Adam, who cannot save!

⁴ When his spirit departs, he will return to his earth. On that day his plans will perish.

⁵ Blessed is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help! His hope is in the LORD, his God, ⁶ **who has made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them**, who remains faithful for ever, ⁷ who provides justice for those who are oppressed and who gives food to those who are hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free.

⁸ The LORD opens the eyes of blind people. The LORD raises up those who are bowed down. The LORD loves righteous people.

⁹ The LORD watches over resident-foreigners. He helps up the orphan and the widow. However, He makes the way of wicked people crooked.

¹⁰ The LORD will reign for ever, Your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!

147

¹ Praise the LORD! For it is good to sing praises to our God. For it is pleasant. A song of praise is delightful.

² The LORD is the Builder of Jerusalem. He gathers the outcasts of Israel.

³ He is the Healer of broken-hearted people. He bandages up their sores.

⁴ He counts out the number of stars. He gives all of them their names.

⁵ Great is our Lord and great in might! There is no limit to His understanding.

⁶ The LORD helps afflicted people. He brings wicked people down to the ground.

⁷ Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving! Make melody to our God with the lyre!

⁸ He covers the heavens with clouds. He prepares rain for the ground. He makes the grass grow on the mountains.

⁹ He gives food to the animals and to the young ravens that call out.

¹⁰ He does not delight in the strength of the horse. He takes no pleasure in the thighs of a man.

¹¹ The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy.

¹² Glorify the LORD, Jerusalem! Praise your God, Zion!

¹³ For He has made the bars of your gates strong. He has blessed your children among you.

¹⁴ He makes peace in your territory. He satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵ **He sends out His Command** throughout the earth. His Word runs swiftly.

¹⁶ He sends snow like wool. He scatters frost like ashes.

¹⁷ He throws out His hailstones like crumbs. Who can stand before His cold?

¹⁸ **He sends out His Word** and melts them. He makes His wind blow, and the waters flow.

¹⁹ He declares His Word to Jacob, His Statutes and His judgments to Israel.

²⁰ He has not done anything like this for any other nation. They do not know His judgments. **Praise the LORD!**

148

¹ **Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD** from the heavens! Praise Him in the heights above!

² Praise Him, all you His angels! Praise Him, all His hosts!

³ Praise Him, sun and moon! Praise Him, all you stars of light!

⁴ Praise Him, you heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD! For He commanded, and they were created.

⁶ He set them in position for ever and ever. He gave a decree that will not pass away.

⁷ **Praise the LORD** from the earth, you great sea creatures and all ocean depths, ⁸ fire and hail, snow and fog, wind and storm, which carry out His Word, ⁹ you mountains and all hills, you fruit trees and all cedars, ¹⁰ you wild animals and all cattle, you reptiles and winged birds, ¹¹ you kings of the earth and all peoples, you princes and all judges on the earth, ¹² you young men and also you maidens, you old men together with young people!

¹³ Let them praise the name of the LORD! For His name alone is exalted. His majesty is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴ He has raised up a horn for His people, praise from all His devout people, from the people of Israel, the people who are close to Him! Praise the LORD!

149

Psalms

¹ **Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song,** His praise in the assembly of devout people!
² Let Israel rejoice in its Maker! Let the children of Zion be joyful over their King!
³ Let them praise His name with dancing! Let them make music to Him with tambourine and lyre!
⁴ For the LORD takes pleasure in His people. He glorifies humble people with salvation.
⁵ Let devout people be jubilant in glory! Let them shout for joy on their beds!
⁶ Let the high praises of God be in their throats, and double-edged swords in their hands, ⁷ to carry out vengeance on the nations and punishments on the peoples, ⁸ to tie up their kings with chains and their nobles' feet with iron shackles, ⁹ to carry out the judgment that has been written against them! This is an honour that belongs to all His devout people.

Praise the LORD!

150

¹ **Praise the LORD!** Praise God in His sanctuary! Praise Him in His mighty spread of sky!
² Praise Him for His powerful deeds! Praise Him for His abundant greatness!
³ Praise Him with the blast of the trumpet! Praise Him with the harp and lyre!
⁴ Praise Him with the tambourine and circle-dance! Praise Him with stringed instruments and wind instruments!
⁵ Praise Him with clashing cymbals! Praise Him with crashing cymbals!
⁶ Let everything that has breath **praise the LORD!**
Praise the LORD!

PROVERBS

1

The purpose of the proverbs

¹ The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David and the king of Israel: ² that people may know wisdom and discipline and may understand perceptive words, ³ that they may receive instruction in how to behave wisely, to be righteous, just and fair, ⁴ how to make gullible people discerning and how to give young people knowledge and foresight. ⁵ A wise person will listen and continue to learn, and an understanding person will gain shrewd guidance, ⁶ to understand a proverb, an allusive saying, the words of wise men and their riddles.

Theme

⁷ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge. Stubborn fools despise wisdom and discipline.

An appeal for wisdom

⁸ Listen, my son, to your father's discipline and do not neglect your mother's teaching! ⁹ For they are a graceful garland on your head and a chain around your neck.

A warning not to be enticed

¹⁰ My son, if sinners try to persuade you, do not consent! ¹¹ It may be that they will say: "Come with us, let us set an ambush to commit murder! Let us hide to ambush an innocent person without a reason! ¹² We shall swallow them alive like Sheol, yes, swallow them completely, like those who go down to the pit. ¹³ We shall find all kinds of valuable possessions. We shall fill our homes with stolen goods. ¹⁴ Throw in your lot among us! We shall all have one purse." ¹⁵ Then, my son, do not walk in the way with them! Keep your feet away from their path! ¹⁶ For their feet run to evil, and **they hurry to commit murder.** ¹⁷ For it is useless for a net to be sprinkled with grain when any bird sees it done. ¹⁸ However, these men set an ambush for their own murder. They go into hiding only to snatch at their own lives. ¹⁹ The paths of everyone who is greedy for profit are like that. It takes away the life of him who gets it.

Wisdom speaks

²⁰ Wisdom calls loudly in the street. She raises her voice in the public squares. ²¹ She calls out at the head of noisy streets. She speaks her words at the entrances of the city gates: ²² "How long will gullible people love being gullible? How long will mockers delight in their mockery? How long will fools hate knowledge? ²³ Pay attention when I correct you! Look! Let me pour out my spirit for you! Let me make my words known to you! ²⁴ Because I have been calling but you have been refusing to listen, because **I have been stretching out my hand** but no one is listening, ²⁵ because you have **not been concerned about all my advice** and because you have

not been accepting my rebuke, ²⁶ I also shall laugh at your calamity. I shall mock when panic overtakes you, ²⁷ when panic strikes you like a storm, when calamity comes on you like a gale and when trouble and distress overtake you. ²⁸ Then they **will call to me, but I shall not answer.** They will search for me but will not find me. ²⁹ For they hate knowledge and have not chosen the fear of the LORD. ³⁰ They have not accepted my advice. They have scornfully rejected all my correction. ³¹ Therefore, let them eat the fruit of their own way and let them get enough of their own plans! ³² For the waywardness of gullible people will kill them, and the self-confidence of fools will ruin them. ³³ However, he who listens to me will live in safety and be untroubled by fear of harm."

2

An admonition to listen to wisdom

¹ My son, if you accept what I say and treasure up my commands with you, ² so that you listen attentively to wisdom and guide your heart to understanding, ³ if indeed you call out for insight and raise your voice for **understanding**, ⁴ if you try to get wisdom as if it were money and search for it as if it were **hidden treasure**, ⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. ⁶ For **the LORD gives wisdom.** Knowledge and understanding come from His mouth. ⁷ He stores up effective wisdom for upright people. He is a shield for those who live blamelessly, ⁸ to guard the paths of justice, and He protects the way of the people whom He favours. ⁹ Then you will understand what is right, just and fair — every good path. ¹⁰ For wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. ¹¹ Foresight will protect you. Understanding will guard you, ¹² to deliver you from any evil way, from anyone who speaks perverse things, ¹³ from people who abandon straight paths to walk on dark ways, ¹⁴ from people who enjoy doing evil, from people who rejoice in the perversity of evil, ¹⁵ from people whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways. ¹⁶ Wisdom will also deliver you from a woman who is a stranger, from the adulterous woman with her smooth talk, ¹⁷ who leaves the one who was her close companion when she was young and who forgets the covenant with her God. ¹⁸ For her family has bowed down to death, and her ways have led to the spirits of the departed. ¹⁹ None who go to her come back or reach the paths of life. ²⁰ Therefore, you shall walk on the road of good people and keep to the paths of righteous people! ²¹ For **upright people will live in the land**, and people who are blameless will remain in it. ²² However, wicked people will be cut off from the land, and people who act unfaithfully will be torn out of it.

3

The way to wisdom

¹ My son, do not forget what I teach you! Your heart should observe my commandments! ² For they will prolong your life for many years and give you peace as well.

³ May mercy and truth not forsake you! Tie them around your neck! **Write them on the tablet of your heart!** ⁴ Then you will find **favour** and kindly approval in the sight of **God and human beings**.

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not rely on your own understanding!

⁶ Acknowledge Him in all your ways, and He Himself will make your paths level.

⁷ **Do not think that you yourself are wise! Fear the LORD** and turn away from evil! ⁸ Then your body will be healthy, and your bones will be refreshed.

⁹ Honour the LORD with your wealth and with the first-fruits of everything that you produce! ¹⁰ Then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your wine-presses will overflow with new wine.

The superiority of wisdom

¹¹ **Do not reject the discipline of the LORD, my son, or feel disgusted when He reprimands you!**

¹² **For the LORD disciplines the one whom He loves and, like a father, He disciplines the son in whom he delights.**

¹³ Blessed is the human being who has found wisdom, and the human being who obtains understanding!

¹⁴ For the profit gained from wisdom is greater than the profit gained from silver. It yields better than fine gold.

¹⁵ Wisdom is more precious than pearls of coral, and nothing that you desire equals it. ¹⁶ Long life is in wisdom's right hand. Riches and honour are in wisdom's left hand.

¹⁷ Wisdom's roads are pleasant roads, and all its paths are peaceful.

¹⁸ Wisdom is **a tree of life** for those who grasp wisdom firmly, and **he who holds it securely is blessed**.

¹⁹ By wisdom the LORD laid the foundation of the earth. By understanding He established the heavens.

²⁰ By His knowledge the deep waters have burst open, and the clouds drip down dew.

²¹ My son, these things must not escape from your sight! Comply with effective wisdom and foresight,

²² that they may give life to your throat and adorn your neck! ²³ Then you will go on your way without worry, and your foot will not stumble. ²⁴ When you lie down, you will not be afraid. While you lie there, your sleep will be pleasant.

²⁵ Do not be afraid of sudden **terror** or of the destruction of wicked people when it comes! ²⁶ For the LORD will be your confidence and He will keep your foot from being trapped.

Advice to be fair

²⁷ Do not hold back anything good from those who have a right to it when it is in your power to do it!

²⁸ When you have it with you, do not tell your neighbour: "Go away! Come back tomorrow, and I shall give something to you then!"

²⁹ Do not plan to do wrong against your neighbour while he is sitting with you, suspecting nothing!

³⁰ Do not quarrel with a person for no reason if he has done you no harm!

³¹ Do not envy a violent man or choose any of his ways! ³² For a devious person is disgusting to the LORD. His intimate advice is with upright people.

³³ The curse of the LORD is on the house of a wicked person. However, He blesses the homes of righteous people.

³⁴ Although **He mocks those who mock, He is gracious to humble people**.

³⁵ Wise people will inherit honour, but He holds fools up to disgrace.

4

Advice to get wisdom

¹ Sons, listen to your father's instruction and pay close attention to gain understanding! ² For I have taught you well. Do not forsake my teaching! ³ When I was a son to my father, a tender and only child with my mother,

⁴ he used to teach me and tell me: "Let your heart cling to my words! Keep my commands, that you may live!" ⁵ Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget and do not turn away from the words that I have spoken!

⁶ Do not abandon wisdom! Then it will watch over you. Love wisdom! Then it will protect you. ⁷ The most important thing is wisdom. Acquire wisdom and use all that you possess to acquire understanding!

⁸ Regard wisdom highly! Then it will raise you up. It will bring you honour when you embrace it. ⁹ It will place a lovely wreath on your head. It will present a beautiful crown to you.

¹⁰ Listen, my son! Accept what I say, that the years of your life may be many! ¹¹ I have taught you on the road of wisdom. I have guided you along straight paths. ¹² When you walk, your stride will not be restricted. If you run, you will also not stumble.

¹³ Keep hold of instruction! Do not relax your grip on it! Keep watch over it! For it is your life.

¹⁴ Do not enter the path of wicked people or walk along the road of evil people! ¹⁵ Avoid it! Do not pass along it! Turn away from it and go past it! ¹⁶ For those people cannot sleep unless they do wrong and are robbed of their sleep if they do not cause someone to stumble. ¹⁷ For they eat food obtained through being wicked and drink wine obtained through being violent. ¹⁸ However, the path of righteous people is like bright light, which becomes brighter and brighter until it reaches midday.

¹⁹ **The road of wicked people is like the dark. They do not know over what they stumble.**

²⁰ My son, pay close attention to my words! Incline your ear to my sayings! ²¹ They must not escape from your sight! Keep them inside your heart! ²² For they are life to those who find them and they their whole bodies. ²³ More than anything else, guard your heart! For it is the starting-point of life. ²⁴ Remove perversion from your mouth and put devious talk far away from your lips! ²⁵ Let your eyes look straight ahead, and let your eyelashes point straight in front of you! ²⁶ **Clear a path for your feet!** Then all your ways will be sure. ²⁷ Do not swerve to the right or to the left! Turn your foot away from evil!

5

Illustrations of impure and pure love

¹ My son, pay close attention to my wisdom! Incline your ear to my understanding, ² that you may maintain foresight and your lips may preserve insight! ³ For the lips of a forbidden woman drip with honey, and her mouth is smoother than olive-oil. ⁴ However, in the end she is as bitter as wormwood, as sharp as a two-edged sword. ⁵ Her feet go down to death. Her steps proceed towards Sheol. ⁶ She does not even think about the path that leads to life. Her paths wander, and she does not realise it.

⁷ Now therefore, my sons, listen to me and do not turn away from what I tell you! ⁸ Keep your path far away from her and do not even go near the doorway of her house, ⁹ that you may not surrender your honour to others and your years to some cruel person, ¹⁰ that strangers may not satisfy themselves from your exertion and that your strenuous work may not benefit the house of a foreigner! ¹¹ Then you will groan when your end comes, when your body and flesh are consumed, ¹² and you will say: "How I hated discipline, and how my heart despised correction! ¹³ I did not listen to what my teachers told me and did not incline my ear to my instructors. ¹⁴ I had almost reached total ruin in the community and in the assembly!"

¹⁵ Drink water out of your own cistern and flowing water from your own well! ¹⁶ Should your springs overflow in the streets? Should your streams of water flow on the open square? ¹⁷ They should be for yourself alone and not to be shared with strangers.

¹⁸ Let your own fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife whom you married when you were young, ¹⁹ a charming deer and a graceful wild goat! Let her breasts always refresh you! Always be intoxicated with her love! ²⁰ Why then, my son, should you be intoxicated with a forbidden woman and embrace a strange woman's bosom? ²¹ **For the eyes of the LORD have a full view of a man's ways, and He observes all his paths.**

²² A wicked person's own wrongs will trap him, and the ropes of his own sin will catch him. ²³ He will die because of his lack of discipline and go astray because

of his great foolishness.

6

A warning against making a rash pledge

¹ My son, if you have guaranteed a loan for your neighbour, if you have pledged yourself by a handshake with a stranger, ² if you have been snared by the words of your own mouth, if you have been caught by the promises of your mouth, ³ then do this, my son, that you may free yourself! For you have fallen into your neighbour's hands. Go! Trample yourself down and plead urgently with your neighbour! ⁴ Do not give your eyes any sleep or your eyelids any slumber! ⁵ Rescue yourself like a gazelle from the hand of a hunter and like a bird from the hand of a hunter!

Proverbs about laziness

⁶ Go to an ant, lazy person! Consider its ways and become wise! ⁷ Although it has no leader, office-holder or ruler, ⁸ it stores its food in summertime. It has gathered its food at harvest time.

⁹ How long will you lie there, lazy person? When will you get up from your sleep? ¹⁰ "Just a little sleep, just a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest!"

¹¹ Then your poverty will come on you like a vagabond, and what you lack will come on you like a shameless fellow.

Proverbs about a villain

¹² A worthless person, a wicked man, goes about with crooked speech. ¹³ He winks his eyes, makes a signal with his foot and gives a signal with his fingers. ¹⁴ With a perverted mind he plots evil all the time. He unleashes controversies. ¹⁵ That is why calamity will come on him suddenly. In a moment he will be broken without remedy.

Proverbs about seven vices

¹⁶ There are six things that the LORD hates, even seven that are disgusting to Him: ¹⁷ arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, **hands that kill innocent people**, ¹⁸ a mind that devises wicked plans, feet that run quickly to evil, ¹⁹ a dishonest witness, who blows out lies and a person who unleashes controversies among brothers.

Warnings that adultery leads to trouble

²⁰ My son, keep the commands of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother! ²¹ Tie them on your heart continually! Fasten them on your neck!

²² When you walk around, they will lead you. When you lie down, they will watch over you and, when you wake up, they will speak to you. ²³ For a commandment is a lamp, and a teaching is a light and the reproofs that discipline gives are the way of life, ²⁴ to keep you from an evil woman and from the smooth tongue of an adulteress. ²⁵ **Do not desire her beauty in your heart!** She must not captivate you with her eyes! ²⁶ For a prostitute's price is only a round loaf of bread, but a married woman hunts for a precious life.

²⁷ Can a man take fire in his lap without his clothes being burnt? ²⁸ Or can anyone walk on red-hot coals without his feet being scorched? ²⁹ So it is with the

man who sleeps with his neighbour's wife. No one who touches her will escape punishment. ³⁰ People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry. ³¹ However, when he is caught, he must repay seven times as much. He will surrender all the possessions in his house.

³² Anyone who commits adultery with a woman has no sense. He who does it destroys himself. ³³ He will get blows and dishonour, and his disgrace will not be wiped away. ³⁴ For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge. ³⁵ He will not approve of any compensation. He will refuse even though you produce the largest bribe.

7

A warning about the prostitute

¹ My son, keep my words and treasure my commands in you! ² Keep my commands that you may live! Keep my teachings like the pupil of your eye! ³ Tie them on your fingers! **Write them on the tablet of your heart!** ⁴ Tell wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your relative, ⁵ that they may keep you from the adulterous woman, from the adulteress with her smooth talk! ⁶ For I looked down from a window in my house through my screen. ⁷ When I looked at the gullible people, I discerned among the young men a lad who had no sense. ⁸ He was crossing a street near her corner and walking along a path toward her house, ⁹ in the twilight, in the evening, in the middle of the night, when it was dark. ¹⁰ I saw a woman coming to meet him, dressed like a prostitute, with cunning intent! ¹¹ She was loud and defiant. Her feet would not find rest at home. ¹² At one time she was out on the street. At another time she was in the square, waiting at every corner to catch someone. ¹³ She was grabbing him and kissing him. She looked impudently and said: ¹⁴ "I have some meat from peace-offerings that I had to make. Today I have fulfilled my vows. ¹⁵ That is why I have come out to meet you, eagerly looking out for you, and I have found you! ¹⁶ I have prepared my couch with coverings, with many-coloured, embroidered linen from Egypt. ¹⁷ I have sprayed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. ¹⁸ Come! Let us drink our fill of love until morning! Let us sample making love together! ¹⁹ For my husband is not at home. He has gone on a journey far away. ²⁰ He has taken a purse of money with him. He will not come back to his house until the full moon."

²¹ She enticed him with her great persuasive charms. She seduced him with her smooth lips. ²² He began to follow her at once, like an ox going to be butchered, like an ankle-chain going off to be disciplined by a stubborn fool, ²³ until an arrow pierces his liver. Like a bird darting into a trap, he does not realise that it will cost him his life.

²⁴ Now therefore, my sons, listen to me and pay close attention to the words of my mouth! ²⁵ Your heart must not turn aside to her ways! Do not go astray on her paths! ²⁶ For she has brought to ruin and fatally wounded many men, and those whom she has killed are numerous. ²⁷ Her house is the way to Sheol. It leads down to the dark chambers of death.

8

The divine call of wisdom

¹ Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? ² Wisdom takes her stand on the top of the high ground beside the road, where the paths cross, ³ beside the gates in front of the city. At the entrance to the gateway wisdom calls aloud: ⁴ "Men, I am calling to you and raising My voice to the descendants of Adam: ⁵ 'You gullible people, understand how to be prudent! You fools, understand how to be sensible!' ⁶ Listen! For I shall speak about important things and open My lips to say what is right. ⁷ My mouth will proclaim what is true, and My lips will abhor what is wicked. ⁸ All the words of My mouth will be right, and there will be nothing twisted or tortuous in them. ⁹ All of them will be straightforward to a person who has understanding and right to those who are acquiring knowledge. ¹⁰ Accept My discipline, not silver! Knowledge is preferable to gold. ¹¹ For wisdom is better than coral pearls, and nothing that you desire will equal it."

The self-description of wisdom

¹² "I, Wisdom, have been living with insight and I acquire knowledge and foresight. ¹³ The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. I hate arrogance, pride, evil behaviour and perverse speech. ¹⁴ Advice and effective wisdom belong to Me. I am understanding. I have strength. ¹⁵ Kings use Me to reign, and rulers use Me to decree what is just. ¹⁶ Princes use Me to govern. So do noblemen and all just judges. ¹⁷ I Myself love those who love Me. Those who look for Me eagerly will find Me. ¹⁸ I have riches, honour, lasting wealth and righteousness. ¹⁹ My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold. My yield is preferable to silver. ²⁰ I walk on the road of righteousness, in the paths of justice, ²¹ to cause those who love Me to inherit property, and I fill their storehouses."

The eternal existence of Wisdom, alongside God

²² **"The LORD had possessed Me at the beginning of His way, from of old, before any of His deeds. ²³ I have been poured forth from eternity, from the first, before the earliest times of the earth.** ²⁴ I was given birth when there were no ocean-depths, when there were no springs that were made glorious by water. ²⁵ I was given birth before the mountains had been firmly set and before there were hills, ²⁶ before He had made the earth, the open fields or the first dust of the world. ²⁷ I was there when He set up the heavens. When He traced a horizon on the surface of the deep,

28 when He made the clouds firm above, when the fountains of the deep became strong, 29 when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, 30 then **I was beside Him** as the Craftsman. I was also His delight every day, always rejoicing in His presence, 31 rejoicing in His inhabitable world and delighting in human beings.”

A warning from Wisdom

32 “Now therefore, children, listen to Me! **Blessed are those who keep My ways!** 33 Listen to instruction and be wise! Do not ignore it! 34 Blessed is the person who listens to Me, keeping watch at My doors every day, waiting beside My doorposts! 35 For whoever finds Me has found life. He has obtained favour from the LORD. 36 However, anyone who sins against Me is harming himself. All who hate Me love death.”

9

The choice between wisdom and folly

1 Wisdom has built her house. She has cut out her seven pillars. 2 She has slaughtered her animals. She has mixed her wine. She has also set her table. 3 She has sent out her servant girls. She is calling out on the highest place in the city: 4 “Anyone who is gullible should turn in here!” She has been telling the one who lacks sense: 5 “Come, people, eat my bread and drink the wine that I have mixed! 6 Forsake gullible people and live! Walk straight on the road of understanding!”

The effect of wisdom

7 **A person who corrects a mocker gets an insult, and a person who rebukes a wicked person incurs abuse.**

8 Do not correct a mocker, that he may not hate you! Correct a wise person, that he may love you!

9 Give instruction to a wise person that he may become still wiser! Teach a righteous person that he may increase in insight!

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

11 For because of me you will live for a long time, and years will be added to your life.

12 If you are wise, your wisdom will help you. If you mock, you alone will bear the consequences.

A warning against stupidity, the opponent of wisdom

13 A foolish woman is a loudmouth, is gullible and knows nothing at all. 14 She sits at the door of her house. She takes a seat on the highest places in the city, 15 to call out to those who go past on the road, to those who are going straight on their paths:

16 “Anyone who is gullible should turn in here!” She also tells the one who lacks sense: 17 “Stolen water is sweet, and food eaten in secret is delicious!”

18 However, he does not know that the spirits of the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

10

The proverbs of Solomon describing a wise son

1 The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son makes his father glad, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother.

2 Treasures gained by wickedness will not benefit anyone, but righteousness will deliver from death.

3 The LORD will not allow a righteous throat to go hungry but will block what wicked people desire.

Proverbs about work-habits

4 An idle hand makes a person poor, but the hands of diligent people will make them rich.

5 He who gathers in the summer is a prudent son. He who sleeps deeply at harvest time is a son who acts shamefully.

Proverbs about the blessings of righteousness

6 Blessings are on the head of a righteous person, but violence will cover the mouths of wicked people.

7 The remembrance of a righteous person is a blessing, but the names of wicked people will rot away.

Proverbs concerning the use of the mouth

8 One who has a wise heart will accept commands, but the one who has foolish lips will come to ruin.

9 He who lives honestly will live securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.

10 He who winks with his eye will cause sorrow, and one who has foolish lips will come to ruin.

11 The mouth **of a righteous person is a fountain of life**, but violence will cover the mouths of wicked people.

12 Hatred will stir up quarrels, but **love will cover all wrongs.**

13 Wisdom will be found on the lips of a person who has understanding, but a cane is for the back of one who lacks sense.

14 Wise people will store up knowledge, but the mouth of a stubborn fool is close to ruin.

Proverbs about resources for living

15 A rich person’s wealth is his strong city. Their own poverty ruins poor people.

16 The wage of a righteous person leads to life. The income of a wicked person leads to sin.

17 He who takes heed of discipline is on the path to life, but he who ignores a reprimand leads others astray.

Proverbs about verbal expression

18 One who conceals hatred has lying lips, and one who spreads a rumour is a fool.

19 When there are many words, wrong will not cease, but he who restrains his lips has insight.

20 The tongue of a righteous person is choice silver. The hearts of wicked people are worth little.

21 The lips of a righteous person provide pasture for many people, but stubborn fools die because they lack sense.

Proverbs about blessings and riches as they are related to human efforts and plans

22 The blessing of the LORD is what will make a person rich, and hard work will not add anything to it.

23 As a fool is pleased when he does something wick-

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ed, so wisdom pleases a man who has understanding.

Contrasts between righteous people and wicked people

24 What a wicked person dreads will happen to him, and what righteous people desire will be granted.

25 **When the storm has passed, the wicked person has vanished, but the righteous person has an everlasting foundation.**

26 Like vinegar to the teeth and like smoke to the eyes, so is a lazy person to those who send him.

27 The fear of the LORD will increase the number of days, but the years of wicked people will be shortened.

28 The hope of righteous people brings joy, but the expectation of wicked people will come to nothing.

29 The Way of the LORD is a fortress for the innocent person but ruin to those who do wrong.

30 A righteous person will never stagger, but wicked people will not continue to live in the land.

31 The mouth of a righteous person will bear wisdom like fruit, but a perverse tongue will be cut off.

32 The lips of a righteous person will know what is pleasing, but the mouths of wicked people are perverse.

11

Proverbs about integrity

1 Dishonest scales are disgusting to the LORD, but He is pleased with an accurate weight.

2 When pride comes, disgrace comes, but wisdom is with humble people.

3 The integrity of upright people will guide them, but the perversity of treacherous people will ruin them.

Proverbs about the value of righteousness

4 Riches will not help in the day of wrath, but righteousness will deliver from death.

5 The righteousness of an innocent person will make his road smooth, but a wicked person will fall because of his own wickedness.

6 The righteousness of upright people will deliver them, but treacherous people will be trapped by their greed.

7 When a wicked person dies, hope will come to nothing. What he had expected from mischief has also come to nothing.

8 A righteous person was rescued from trouble, and then a wicked person came to take his place in it.

9 With his mouth a godless man will destroy his neighbour, but by knowledge righteous people will be delivered.

Proverbs about righteous people in a city

10 When righteous people prosper, a city will be glad, and when wicked people perish, there will be a shout of joy.

11 By the blessing of upright people a city will lift itself up, but the mouths of wicked people will ruin it.

Right ways to act

12 A person who despises his neighbour lacks sense, but a man who has understanding will keep quiet.

13 A person who goes about with gossip reveals a secret, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps something covered.

14 A nation will fall when there is no guidance, but there is safety when there are many advisers.

15 When someone has guaranteed a stranger's loan he will certainly get into trouble, but one who hates those who join hands to make a deal will remain secure.

16 A gracious woman will win honour, but violent men will win wealth.

17 **A merciful man benefits himself**, but a cruel man brings trouble on himself.

18 A wicked person earns dishonest wages, but whoever sows righteousness earns genuine reward.

19 A truly righteous person attains to life, but he who pursues evil goes to his death.

Proverbs about the inner nature

20 Those who are perverse in heart are disgusting to the LORD, but He is delighted with those whose ways are blameless.

21 Depend on it that an evil person will not go unpunished! However, the descendants of righteous people will escape.

22 A beautiful woman who abandons discretion is like a golden ring in a pig's snout.

23 What righteous people desire ends only in good, but what wicked people hope for ends in fury.

Comparisons between generosity and selfishness

24 **One person gives freely and grows still richer, while another holds back what he ought to give, only to become poorer.**

25 A generous person will grow prosperous, and he who gives a drink to others will also be refreshed himself.

26 The people will curse the man who holds back grain, but a blessing will be on the head of the man who sells it.

Proverbs about inheriting rewards

27 A person who is on the lookout for what is good will discover favour, but evil will come on a person who is intent on it.

28 He who trusts in his riches will fall, but righteous people will flourish like green leaves.

29 One who brings trouble on his own family will inherit the wind, and a stubborn fool will become a slave to one who is wise in heart.

30 The fruit of a righteous person is a tree of life, and a person who wins souls is wise.

31 If a **righteous person** is rewarded on earth, how much more a **wicked and sinful person!**

12

Proverbs about the control of direction by character

1 A person who loves discipline loves knowledge, but a person who hates correction is stupid.

2 A good person will obtain favour from the LORD, but He will condemn a man who is a schemer.

3 No person will be established through wickedness,

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but the root of righteous people will not be moved.

⁴ A capable wife is her husband's crown, but a wife who brings disgrace is like decay in his bones.

Contrasts between righteous and wicked people

⁵ The thoughts of righteous people are honest. The recommendations of wicked people are deceitful.

⁶ The words of wicked people lie in ambush to kill, but what upright people say will rescue them.

⁷ When wicked people are overthrown, they are no more, but the family of righteous people will stand firm.

Proverbs about the results of wisdom and folly

⁸ A man will be praised according to his insight, but a person who has a twisted mind will be despised.

⁹ It is better to be thought unimportant and have a slave than to be boastful and have nothing to eat.

¹⁰ A righteous person cares about the life of his animal, but the kind acts of wicked people are cruel.

¹¹ He who works his land will have plenty to eat, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.

¹² A wicked person delights in what other evil people have snared, but the root of righteous people will produce fruit.

¹³ His own sinful talk is the trap of an evil person, but a righteous person will come out of trouble.

¹⁴ A man will enjoy good things because of what his mouth speaks, and what a human being's hands accomplish will reward him.

Proverbs about the stubbornness of a fool

¹⁵ A stubborn fool himself considers that his way is the right one, but a person who listens to advice is wise.

¹⁶ When a stubborn fool is irritated, he shows it immediately, but a person who hides an insult is shrewd.

Proverbs about the way of deceit

¹⁷ A truthful witness will speak honestly, but a lying witness will speak deceitfully.

¹⁸ There is a person whose rash words are the stabs of a sword, but the tongues of wise people bring healing.

¹⁹ A truthful lip will endure for ever, but a lying tongue will last only as long as I am granting peace.

²⁰ Deceit is in the heart of those who plan evil, but those who advise peace have joy.

General advice and observations

²¹ No calamity will happen to the righteous person, but wicked people are full of trouble.

²² The LORD is disgusted with lying lips but takes delight in those who act honestly.

²³ A shrewd person conceals knowledge, but the minds of fools will proclaim foolishness.

²⁴ The hands of diligent people will rule, but slack hands will be put to forced labour.

²⁵ Worry in a man's heart will oppress him, but a kind word will make him glad.

²⁶ A righteous person will gather information about his neighbour, but the path of wicked people will lead them astray.

²⁷ A slack person will not roast his game, but a man's

wealth will be valuable if he is diligent.

²⁸ There is life on the path of righteousness, and along that pathway there is no death.

13

A proverb about a wise son

¹ A wise son listens to his father's discipline, but a mocker has not been listening to rebuke.

Proverbs about using one's mouth to advantage

² A man eats well because of what his mouth has spoken, but treacherous people have an appetite for violence.

³ He who controls his mouth protects his own life. He who opens his lips rashly comes to ruin.

A proverb about lazy people and hardworking people

⁴ The soul of a lazy person has a craving and gets nothing, but the appetite of hardworking people will be richly supplied.

Proverbs about the contrast between righteousness and wickedness

⁵ A righteous person hates a false statement, but a wicked person will cause shame and disgrace.

⁶ Righteousness will protect a person whose way is blameless, but wickedness will ruin a sin-offering.

Proverbs about the vanity of riches

⁷ One person pretends to be rich but has nothing. Another pretends to be poor but is very rich.

⁸ A man's riches are the ransom for his life, but a poor person has not been paying attention to a rebuke.

Proverbs about righteous and evil living

⁹ The light of righteous people will shine happily, but **the lamp of wicked people will be put out.**

¹⁰ Pride will produce nothing but strife, but there will be wisdom with those who take advice.

¹¹ Wealth gained through what has no value will dwindle away, but he who gathers one handful after another will have plenty.

Proverbs about the essence of life

¹² Hope that is being deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing that is fulfilled is **a tree of life.**

¹³ He who despises the Word will fare badly, but he who fears a Commandment will be rewarded.

¹⁴ The teaching of a wise person is **a fountain of life** by turning a person away from the snares of death.

Proverbs about wise and unwise behaviour

¹⁵ Good insight will win favour, but the way of treacherous people never changes.

¹⁶ Every shrewd person will behave intelligently, but a fool will put on a display of folly.

¹⁷ A wicked messenger will fall into trouble, but a trustworthy delegate will bring healing.

¹⁸ Poverty and shame come to him who ignores correction, but he who pays attention to a rebuke will be honoured.

Advice to associate with wise people

¹⁹ A desire that is fulfilled is pleasing to the soul, but turning away from evil is disgusting to fools.

²⁰ A person who walks with wise people will be wise, but a person who associates with fools will suffer harm.

Proverbs about the reward of righteous people

Proverbs

21 Calamity will pursue sinners, but prosperity will reward righteous people.

22 A good man will leave an inheritance to his grandchildren, but a sinner's wealth will be stored up for the righteous person.

Proverbs about society, family and self

23 The fallow ground of poor people may yield plenty of food, but a person is swept away when there is no justice.

24 He who refrains from using his cane hates his son, but he who loves him has been disciplining him diligently.

25 A righteous person eats all that his appetite wants, but the stomachs of wicked people will have less than they need.

14

Proverbs about the way of wise people

1 The wisest of women has built up her home, but a foolish one will tear it down with her own hands.

2 He who lives uprightly fears the LORD, but he whose paths are wrong despises Him.

3 A cane deals with the arrogance of a stubborn fool because of his mouth, but the lips of wise people will protect them.

Proverbs about strength of character

4 Where there are no cattle, the feed-trough is clean, but abundant harvests come from the strength of an ox.

5 **A trustworthy witness** will not lie, but **a dishonest witness** will breathe out lies.

6 A mocker has searched for wisdom without finding it, but knowledge has come easily to a person who has understanding.

Proverbs about the contrast between fools and sensible people

7 Leave the presence of a foolish man! You do not receive knowledge from his lips.

8 The wisdom of a sensible person lies in understanding his way, but the folly of fools is deceitful.

9 Stubborn fools will mock at guilt, but there is acceptance among upright people.

Proverbs about the essence of joy

10 The heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can interfere in its joy.

11 The houses of wicked people will be destroyed, but the tents of upright people will flourish.

12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

13 Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, and joy can end in grief.

Proverbs about patterns of personality

14 One whose heart is disloyal will be satisfied with his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied with what is above him.

15 A gullible person will believe anything, but a prudent person will consider his step.

16 A wise person is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool shows anger and is full of confidence.

17 A short-tempered person will act foolishly, and a man who plots evil will be hated.

18 Gullible people have inherited folly, but prudent people will wear knowledge like a crown.

19 Evil people have been bowing down before good people, and wicked people at the gates of a righteous person.

Proverbs about neighbours

20 Even a poor person's neighbour will hate him, but many people will love a rich man.

21 One who despises his neighbour sins, but **blessed is the one who has compassion on needy people!**

General advice and observations

22 Will not those who plan evil go astray? However, are not those who plan what is good merciful and faithful?

23 In all hard work there will be something gained, but talk with the lips will lead only to poverty.

24 The crown of wise people is their wealth. The folly of foolish people is only folly.

25 A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful.

26 In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge.

27 The fear of the LORD is **a fountain of life**, so that one turns away from the snares of death.

28 A large population makes a king glorious, but a lack of people ruins a prince.

Proverbs about the results of wise living

29 A person who has great understanding is **slow to become angry**, but a quick temper shows the height of folly.

30 Tranquil hearts make healthy bodies, but jealousy causes decay in the bones.

31 He who oppresses a poor person has insulted his Maker, but he who is kind to a needy person honours Him.

32 A wicked person will be thrown down by his own wrongdoing, but a righteous person finds refuge when he dies.

33 Wisdom will repose in the heart of an understanding person and will make itself known among fools.

Proverbs about ruling righteously

34 Righteousness will lift up a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

35 A king is delighted with **a servant who acts wisely** but will be furious with one who acts shamefully.

15

Proverbs about effective words

1 A gentle answer will turn wrath away, but a harsh word will stir up anger.

2 The tongues of wise people will make knowledge successful, but the mouths of fools will allow folly to gush forth.

3 **The eyes of the LORD are in every place**, keeping watch on evil people and good people.

4 A gentle tongue is **a tree of life**, but deceit in it

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breaks the spirit.

⁵ A stubborn fool will despise his father's correction, but he who pays attention to a warning will become prudent.

⁶ There is much wealth in the house of a righteous person, but there is trouble in the income of a wicked person.

⁷ The lips of wise people will spread knowledge, but the minds of fools will not.

Proverbs about what God loves

⁸ The LORD detests any sacrifice of wicked people but delights in the prayers of upright people.

⁹ The LORD detests the way of a wicked person, but loves one who pursues righteousness.

Proverbs about the consequences of foolishness

¹⁰ There will be severe discipline for him who leaves the right path. He who hates correction will die.

¹¹ Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD. How much more the hearts of the children of Adam!

¹² A mocker does not like being corrected. He will not go to wise people.

Proverbs about the joyful heart

¹³ A joyful heart will make a cheerful face, but when the heart is suffering the spirit is crushed.

¹⁴ A mind that has understanding will search for knowledge, but the faces of fools will feed on folly.

¹⁵ All the days of an afflicted person are evil, but a cheerful heart has a constant feast.

Proverbs about things that are better

¹⁶ It is better to have a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure together with turmoil.

¹⁷ It is better to have a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf and hatred with it.

Proverbs about differing dispositions

¹⁸ An angry man will stir up strife, but one who is slow to get angry will settle a quarrel.

¹⁹ The way of a lazy man is like a thorny hedge, but the path of upright people is a highway.

Proverb about a wise son

²⁰ A wise son makes his father happy, but a foolish person despises his mother.

Proverbs about fun and delight

²¹ Folly is fun to him who lacks sense, but a man who has understanding will go straight ahead.

²² Plans go wrong without advice, but with many advisers they will succeed.

²³ A man is delighted to hear an answer from his own mouth. How good a word at the right time is!

Proverbs about destruction for wicked people and life for upright people

²⁴ The path of life leads upward for a man with insight, that he may turn away from Sheol beneath.

²⁵ The LORD will tear down the houses of proud people but will fix the boundary of a widow.

²⁶ The LORD detests the thoughts of an evil man, but pleasant words are pure to Him.

²⁷ A man who makes gain unjustly causes trouble for his own family, but he who hates bribes will live.

Comparisons between righteous people and wicked people

²⁸ The heart of a righteous person carefully considers

how to answer, but the mouths of wicked people will let evil things gush out.

²⁹ The LORD is far from wicked people, but will hear the prayers of righteous people.

Proverbs about good eyes and ears

³⁰ Sparkling eyes will delight the heart. Good news will refresh the body.

³¹ The ear that listens to a life-giving rebuke will live among wise people.

Proverbs about the value of discipline

³² He who disregards correction despises himself, but he who listens to a rebuke gains understanding.

³³ The fear of the LORD is discipline that leads to wisdom, and humility comes before honour.

16

The sevenfold centrality of God

¹ The plans of the heart belong to a human being, but an answer of the tongue comes from the LORD.

² A man thinks that all his ways are pure, but the LORD examines motives.

³ Entrust your efforts to the LORD! Then your plans will succeed.

⁴ The LORD has made everything for His own purpose and even a wicked person for a day of calamity.

⁵ Everyone with an arrogant heart is disgusting to the LORD. Be assured! Such a person will not escape punishment.

⁶ Mercy and faithfulness make atonement for sin, and by the fear of the LORD a person turns away from evil.

⁷ When the LORD is pleased with a man's ways, He causes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Proverbs about honesty and planning

⁸ A little gained righteously is better than great revenues gained unjustly.

⁹ A human being's mind may plan his own journey, but the LORD will direct his steps.

Proverbs about kings

¹⁰ When a divine revelation is on a king's lips, his mouth will not fail in its duty in a legal decision.

¹¹ Honest balances and scales belong to the LORD. He has made all the weights in the bag.

¹² Kings detest wrongdoing, because a throne is established by righteousness.

¹³ Kings delight in honest lips and love a man who speaks things that are right.

¹⁴ A king's anger is a messenger of death, but a wise man will pacify him.

¹⁵ When a king's face is bright, there is life, and his favour is like a cloud that brings Spring-rain.

Proverbs about the highway of wisdom

¹⁶ How much better it is to gain wisdom than gold! The gaining of understanding is preferable to silver.

¹⁷ Turning away from evil is the highway of upright people. He who guards his way preserves his own life.

Proverbs about pride

¹⁸ Pride goes ahead of destruction, and an arrogant spirit goes ahead of a fall.

Proverbs

¹⁹ It is better to be humble in spirit with lowly people than to share plunder with proud people.

Proverbs about words that give understanding

²⁰ He who understands the Word will find what is good. Blessed is the person who trusts the LORD!

²¹ A person who has a wise heart will be called discerning, and charming speech will promote instruction.

²² To those who possess understanding, it is **a fountain of life**, but it is folly to discipline stubborn fools.

²³ A wise man's heart will make his mouth discerning, and he will use his lips to promote instruction.

²⁴ Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.

Proverbs about negative kinds of personality

²⁵ There is a way that a man thinks is right, but its end is the way to death.

²⁶ A labourer's appetite has exerted itself to his advantage because his mouth has driven him on.

²⁷ A worthless man digs for trouble, and his lip is like **a scorching fire**.

²⁸ A devious man will spread strife, and a gossip will alienate a close friend.

²⁹ A violent man will deceive his neighbour and will lead him on a way that is not good.

³⁰ A person who winks his eyes wants to plot something crooked. A person who purses his lips has finished his evil work.

General advice and observations

³¹ Grey hair is a beautiful crown and can be found because of a righteous life.

³² It is better to be slow to become angry than to be a hero, and better to control one's temper than to capture a city.

³³ The dice will be thrown into the lap, but every decision it makes is from the LORD.

17

¹ A dry crust with peace is better than a house filled with feasting and strife.

² A slave who has insight will become master over a son who acts shamefully and he will share the inheritance as one of the brothers.

³ The crucible is for silver, and the smelting pot is for gold, but the One who puts hearts to the test is the LORD.

⁴ An evildoer listens attentively to a wicked lip. A liar listens to a malicious tongue.

⁵ He who ridicules a poor person has insulted his Maker. He who is glad about a calamity will not escape punishment.

⁶ Grandchildren are the crowns of elderly people, and parents are the glory of their children.

Proverbs about the consequences of being a fool

⁷ Excessive talk is not proper for a godless fool. How much less is a lying lip appropriate for a noble person!

⁸ One who offers a bribe regards it as a charming jewel. He will be successful wherever he turns.

⁹ He who forgives an offence seeks love, but he who repeatedly brings up an issue alienates a close friend.

¹⁰ A rebuke will deeply impress a person who has understanding more than a hundred lashes will impress a fool.

Proverbs about the consequences of evil living

¹¹ A rebellious person will look for nothing but evil, and a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

¹² Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, but not a fool in his folly!

¹³ If a person pays back evil for good, evil will not leave his home.

¹⁴ The beginning of strife is like letting water flow freely. Therefore, discontinue it before a quarrel breaks out!

¹⁵ The LORD detests both one who justifies a wicked person and one who condemns a righteous person.

Proverbs about the mind of a fool

¹⁶ Why should a fool have the money in his hand to buy wisdom when he has no sense?

¹⁷ A friend loves constantly, and a brother is born to help in need.

¹⁸ A person without good sense closes a deal with a handshake and puts up security in the presence of his neighbour.

¹⁹ He who loves transgression loves strife. He who makes his door high seeks destruction.

²⁰ A twisted mind will not find good, and a person with a devious tongue will fall into calamity.

²¹ The parent of a fool will get himself grief, and the father of a godless fool will have no joy.

²² A joyful heart will be good medicine, but a crushed spirit will dry up the bones.

²³ A wicked person will accept a bribe from the fold of someone's garment to pervert the paths of justice.

²⁴ Wisdom is right in front of an understanding person, but the eyes of a fool look for it all over the earth.

A proverb about a foolish son

²⁵ A foolish son makes his father sad and brings bitterness to the one who bore him.

Proverbs about self-control

²⁶ It is not good both to impose a fine on a righteous person and to strike down noble people on account of their honesty.

²⁷ A person who has knowledge restrains his words, and a man who has understanding is even-tempered.

Proverbs about fools

²⁸ Even a stubborn fool who remains silent will be considered wise and thought intelligent if he keeps his lips shut.

18

¹ A person who isolates himself will try to get what he wants for himself. He will oppose all sound judgment.

² A fool will not delight in understanding but only in expressing his own opinion.

Proverbs about aspects of wickedness

³ When a wicked person comes, contempt has also

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come, and insult comes along with dishonour.

⁴ The words of a man's mouth are like deep water. The fountain of wisdom is a gushing stream.

⁵ It is not good to be biased in favour of a wicked person, to suppress a righteous person in a legal decision.

Proverbs about the mouth of a fool

⁶ A fool will use his lips to get into an argument, and his mouth will call out for a flogging.

⁷ A fool's mouth ruins him, and his lips are a snare for his soul.

⁸ The words of a gossip are like eating things that taste good and go down into the inner parts of the body.

A proverb about laziness

⁹ A person who shows that he is lazy is actually a brother to a vandal.

Proverbs about two kinds of safety

¹⁰ The name of the LORD is a strong tower. A righteous person will run to it and will be too high to reach.

¹¹ A rich person's wealth is his strong city. He imagines that it is like a wall that is too high to scale.

Proverbs about human attitudes

¹² Before destruction a man's heart will be haughty, but humility comes in front of honour.

¹³ He who gives an answer before he listens is foolish and insulting.

¹⁴ A man's spirit can endure his sickness, but who can bear a crushed spirit?

¹⁵ The mind of a person who has understanding will acquire knowledge, and the ears of wise people will search for knowledge.

¹⁶ A person's gift will create a wide space for him and will bring him into the presence of great people.

Proverbs about strife

¹⁷ The one who states his case first seems right, until the one next to him comes and examines him.

¹⁸ Casting a lot will put an end to quarrels and will keep powerful opponents apart from each other.

¹⁹ A brother who has been offended is more unyielding than a strong city, and such quarrels are like the barred gates of a castle.

Proverbs about talking

²⁰ The fruit of a man's mouth can satisfy his stomach. What his lips yield can satisfy him.

²¹ The tongue has power over life and death, and those who love the tongue will eat the fruit of the tongue.

Proverbs about companions

²² He who has found a wife has found what is good and has obtained favour from the LORD.

²³ A poor person will utter pleas for mercy, but a rich person will answer harshly.

²⁴ A man and his friends can be split up, but there is a loving friend who sticks closer than a brother.

19

Proverbs about poverty, knowledge and wealth

¹ It is better to be a poor person who lives blamelessly

than to be one who talks dishonestly and is a fool.

² Enthusiasm without knowledge is no good, and a person whose feet are in a hurry misses his way.

³ Although the folly of a person will ruin his way, his heart will rage against the LORD.

⁴ Wealth will bring many friends, but a poor person will be separated from his friend.

Proverbs about deception

⁵ A lying witness will not be unpunished, and one who breathes out lies will not escape.

⁶ Many will try to win the kindness of a generous person, and everyone is the friend to a man who gives gifts.

⁷ All the brothers of a poor man hate him. How much more do his companions avoid him! Although he goes after them and calls to them, they are gone.

⁸ A person who gains sense loves himself. One who retains understanding will find something good.

⁹ A lying witness will not be unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will perish.

Proverbs about being near the fool, the wise person and the king

¹⁰ Luxury is not appropriate for a fool. How much less that a slave should rule over princes!

¹¹ A human being's intelligence has made him refrain from anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offence.

¹² The wrath of a king is like the roar of a lion, but his favour is like dew on the grass.

Proverbs about home-life

¹³ A foolish son ruins his father, and a wife's quarrelling is like constantly dripping water.

¹⁴ Home and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a wife with insight comes from the LORD.

Proverbs about laziness and life

¹⁵ Laziness will cast a person into a deep sleep, and an idle person will go hungry.

¹⁶ He who keeps the Commandment preserves his life. He who despises God's Ways will die.

Proverbs that give good advice

¹⁷ **He who has pity on a poor person lends to the LORD**, and He will repay him for what he has done.

¹⁸ Discipline your son while there is hope. Do not be a willing party to his death!

¹⁹ A man of great wrath will pay the penalty. If you rescue him, you will have to do it again.

²⁰ Listen to advice and accept discipline, that you may be wise for the rest of your life!

²¹ Many plans are in a man's mind, but the purpose of the LORD will stand firm.

²² What is desired in a man is his faithful love, and a poor man is better than a liar.

Contrasts between harm and benefit

²³ The fear of the LORD leads to life, and such a person will spend the night satisfied, without being met by trouble.

²⁴ A lazy person has dipped his hand in the dish. He will not even bring it back to his mouth.

²⁵ Strike a mocker, and a gullible person may become clever. Warn an intelligent person, and he will gain

more knowledge.

Proverbs about a foolish son

26 A son who assaults his father and who injures his mother brings shame and disgrace.

27 If you stop listening to instruction, my son, you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Proverbs about mockers

28 A worthless witness will mock justice, and the mouths of wicked people will swallow down calamity.

29 Punishments have been prepared for mockers, and floggings for the backs of fools.

20

1 Wine is a mocker. Intoxicating drink causes noise, and no one who staggers because of it is wise.

Proverbs from a king's point of view

2 Terror caused by a king is like the roaring of a young lion. One who infuriates him harms himself.

3 It is honourable for a man to avoid a quarrel, but any stubborn fool can break out in one.

4 A lazy person will not plough in the autumn. He will look for something in the harvest but find nothing.

5 The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a person who has understanding will draw it out.

6 Many a person will profess that he is loyal, but who can find a man who can be trusted?

7 A righteous person walks in his integrity. Blessed are his children after him!

8 A king who sits on his throne to judge winnows every evil with his eyes.

Proverbs about inner aspects of life

9 Who can say, "I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my sin"?

10 The LORD detests both unequal weights and unequal grain-measures.

11 Even a child will make himself known by his actions, whether his behaviour is pure and upright.

12 The ear that hears, and the eye that sees, the LORD has made both of them!

13 Do not love sleep, that you may not become poor! Keep your eyes open! Then have plenty of food!

Proverbs about the mouth

14 The one who is buying will say, "Bad! Bad!" However, he will boast when he goes away.

15 There are gold and plenty of pearls of coral, but lips that speak knowledge are precious jewels.

16 Take the garment of one who has guaranteed a stranger's debt and seize it as a pledge when he puts up security on behalf of a foreign woman!

17 Food obtained by trickery tastes pleasant to a man, but afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel.

18 Your plans will be established by getting advice. Use guidance to wage war!

19 He who goes about slandering reveals secrets. Do not associate with a person whose lips are always open!

Proverbs that contrast good and bad judgment

20 **The lamp of a person who curses his father and**

mother will go out in total darkness.

21 An inheritance that is obtained greedily in the beginning will not be blessed in the end.

22 **Do not say, "I want to repay evil with evil!" Wait for the LORD, that He may save you!**

23 The LORD detests unequal weights and fraudulent scales are not good.

24 A man's steps are from the LORD. How, then, can a man understand his way?

25 It is a snare for a person to say rashly, "It is holy," and to reflect only after making vows.

26 A wise king winnows out wicked people and drives a threshing wheel back over them.

27 A human being's spirit is the lamp of the LORD. It searches his whole inner being.

Proverbs about kings, good people and evil people

28 Mercy and truth will protect a king, and he will use mercy to maintain his throne.

29 The glory of young men is their strength, but the splendour of old people is their grey hair.

30 Blows and wounds will cleanse wickedness away, and beatings will cleanse the inmost being.

21

Proverbs about the ways of life

1 The heart of a king is like channels of water. The LORD controls them both and will guide them wherever He pleases.

2 **A man thinks that all his ways are right, but the LORD weighs hearts.**

3 Practising what is right and just is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

4 Haughty eyes and an arrogant heart, which are the lamps of wicked people, are sinful.

5 The plans of a diligent person are certainly profitable, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.

6 The use of a lying tongue to acquire treasure is a windblown vapour. Such people are looking for death.

7 The violence of wicked people will drag them away because they have refused to do what is just.

8 The way of a guilty man is crooked, but the conduct of a pure man is upright.

Proverbs about life together with wicked people

9 It is better to live on a corner of a roof than to share a home with a quarrelsome wife.

10 The soul of a wicked person has been craving evil. He has not been regarding his neighbour mercifully.

11 When a fine is imposed on a mocker, a gullible person will become wiser, and, when a wise person is instructed, he will gain knowledge.

12 The Righteous One understands the house of a wicked person. He brings wicked people to ruin.

13 If anyone shuts his ear to the cry of a poor person, he too will cry out and will not be answered.

14 A secret gift will subdue anger, and a present concealed in the cloak will pacify fierce rage.

15 When justice is done, a righteous person is delight-

ed, but those who do wrong are terrified.

¹⁶ A person who wanders from the way of wise behaviour will rest in the assembly of the spirits of the dead.

¹⁷ He who loves pleasure will become a poor man. He who loves wine and the finest food will not become rich.

¹⁸ A wicked person becomes a ransom instead of a righteous person, and one who deals treacherously instead of upright people.

¹⁹ It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and vexatious wife.

Proverbs about the wealth of the wise

²⁰ There are desirable stores and olive-oil in a wise man's dwelling, but a foolish man will waste them.

²¹ He who follows what is righteous and kind will find life, righteousness and honour.

Proverbs about the wise man and the proud man

²² A wise man has gone up against a city of warriors and pulled down the stronghold on which they relied.

²³ Whoever keeps watch over his mouth and his tongue protects himself from trouble.

²⁴ The name of an insolent and arrogant person is "mocker." He acts with haughty impertinence.

Proverbs about the lazy person

²⁵ The craving of a lazy person will kill him, because his hands have refused to work.

²⁶ He has been constantly trying to get something all day long, but a righteous person will give and will not keep anything back.

Proverbs about the ways of wicked people and upright people

²⁷ The sacrifices of wicked people are disgusting. How much more so when they offer them with evil intent!

²⁸ A witness who tells lies will be defeated, but the word of a man who listens will be successful.

²⁹ A wicked person has put on an impudent front, but an upright person will make his own way secure.

Proverbs that affirm that God is over everything

³⁰ No wisdom, no understanding and no advice can succeed against the LORD.

³¹ A horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.

22

A proverb about a good name

¹ A good name is preferable to great wealth. Being favoured is better than silver and gold.

General advice and observations

² When a rich man and a poor man have met one another, the LORD is the Maker of them all.

³ A sensible person has foreseen danger, so that he hides from it, but gullible people have gone ahead, so that they come to grief.

⁴ Humility and the fear of the LORD result in riches, honour and life.

⁵ Thorns and snares are on the road of a perverse person. He who guards his soul will keep far away from them.

⁶ Train a child in the way he should go! Then even when he is old he will not turn away from it.

⁷ A rich person will rule over poor people, and one who borrows is a slave to one who lends.

⁸ One who sows injustice will harvest calamity, and the cane of his own wrath will be destroyed.

⁹ He whose eye is kind will himself be blessed. For he has shared his bread with the poor person.

¹⁰ Drive out a mocker, that conflict may leave and that quarrelling and insult may cease!

¹¹ He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious has a king as his friend.

¹² The eyes of the LORD have been keeping watch over knowledge, but He has overturned the words of a treacherous person.

¹³ A lazy person has said: "There is a lion outside! I shall be killed on the streets!"

¹⁴ The mouths of adulterous women are a deep pit. One with whom the LORD is angry will fall into it.

¹⁵ Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child. A rod of discipline will remove it far from him.

¹⁶ He who oppresses a poor person to increase his own wealth, and he who gives to the rich will only come to poverty.

The sayings of wise men

¹⁷ Open your ear, listen to the words of wise men and set your mind on the knowledge that I give you!

¹⁸ For it is pleasant if you keep them in you. Let them all be ready on your lips!

¹⁹ That your trust may be in the LORD, I have made them known to you today, yes, to you.

²⁰ Did I not write to you previously with advice and knowledge, ²¹ to teach you the very words of truth, that you might bring back a true report to him who had sent you?

A proverb about robbing poor people

²² Do not rob a poor person because he is poor and do not crush an afflicted person at the city gate! ²³ For the LORD will plead their cause and will rob the lives of those who rob them.

A proverb about associating with hot-tempered people

²⁴ Do not make friends with someone who is hot-tempered and never accompany a man who is in a rage, ²⁵ that you may not become familiar with his ways and get yourself into a trap!

Proverbs about loans

²⁶ Do not be among those who give handshakes to be guarantors or among those who put up security for debts!

²⁷ If you have no means to make a repayment, why should someone take your bed from under you?

A proverb about the protection of property

²⁸ Do not move an ancient boundary line that your ancestors have set!

A proverb about the skilful worker

²⁹ You have seen a man who is skilful in his work. He will take his stand in the presence of kings. He will not take his stand in the presence of obscure people.

23

Proverbs about dining with a ruler

¹ When you sit down to eat with a ruler, you must pay close attention to what is before you, ² and put a knife to your throat if you have a big appetite!

³ Do not yearn for his delicious food! For that is deceptive food.

Proverbs about becoming rich

⁴ Do not struggle to become rich! Desist! For you have understanding.

⁵ Will you make your eyes fly after it before it is gone? For it will certainly obtain wings for itself, like an eagle flying away into the sky.

Proverbs about eating with selfish people

⁶ Do not eat the bread of one who is miserly and do not yearn for his delicious food!

⁷ For, as he has been calculating the cost to himself, this is what he will tell you, "Eat and drink!" However, he is not well disposed towards you.

⁸ You will vomit out the little bit that you have eaten and ruin your pleasant conversation.

A proverb about talking to fools

⁹ Do not speak when a fool is listening! For he will despise your intelligent words.

A proverb about protecting the property of orphans

¹⁰ Do not displace an ancient boundary marker and do not trespass into the fields of orphans! ¹¹ For their Redeemer is strong. He Himself will plead their case against you.

A proverb about giving attention to knowledge

¹² Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge!

Proverbs about the discipline of a child

¹³ Do not withhold discipline from a child! When you strike him with the cane, he will not die.

¹⁴ You should strike him yourself with the cane! Then you will save his soul from Sheol.

Proverbs about what makes a father rejoice

¹⁵ My son, if your heart is wise, my heart also will rejoice.

¹⁶ My inmost being is also jubilant when your lips speak what is right.

Proverbs that contrast sin and hope

¹⁷ Your heart should not envy sinners. Rather, continue in the fear of the LORD all the day!

¹⁸ There is indeed a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

Proverbs about associating with drunks and gluttons

¹⁹ You yourself must listen, my son! Be wise and direct your heart on the way!

²⁰ Do not associate with those who are addicted to wine, with those who gorge themselves on meat!

²¹ For a drunkard and one who squanders will become poor, and drowsiness will clothe them in rags.

Proverbs that give advice to parents

²² Listen to your father, who has begotten you, and do not despise your mother when she is old!

²³ Acquire truth and do not sell it! Acquire wisdom, training and understanding!

²⁴ A righteous person's father will certainly rejoice. One who fathers a wise son will take delight in him.

²⁵ May your father and your mother be glad! May she who gave birth to you rejoice!

A proverb against prostitution

²⁶ My son, give me your heart! Let your eyes take delight in my ways! ²⁷ For a prostitute is a deep pit, and a harlot is a narrow well. ²⁸ Indeed, she will lie in ambush like a robber. She will make more and more people treacherous.

Proverbs about the misery caused by excessive drinking

²⁹ Who has woe? Who has misery? Who has quarrels? Who has a complaint? Who has bruises for no reason? Who has blurred eyesight? ³⁰ Those who spend a long time over wine, who search for mixed drink!

³¹ **Do not look at wine when it is red**, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly! ³² Finally it will bite like a snake and will sting like an adder.

³³ Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will say confusing things. ³⁴ You will be like someone lying down in the middle of the sea or like someone lying down on top of a mast. ³⁵ "They have been striking me, but I feel no pain. They have been beating me, but I am not aware of it. When shall I wake up, that I may try to get yet another drink?"

24

A proverb about wrong thoughts and wrong company

¹ Do not envy evil men and do not desire to be with them! ² For their hearts will plan violent action, and their lips will talk about mischief.

Proverbs about spiritual building materials

³ A house will be built with wisdom. It will be founded firmly by understanding.

⁴ By means of knowledge its rooms will be filled with every kind of riches, both precious and pleasant.

A proverb about strategic planning

⁵ A wise man is strong, and an intelligent man puts strength to good use. ⁶ For you can use shrewd strategy to wage your war, and victory comes by means of plenty of advisers.

Proverbs about foolish scheming

⁷ Matters of wisdom are too high for a stubborn fool. He will not open his mouth at the city gate.

⁸ Anyone who plans to do evil will get a reputation as a schemer.

⁹ Foolish scheming is sinful, and human beings detest a mocker.

Proverbs about caring and its reward

¹⁰ If you have shown that you lack courage in a day of trouble, your strength has been slight.

¹¹ Rescue those who are being led away to execution and hold back those who are staggering toward their slaughter.

¹² When you say, "Look! We did not know this," will not He who examines hearts Himself perceive it? Will not He who watches your soul Himself also know it? **Will He not also repay a person according to what he has done?**

Proverbs

A proverb comparing honey and wisdom

¹³ Eat honey, my son! For it is good. What flows from the honeycomb is sweet to your taste. ¹⁴ Realise that wisdom is like that for your soul! If you have found it, then there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

A proverb contrasting the resilience of righteous people with the devastation of wicked people

¹⁵ You wicked person, do not lie in ambush at the abode of a righteous person! Do not raid his dwelling!

¹⁶ For a righteous person may fall seven times but will get up again. However, wicked people will be brought down by a calamity.

A proverb about reaction to the misfortune of enemies

¹⁷ Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and your heart must not be glad when he stumbles, ¹⁸ that the LORD may not see it, consider it as evil and turn His anger away from him!

A proverb about level-headed restraint

¹⁹ Do not be vexed about those who do evil! Do not envy wicked people! ²⁰ For an evil person will have no future. **The lamp of wicked people will go out.**

A proverb upholding traditions as protection against misery

²¹ **Fear the LORD, my son, and fear the king!** Do not associate with those who are different! ²² For their calamity will come on them suddenly, and who knows what distress the two of them may bring?

Proverbs about partiality and fairness

²³ These also are the sayings of the wise men: It is not good to show favouritism in a legal decision.

²⁴ Peoples will curse, and nations will be indignant with one who says to a guilty person, "You are innocent." ²⁵ However, it will be pleasant for those who convict guilty people, and a great blessing will come on them.

²⁶ He who gives straight answers gives a kiss on the lips.

A proverb about planning ahead

²⁷ Do your work unflinchingly outside and carefully get things ready for yourself in the field! Then, after that, set up your house!

Proverbs about trying to get even

²⁸ Do not testify against your neighbour without a reason and do not deceive anyone with your lips!

²⁹ Do not say: "I shall treat him as he has treated me. I shall pay the man back according to what he has done to me!"

Proverbs about learning from the laziness of others

³⁰ I went past a lazy man's field, past the vineyard belonging to a man without sense. ³¹ I saw that all of it was overgrown with thistles. Its surface was covered with weeds, and its stone fence had been torn down. ³² When I observed this, I considered it carefully. I saw it and learned a lesson. ³³ "Just a little sleep, just a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest!" ³⁴ Then your poverty will come marching back and forth, and your need like an armed man.

25

Introduction to the proverbs of Solomon copied out by the "Men of Heze-

kiah"

¹ These also are proverbs of Solomon that the men of Hezekiah, the King of Judah, collected.

Proverbs about kings

² It is the glory of God to hide a matter, but it is the glory of kings to investigate a matter.

³ Like the high sky with respect to its height and the earth with respect to its depth, the minds of kings cannot be searched.

⁴ Remove impurities from silver, and the silversmith will have success with a vessel.

⁵ Take a wicked person away from the presence of a king, and his throne will be made secure by justice.

⁶ Do not behave arrogantly before a king or stand in the place that belongs to great men! ⁷ For it is better for someone to tell you, "Come up here!" than that someone should put you lower in front of a prince.

Proverbs about lawsuits, libel and being level-headed

With reference to what your eyes have seen, ⁸ do not be in a hurry to go to contest a lawsuit! Otherwise, what will you do at the end of it if your neighbour puts you to shame? ⁹ Argue your lawsuit with your neighbour, but do not reveal another person's secret! ¹⁰ Otherwise he will bring shame on you when he hears about it, and your bad reputation will stick to you.

Comparisons with words that are used appropriately

¹¹ A word spoken at the proper time is like golden apples in silver settings.

¹² One who wisely admonishes a listening ear is like a golden ring and an ornament of fine gold.

¹³ A trustworthy messenger is like the coolness of snow on a harvest-day to those who send him. He will refresh the spirits of his masters.

¹⁴ A person who boasts about a gift that he has not given resembles patches of mist and wind without rain.

Proverbs about moderation in human relations

¹⁵ With patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue may break a bone.

¹⁶ When you have found honey, eat only as much as you need! Otherwise, you will have too much of it and vomit it out.

¹⁷ Seldom set your foot in your neighbour's house! Otherwise he will see too much of you and hate you.

¹⁸ A man who gives lying testimony against his neighbour is like a war-club, a sword or a sharp arrow.

¹⁹ Reliance on a treacherous person in a time of trouble is like a bad tooth or a foot that slips.

²⁰ Someone singing songs to a sad heart is like a person who takes off his coat on a cold day and like vinegar on soda.

²¹ **If your enemy is hungry, give him some food to eat and, if he is thirsty, give him some water to drink!** ²² **For you will be heaping up burning coals on his head,** and the LORD will reward you.

²³ A whispering tongue brings forth angry looks as the north wind brings forth rain.

Proverbs

²⁴ It is better to live on a corner of a roof than to share a home with a quarrelsome wife.

²⁵ Good news from a distant country is like cold water to a thirsty soul.

²⁶ A righteous person who gives way before a wicked person is like a muddied spring and a polluted fountain.

²⁷ Eating too much honey is not good, and searching for one's own honour is not honourable.

²⁸ A man without self-control is like a city that has been broken into or without a wall.

26

Proverbs about foolish people

¹ Honour for a fool is as inappropriate as snow in summer and rain in the harvest.

² A curse without a reason will not come true, like a sparrow that flutters, like a swallow that darts about.

³ A cane is for the backs of fools, as a whip is for the horse and a bridle is for the donkey.

⁴ Do not answer a fool according to his foolishness, that you may not be like him yourself!

⁵ Answer a fool according to his own foolishness, that he may not think that he is wise himself!

⁶ He who uses a fool to send a message is chopping off his own feet and drinking down violence.

⁷ A proverb in the mouths of fools resembles the dangling thighs of a cripple.

⁸ He who gives honour to a fool is like one who ties a stone in a sling.

⁹ A proverb in the mouths of fools is like a thorn that has stuck in the hand of a drunk person.

¹⁰ Someone who hires a fool or who hires any people who are going past is like an archer who wounds everybody.

¹¹ A fool who repeats his folly is like **a dog that goes back to its vomit**.

¹² You have seen a man who regards himself as wise. There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Proverbs about a lazy person

¹³ A lazy person has been saying: "There is a lion on the road! There is a lion out on the streets!"

¹⁴ A lazy person turns on his bed like a door turning on its hinges.

¹⁵ A lazy person has buried his hand in the dish. He has been too lazy to bring it back to his mouth.

¹⁶ A lazy person regards himself as wiser than seven people who answer with discernment.

Proverbs about meddling

¹⁷ A person who meddles in someone else's quarrel is like someone who grabs a passing dog by the ears.

¹⁸ Like a madman who shoots flaming arrows, arrows and death, ¹⁹ so is the man who has betrayed his neighbour and then asked, "Was I not joking?"

Proverbs about avoiding gossip

²⁰ Without wood a fire will go out, and without a gossip a quarrel will die down.

²¹ A quarrelsome person sets a dispute aglow like

charcoal to burning coals and wood to a fire.

²² The words of a gossip are like eating things that taste good and go down into the inner parts of the body.

Proverbs about the evils of lying

²³ Burning lips and a wicked heart are like an earthenware pot overlaid with impure silver.

²⁴ A person who hates will disguise himself with his lips and place deceit in his inner parts. ²⁵ When he makes his voice charming, do not trust him! For there are seven disgusting things in his heart. ²⁶ Although his hatred will cover itself with deception, his wickedness will be exposed in the assembly.

²⁷ He who digs a pit may fall into it and, if anyone starts a stone rolling, it may come back on him.

²⁸ A lying tongue will hate those whom it has oppressed, and a flattering mouth will cause calamity.

27

General proverbs giving advice and making observations

¹ **Do not boast about the next day! For you do not know what a day may bring forth.**

² Another person should praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.

³ A stone is heavy and sand is a burden, but annoyance caused by a stubborn fool is heavier than both.

⁴ Wrath is cruel, and anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?

⁵ Open blame is better than love that is kept secret.

⁶ Wounds made by a friend can be trusted, but an enemy's kisses are too much to bear.

⁷ One who has had plenty to eat will despise honey, but to someone who is hungry everything bitter is sweet.

⁸ A man who wanders from his home is like a bird that wanders from its nest.

⁹ Olive-oil and perfume make the heart glad, but the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest advice.

¹⁰ Do not abandon your friend or your father's friend! Do not go to your brother's home on the day when you are in trouble! A neighbour who lives nearby is better than a brother is who is far away.

¹¹ Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad, so I may be able to answer anyone who insults me!

¹² A sensible person has foreseen danger and hidden, but gullible people have gone ahead and come to grief.

¹³ Take the garment of one who has guaranteed a stranger's debt and seize it as a pledge when he puts up security on behalf of a foreign woman!

¹⁴ If anyone gets up early in the morning and blesses his friend in a loud voice, the blessing will be regarded as a curse for him.

¹⁵ A quarrelsome wife is like constantly dripping water on a day of heavy rain. ¹⁶ He who can hide her has hidden the wind and will grasp olive-oil with his right hand.

17 One man will sharpen the person of another as an iron tool will sharpen iron.

18 He who looks after a fig tree may eat its fruit, and he who protects his master will be honoured.

19 As water reflects a face, so a person's heart reflects the person.

20 Sheol and Destruction will not be satisfied, and a human being's eyes will not be satisfied.

21 The crucible is for silver, and the smelting-pot for gold, but a man is tested by the praise he receives.

22 If you use a pestle to pound the stubborn fool in a mortar together with the barley meal, his folly will not leave him.

Proverbs about rural routines

23 You must be fully aware of the condition of your flock and pay close attention to your herds! 24 For wealth will not last for ever. Will a crown endure to all generations?

25 When the hay is removed and the green growth appears and fodder is gathered on the hills, 26 lambs will provide you with clothing, and male goats with the price to buy a field.

27 There will be enough goats' milk to feed you, to feed your family and to keep your servant girls alive.

28

General proverbs that give advice and make observations

1 A wicked person runs away when no one chases him, but righteous people are as confident as a lion.

2 When a country is in revolt, it has many rulers but with a person who has understanding and knowledge it will last for a long time.

3 A poor man who oppresses other poor people is like a rain that flattens crops and leaves no food.

4 Those who forsake the Law will praise a wicked person, but those who keep the Law will oppose them.

5 Evil men will not understand justice, but those who are intent on the LORD will understand everything.

6 It is better to be a poor person who lives in his innocence than to be a rich person who is perverse in double-dealing.

7 He who observes the Law is a son who has understanding, but he who associates with gluttons will disgrace his father.

8 He who uses excessive interest and profiteering to increase his wealth will collect it to benefit him who is kind to the poor.

9 If anyone turns his ear away from hearing the Law, even his prayer is disgusting.

10 Whoever leads upright people astray on an evil way will fall into his own pit, but blameless people will inherit prosperity.

11 A rich man may regard himself as wise, but a poor man who has understanding will comprehend him.

12 When righteous people triumph, there is great glory, but when wicked people rise, a person will hide himself.

13 He who conceals his wrongdoings will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will be treated mercifully.

14 Blessed is the person who has a timid attitude! However, **he who becomes stubborn will fall into calamity.**

15 A wicked person who rules over poor people is like a roaring lion and like a charging bear.

16 A leader without understanding oppresses people severely, but one who hates gain made by violence will live for a long time.

17 A person burdened with the murder of another will be a fugitive down to the grave. No one should support him!

18 He who lives honestly will be rescued, but he who walks on crooked paths will suddenly fall.

19 He who works his land will have plenty of food. However, he who chases worthless schemes will have plenty of poverty.

20 A trustworthy man will have rich blessings, but he who wants to become rich quickly will not remain blameless.

21 It is not good to show favouritism. A man may rebel for a scrap of bread.

22 A resentful person wants to become rich quickly, without realising that poverty is about to overtake him.

23 One who rebukes another person will in the end be more highly regarded than one who uses his tongue to flatter.

24 He who robs his father or his mother and says, "It is not wrong!" is a partner to him who destroys.

25 A greedy person will stir up a fight, but he who trusts the LORD will prosper.

26 He who trusts his own intelligence is a fool, but he who lives wisely will be kept safe.

27 He who gives to a poor person does not lack anything, but he who ignores him receives many curses.

28 When wicked people rise, a person will hide himself, but, when they perish, righteous people will increase.

29

Proverbs about some patterns of life

1 A man who has been rebuked and becomes obstinate will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.

2 When righteous persons increase, the people rejoice, but, when a wicked person is ruling, the people groan.

3 A man who loves wisdom will make his father glad, but one who associates with prostitutes will squander his wealth.

4 A king will use justice to give stability to a country, but a man who accepts bribes will tear it down.

5 A man who flatters his neighbour is spreading out a net for his feet.

6 An evil man is snared by transgression, but a righteous person will rejoice and be glad.

Proverbs

⁷ A righteous person will know the legal claim of poor people. A wicked person will not understand such knowledge.

⁸ Men who mock will stir up a city, but wise men will turn away anger.

⁹ When a wise man goes to court with a stubborn fool, the fool may become excited or he may laugh, but there will be no calmness.

¹⁰ Bloodthirsty men will hate a blameless person, but upright people will try to keep him alive.

¹¹ A fool will express all his displeasure, but a wise person will calm it down at last.

¹² If a ruler pays attention to falsehood, all his officials become wicked.

¹³ A poor man and a tormentor have met each other: the LORD gives light to the eyes of both.

¹⁴ When a king judges poor people honestly, his throne will always be secure.

Proverbs that express general truths

¹⁵ A cane and a rebuke will produce wisdom, but an unchecked child brings shame on his mother.

¹⁶ When wicked people increase, crime will increase, but righteous people will witness their downfall.

¹⁷ Correct your son! Then he will give you peace and bring delight to your soul.

¹⁸ Where there is no prophetic vision a people will run wild. However, blessed are those who observe the Law!

¹⁹ A slave will not let himself be instructed by means of words. For, although he may understand, he will not respond.

²⁰ Have you seen a man who is quick to speak? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

²¹ If someone pampers his servant from young on, he will be unmanageable in the end.

²² An angry man will stir up a fight, and a bad-tempered man will be one who often transgresses.

²³ **A person's arrogance will humiliate him, but a humble spirit will obtain honour.**

²⁴ He who is the partner of a thief hates his own life. Even though he hears a curse, he will not give evidence.

²⁵ Fear of a human being will lay a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be protected.

²⁶ Many people try to come into the presence of a ruler, but justice for a man comes from the LORD.

²⁷ Righteous people detest a dishonest man, and a wicked person detests one whose conduct is honest.

30

Introduction to the words of Agur

¹ This is the pronouncement, the words of Agur the son of Jakeh.

Words acknowledging to God that He is a mystery

The man declares to Ithiel, to Ithiel and to Ucal:

² "Surely I am too stupid to be a man. I do not have the understanding of a human being. ³ I have not

learned wisdom and do not have knowledge of the Holy One!"

Questions about God

⁴ **"Who has gone up to heaven and come down?** Who has collected the wind in the hollows of His hands? Who has wrapped up water in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name or the name of His Son? For you know!"

A proverb about the power of God's Word

⁵ "Every Word of God has been refined. He is a Shield to those who go to Him for safety. ⁶ **Do not add to His Words,** that He may not rebuke you and that you may not prove yourself to be a liar!"

A prayer to God

⁷ "I have asked You for two things. Do not refuse them to me before I die! ⁸ Keep deceit and lies far away from me! Do not give me either poverty or riches! **Keep providing me with the food that is my share!** ⁹ Otherwise I may have plenty, deny You and ask, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor, steal and profane the name of my God."

A proverb against slander

¹⁰ Do not slander a slave to his master, that he may not curse you and that you may not suffer for your guilt!

Proverbs about four kinds of people

¹¹ There is a class of persons who curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers.

¹² There is a class of persons who regard themselves as clean but have not had their own excrement washed off.

¹³ There is another class of persons. How arrogant their eyes are, and how high their eyelashes are raised!

¹⁴ There is a class of people whose teeth are like swords and whose jaws are like knives, to devour oppressed people from the earth and needy people from among mankind.

A proverb about people who suck blood

¹⁵ The leech has two daughters, "Give!" and "Give!"

Four things that are never satisfied

There are three things that will never be satisfied, four that never say, "Enough!" ¹⁶ Sheol, a barren womb, a land that does not get enough water and a fire that does not say, "Enough!"

A proverb about disrespectful children and their punishment

¹⁷ The ravens in the valley will pluck out the eye that mocks a father and scorns obedience to a mother, and the young vultures will eat it.

Four things that cause amazement

¹⁸ Three things are too wonderful for me, even four that I do not understand: ¹⁹ the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship in the middle of the sea and the way of a man with a virgin.

A proverb about the adulteress

²⁰ This is the way of an adulterous woman: When she has eaten, she wipes her mouth and says, "I have not done anything wrong!"

Four things that are intolerable

²¹ Under three things the earth has been trembling,

and under four it cannot bear up: ²² under a slave when he becomes a king, a godless fool when he has eaten enough food, ²³ a woman who is unloved when she gets married and a maid when she takes the place of her mistress.

Four things that are strong although they are small

²⁴ Four things are the wisest of those that have been made wise, although they are small on earth: ²⁵ the ants are not a strong species. Yet they have prepared their food in summer. ²⁶ Rock-badgers are not a mighty species. Yet they have made their homes in the cliffs. ²⁷ Locusts have no king. Yet all of them have been marching out in ranks. ²⁸ Although you may grasp a lizard in your hands, it is in kings' palaces.

Four things that move like a king

²⁹ There are three things that step out splendidly, even four that stride out grandly: ³⁰ a lion, the mightiest among animals, which does not turn away from anyone, ³¹ a war-horse girt in the loins, a billy goat and a king with his band of soldiers.

Advice to remain quiet

³² If you have been such a godless fool as to honour yourself or if you have been planning evil, you should put your hand over your mouth! ³³ For, as pressing milk will produce curds, and squeezing a nose will produce blood, so squeezing anger will produce strife.

31

Introduction to the advice of Lemuel's mother

¹ The sayings of King Lemuel, a pronouncement that his mother used to educate him:

Warning against making oneself vulnerable!

² "What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows? ³ Do not give your strength to women or your ways to those who destroy kings!

Warning about the use of strong drink

⁴ "It is not for kings, Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine or for rulers to crave strong drink.

⁵ Otherwise they will drink, forget what has been decreed and pervert the standard of justice for all who have been oppressed. ⁶ Give strong drink to the person who is perishing and wine to those whose hearts are bitter. ⁷ Such a person will drink, forget his poverty and will not remember his misery any longer."

Advice to defend poor and needy people

⁸ Open your mouth for one who cannot speak, for the legal rights of those who are about to pass away!

⁹ Open your mouth, judge righteously and plead the cause of poor and needy people!

Praise of the wife who has a strong character

¹⁰ ^{*125} "Who can find a wife of noble character? She is far more valuable than pearls of coral. ¹¹ Her husband has trusted her with all his heart and he will have no lack of gain. ¹² She treats him well and does nothing harmful to him all her life. ¹³ She has been searching for wool, and linen and has been active with her eager hands. ¹⁴ She has been like trading vessels. She brings

her food from far away. ¹⁵ She has been getting up while it has still been dark, providing food to her family and assigning tasks to her servant-girls. ¹⁶ She has considered a field and bought it. She has used what her hands have produced to plant a vineyard. ¹⁷ She has put on strength like a belt and has made her arms strong. ¹⁸ She has experienced that she has profited well from her trading. Her lamp does not go out at night. ¹⁹ She has been laying her hands on the distaff, and the palms of her hands have been holding a spindle. ²⁰ She has been opening her hand to the oppressed person and reaching out her hands to the needy person. ²¹ She does not fear for her family when it snows because her whole family has been dressed in crimson garments. ²² She has made bed-coverings for herself. Her clothes have been made of linen and purple wool. ²³ Her husband is known at the city gates when he sits with the elders of the land. ²⁴ She has been making linen undergarments and selling them. She has been delivering waistbands to the merchants. ²⁵ She dresses with strength and dignity and has been laughing at the time to come. ²⁶ She has been opening her mouth wisely, and kind instruction is on her tongue. ²⁷ She watches intently the conduct of her family and does not eat the bread of idleness. ²⁸ Her children have been standing up and calling her blessed. Her husband also does and he has been praising her: ²⁹ 'Many women have proved themselves capable, but you have surpassed all of them!'

³⁰ "Charm is deceptive and beauty evaporates, but a woman who fears the LORD is the one who is to be praised!

³¹ "Reward her with what her hands have produced, and let her achievements bring her praise at the city gates!"

¹²⁵ The section v 10-31 is alphabetical in Hebrew, like Ps 119.

ECCLESIASTES

1

The introduction for the speaker at the assembly

¹ The Words of the speaker at the assembly, the son of David, the king at Jerusalem.

The theme, that everything is pointless

² “Absolutely pointless!” is what the speaker at the assembly has said. “Absolutely pointless! Everything is pointless.”

The endless circle of life

³ What profit does a person gain from all his hard work, at which he toils under the sun?

⁴ One generation goes and another generation comes, but the earth remains for ever.

⁵ The sun rises and the sun sets and presses on to the place where it rises.

⁶ The wind blows to the south and goes around to the north. The wind goes around and around, and the wind returns on its circuits.

⁷ Although all the streams flow into the sea, the sea is not full. The streams have been flowing again to the place where they had been flowing.

⁸ All things are wearisome. A man cannot express it. Seeing will not satisfy the eye, and hearing will not fill the ear.

⁹ What has always been is what will be, what has always been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰ Is there anything about which one can say, “See! This is new”? It has been already in the former times, which have been before us. ¹¹ No one remembers former things, and none of those who will come later on will remember later things that are yet to be.

The search for meaning in everything under heaven

¹² I, the spokesman at the assembly, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem.

¹³ I have also been applying my mind to study and to use wisdom to investigate all that has been done under heaven. It is a burdensome task that God has given to human beings to be troubled about. ¹⁴ I have seen everything that has been done under the sun and, indeed, everything is pointless and an attempt to catch the wind. ¹⁵ What is crooked cannot become straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted.

The beginning of the spokesman’s study of human life

¹⁶ I thought to myself: “Look! I have become great, I have acquired more wisdom than everyone else who has been over Jerusalem before me, and my mind has experienced much wisdom and knowledge.”

¹⁷ I have applied my mind to understand wisdom and to understand madness and folly. I have found out that this also is an attempt to catch the wind. ¹⁸ For much vexation comes with much wisdom. When anyone gains more knowledge, he will gain more irritation.

2

The study of laughter by the spokesman

¹ I thought to myself: “Come now, let me test you with pleasure! Enjoy prosperity!” However, I realised that that was also pointless. ² I thought, about laughter, “It makes no sense,” and, about pleasure, “What does it accomplish?”

The study of wine

³ I used my mind to explore how to cheer my body with wine (while my mind was still using wisdom to guide me) and how to lay hold on folly, until I might see what good there was for human beings to do under heaven during the short time of their lives.

The study of personal achievements

⁴ I accomplished my great projects. I built houses for myself and planted vineyards for myself. ⁵ I made gardens and parks for myself and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. ⁶ I made myself reservoirs from which to water a grove of growing trees. ⁷ I bought male and female slaves. I also had slaves who were born in my household. I also possessed larger herds and flocks than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. ⁸ I also amassed silver and gold for myself and the treasures of kings and provinces. I acquired male and female singers and enjoyed the pleasures that men have with many concubines. ⁹ So, I became great and surpassed anyone else who had been before me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also remained with me. ¹⁰ I did not keep from my eyes anything that they desired. I did not refuse my heart any pleasure. For my heart took delight in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. ¹¹ Nevertheless, when I surveyed all that my hands had done and the toil that I had expended in doing it, I saw that everything had been pointless and an attempt to catch the wind and that nothing had been gained under the sun.

The conclusion that death is the common destiny of all life

¹² Then I turned to consider wisdom, madness and folly. For what more can the man who will succeed the king do? Only what has already been done!

¹³ However, I saw that wisdom has an advantage over foolishness, as light has an advantage over darkness.

¹⁴ The wise person has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in the dark. Nevertheless, I also came to realise that the same fate will overtake them all.

¹⁵ Then I thought to myself, “What will happen to the fool will happen to me, too. Why then have I been so very wise?” In addition, I concluded that this is also pointless.

The conclusion that without God everything is pointless

¹⁶ For people will not remember the wise man or the fool for long, since all will be forgotten for a long time in the days to come. Besides, how will a wise man die? Together with the fool! ¹⁷ Therefore, I hated life, because everything that had been accomplished under the sun was distressing to me. For everything is pointless and an attempt to catch the wind. ¹⁸ I also hate all my labour, in which I have been toiling under the sun, because I must leave it behind to the person

who comes after me. ¹⁹ Besides, who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Nevertheless, he will have control over all my labour, in which I have been toiling and for which I have been using my wisdom under the sun. This also is pointless. ²⁰ Therefore, I turned away, to let my heart despair over all the labour in which I had been toiling under the sun. ²¹ For, although a person may have laboured with wisdom, knowledge and skill, he must leave his estate to someone who has not toiled for it. This also is pointless and a great evil. ²² For what does a person get through all the toil and longing of his heart, over which he has been anxious under the sun? ²³ For all his life is full of anguish, and his occupation is irritating. Even in the night, his mind is not content. This also is pointless.

With God even the simplest things have a point

²⁴ There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat, drink and let his soul find satisfaction in his labour. I have seen that this also comes from the hand of God. ²⁵ “For who can eat or who can feel pleasure apart from Me?”

²⁶ For God has given wisdom, knowledge and joy to a person whom He regards kindly. However, to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and amassing wealth, that he may give it to the person whom God regards kindly. This also is pointless and an attempt to catch the wind.

3

Conclusion that everything happens in God's own time

¹ There is an appointed time for everything, and a right time for every activity under the sky: ² a time to give birth and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot what has been planted, ³ a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to demolish and a time to build, ⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to leap about, ⁵ a time to throw stones away and a time to gather stones, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, ⁶ a time to search and a time to give up as lost, a time to keep and a time to throw away, ⁷ a time to tear and a time to stitch together, a time to be silent and a time to speak, ⁸ a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

God's gift of a sense of eternity to human beings

⁹ What benefit does a worker gain from what he toils over? ¹⁰ I have seen the activity that God has given human beings to be troubled about. ¹¹ He has made everything beautiful in its time. He also has put eternity in their hearts. Nevertheless, no human being will be able to find out the work that God has been doing from the beginning to the end. ¹² I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and to enjoy themselves while they are alive. ¹³ Besides, it is a gift of God if every human being eats and drinks and recognises good in all his toil.

¹⁴ I have perceived that whatever God does will last

for ever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken away from it. God has done this that people may fear Him. ¹⁵ What is now has already been, and what will be has already been. God will also search out what has passed away.

Wickedness in the place of justice

¹⁶ I have seen something else under the sun, that there is wickedness right there in the place of justice. In the place of righteousness, right there is wickedness. ¹⁷ I thought to myself, God will judge the righteous person and the wicked person. For there is a time for everything that is purposed and everything that is done.

Human beings and animals meet the same end

¹⁸ I thought to myself, about human beings, that God is going to examine them, that they may see that they are like animals. ¹⁹ For what happens to human beings and what happens to animals are the same. The one dies like the other. They all have the same breath, and the human being has no advantage over the animal. For everything is pointless. ²⁰ All go to the same place. All have come from the dust and all return to the dust. ²¹ Who knows whether the spirit of human beings goes upwards and the spirit of the animal goes downwards to the earth? ²² Therefore, I have seen that there is nothing better than that a human being should enjoy his work. For that is his lot. Indeed, who will bring him to see what will happen after him?

4

The conclusion that it is better not to have been born because of prevailing injustice

¹ Again I saw all the oppressive actions that are done under the sun. I also saw the tears of the oppressed people, and that they had no one to comfort them! Power is on the side of those who oppress them, and there is no one to comfort them. ² I declared that dead people, those who had already died, were happier than the people were who were living, those who were still alive. ³ However, he who has not yet come into existence is better off than both are. He has not seen the evil activity that is being done under the sun.

A comparison between hard work and laziness

⁴ Then I saw that all the toil and all the skilful work spring from the competitive spirit between a man and his neighbour. This also is pointless and an attempt to catch the wind. ⁵ The fool folds his hands and consumes his own flesh. ⁶ A handful with calmness is better than two handfuls of toil and an attempt to catch the wind.

The study of the person who is all alone

⁷ Then I saw something else that is pointless under the sun. ⁸ There is one person who is all alone, without either a son or a brother. Yet there is no end to all his toil. His eyes are never satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, “For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of happiness?” This also is pointless and a miserable business!

The conclusion that two are better than one

⁹ Two are better than one, because they receive good

wages for their toil. ¹⁰ For, if they fall, the one will help his companion up. However, how sad it is for someone who is alone and falls down! He has no one else to help him up. ¹¹ Again, if two lie down together, they will become warm, but how can only one person become warm? ¹² Although one person may overpower another who is alone, two people can resist him. A thread with three strands will not be torn apart quickly.

The conclusion about rulers and fickle citizens

¹³ A young man who is poor and wise is better than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to heed a warning. ¹⁴ For the youth came out of prison to become king, even though he had been born in poverty inside his kingdom. ¹⁵ I saw all those who were alive and moving about under the sun. They sided with the young man, who was the second and who took the place of the former. ¹⁶ There was no end of all the people, of everyone whom he led. However, those who came later were not happy with him. Surely this also is pointless and an attempt to catch the wind.

5

A warning not to be quick to speak at worship

¹ Watch your steps when you go to the house of God! To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools. For they do not know that they are doing evil. ² Do not be quick to talk, and your mind should not be hasty to speak anything in the presence of God! For God is in heaven, and you are on the earth. Therefore, let your words be few! ³ For dreaming comes when there is much activity, and a fool uses many words to speak. ⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it! For He is not pleased with fools. Fulfil what you vow! ⁵ It is better that you should not make a vow than that you should make a vow and not fulfil it. ⁶ Do not allow your mouth to mislead your body into sin, and do not say before God's representative that it had been an unintentional mistake! Why should God become angry at what you had said, so that He ruins what your hands have done? ⁷ Indeed, when there are many dreams, there are also pointless things and many words. For you must fear God!

Corrupt officials have corrupted officials over them

⁸ If you see in a province that a poor person is being oppressed and that justice and righteousness are stolen away, do not be astonished at such a thing! For a higher-ranking official watches over a high official, and still higher-ranking officials are over them. ⁹ Moreover, the land is beneficial for everyone. A king depends on a cultivated field.

The unsatisfying value of money

¹⁰ A person who loves money will not be satisfied with money, and whoever loves wealth will not be satisfied with his income. This also is pointless. ¹¹ When goods increase, those who consume them increase. Therefore, what advantage does their owner

have except to see them with his eyes? ¹² The sleep of a labourer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the plenty of the rich man will not permit him to sleep.

The disappointment caused by wealth

¹³ I have seen a painful evil under the sun, wealth hoarded by its owner so that it harms him. ¹⁴ That wealth has also been lost in a bad venture. When he has a son, he will have nothing in his possession. ¹⁵ He will go back naked, as he has come out of his mother's womb. His toil will not enable him to take anything at all that he can carry away in his hands. ¹⁶ This is also a painful evil. He will depart exactly as he has come. Therefore, what advantage will he gain from exerting himself for the wind? ¹⁷ Moreover, he even used to eat in the dark all his days. He used to be greatly frustrated, sick and angry.

The conclusion that God alone gives contentment

¹⁸ Here is what I have seen to be good: that it is proper to eat, drink and find satisfaction in all the toil in which a person labours under the sun during the few days of his life that God has given him. For that is his lot. ¹⁹ Moreover, when God has given any person wealth and possessions and has granted him the opportunity to enjoy them, to accept his lot and to be happy in his toil, this is the gift of God. ²⁰ For he will not often think about the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the joy in his heart.

6

The disappointments of rich people

¹ There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it is a ponderous one on human beings. ² There is a man to whom God gives wealth, possessions and honour, so that he does not lack anything that he desires for himself. Nevertheless, God does not grant him the opportunity to enjoy them, but a stranger enjoys them. This is pointless and is a painful calamity. ³ A man may have a hundred children and may live for many years, so that he has a very long life. Nevertheless, if his soul is not satisfied with his prosperity and he does not even receive a burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he is. ⁴ For a stillborn baby has come without a purpose, it goes away in the dark, and darkness conceals its name. ⁵ Although it has not seen the sun or known anything, the baby has more rest than that man does. ⁶ Even though he lived for a thousand years twice over without having experienced anything good, do not all go to the same place?

More examples of pointless circumstances

⁷ All a human being's toil is for his mouth, and yet his appetite is not satisfied. ⁸ For what advantage does the wise man have over the fool? What does the poor man gain by knowing how to conduct himself before other living people? ⁹ What the eyes see is better than the wandering of the appetite. This also is pointless and an attempt to catch the wind. ¹⁰ Whatever has come into existence has already been named. A human being has been known for what he is and he cannot con-

tend with One who is mightier than he is. ¹¹ Indeed, the more words there are, the more pointless they are. What advantage does any human being gain? ¹² For who knows what is good for a human being in life during the few days of his pointless life? He spends them like a shadow. For who can tell a man what will come after him under the sun?

7

Proverbs about life

¹ A good reputation is better than fine perfume, and the day of death is better than the day of one's birth.

² It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, because this is the end of all human beings. Everyone who is alive should take this to heart!

³ Sorrow is better than laughter, because, although the face is sad, the heart may be in good spirits.

⁴ The minds of wise people are in the house of mourning, but the minds of fools are in the house of pleasure.

⁵ It is better for a man to listen to the rebuke of a wise person than to hear the song of fools. ⁶ For the laughing of fools is like the noise of thorn-bushes under a pot. This also is pointless.

⁷ Surely oppression will make a wise person look foolish, and a bribe will corrupt the mind.

⁸ The end of something is better than its beginning. It is better to be patient than arrogant.

⁹ Do not be quick in your spirit to become angry! For anger lodges in the bosoms of fools.

¹⁰ Do not ask, "How is it that the former times were better than the present times are?" For wisdom has not prompted you to ask this.

The conclusion that wisdom gives life

¹¹ Wisdom is good when it accompanies an inheritance. It is an advantage to those who see the sun.

¹² For wisdom provides protection as money provides protection. However, the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who possess it.

¹³ Consider what God has done! For who can straighten what He has made crooked?

The conclusion that God sends both prosperity and adversity

¹⁴ Be happy when times are prosperous! However, when bad times come, realise that God made the one as well as the other, so that no human being can discover anything at all that will be after him.

The conclusion that human beings do not get what they deserve

¹⁵ I have seen everything in my pointless life. There is a righteous man who perishes although he is righteous, and there is a wicked man who lives for a long time although he is wicked. ¹⁶ Do not be extremely righteous and do not show yourself excessively wise! Why should you bring ruin on yourself? ¹⁷ Do not be too wicked and do not be a fool! Why should you die before your time? ¹⁸ It is good that you should hold on to the one and not let your hand go from the other. For the one who fears God will escape them all.

The advantages of wisdom

¹⁹ Wisdom will make a wise man stronger than ten rulers who are in a city.

²⁰ Certainly there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins.

²¹ In addition, do not take to heart all the things that people say, that you may not hear your servant cursing you! ²² For your own conscience knows that you also have often cursed other people.

²³ I have used wisdom to test all this. Although I have said, "I want to be wise," it was far away from me.

²⁴ Who can find out what is far off and what is most profound? ²⁵ I had turned my heart to know, to search out and to search for wisdom and the scheme of things and to know that being wicked is stupid and that foolishness is madness. ²⁶ Then I used to find something that is more bitter than death: the woman whose heart is snares and nets and whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God will escape from her, but she will trap the sinner. ²⁷ "Look! This is what I have found," says the speaker at the assembly. "I have added one thing after another to find the scheme of things. ²⁸ I have still been searching for the scheme of things but have not found it. I have found one man out of a thousand but out of all these I have not found one woman. ²⁹ Look! I have found only this: that, although God has made human beings upright, they have investigated many schemes."

8

The obligations of a king and his subjects and the inability to control death

¹ Who is like a wise person? Who knows how to explain a thing? A man's wisdom makes his face shine, and his hard face is changed. ² I say: Keep the king's command, because of your oath to God! ³ Do not be hasty to leave the king's presence! Do not become involved in a bad cause! For he can do whatever he pleases. ⁴ Since the word of the king is supreme, who can ask him, "What are you doing?" ⁵ He who obeys his command will not experience anything harmful, and the wise heart will know the proper time and the right way to act. ⁶ For there is a proper time and a right way to act for every situation, although the sin of a human being lies heavily on him. ⁷ For no one knows the future. For who can tell him how it will turn out? ⁸ No human being has any power over the wind, to keep the wind back, and no one has any power over the day of death. There is no supreme control in that military service, and no wickedness can deliver those who practise it.

The unfairness of life

⁹ I have observed all this and have applied my mind to all the activity that has been carried on under the sun. There is a time when one human being has power over another human being so that he harms him. ¹⁰ Then I saw wicked people being buried. Although they had been going in and coming out of the Holy Place, they had become forgotten in the city where they had been

doing such things. This also is pointless.

The need for swift justice

¹¹ Because the sentence against an evil deed is not carried out quickly, the hearts of human beings have the courage to do wrong. ¹² Although a sinner does evil a hundred times and yet lives a long life, I nevertheless know that those who fear God will prosper, because they fear Him. ¹³ However, it will not go well for the wicked person, and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not fear God.

The recommendation to enjoy life

¹⁴ There is a pointless thing that occurs on earth. There are righteous people who get what wicked people deserve, and there are wicked people who get what righteous people deserve. I have said that this also is pointless. ¹⁵ Therefore, I recommend enjoyment. For a human being has nothing better under the sun than to eat, drink and enjoy himself. This enjoyment will accompany him in his toil during the days of his life, which God has given him under the sun. ¹⁶ When I applied my mind to know wisdom and to see the activity that has been engaged in on earth — that a person's eyes may not experience sleep, either by day or by night — ¹⁷ then I saw everything that God has done. Human beings cannot comprehend the activity that has been engaged in under the sun, since a human being may work hard in searching for it but will not find it out. Even though a wise man claims to know it, he will not be able to find it out.

9

The conclusion that everything is in the hands of God

¹ For I have carefully thought about all this and examined all this, that righteous people and wise people, together with what they do, are in the hand of God. Human beings do not know whether there will be love or hate. Everything is before them. ² Everything will happen in the same way for everyone. The righteous person, the wicked person, the good person, the clean person, the unclean person, the person who sacrifices and the person who does not sacrifice will experience the same event. The sinner will be like the good person, and the person who shuns an oath will be like the person who swears an oath.

The assertion that there is hope while there is life,

³ This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that the same event will happen to everyone. Moreover, the hearts of human beings are full of evil, and there is madness in their hearts while they are alive. Then, after that, they go to the dead. ⁴ However, anyone who is joined with all the people who are alive may be confident. For, really, a living dog is better than a dead lion. ⁵ For the people who are alive know that they will die, but the dead do not know anything at all. There is no more reward for them. Even the memory of them has been forgotten. ⁶ Their love, their hate and their envy have already vanished. They will never again take part in anything that happens under the sun.

The recommendation to enjoy life with one's wife

⁷ Go, eat your food happily and drink your wine with a joyful heart! For God has already been kindly disposed to what you are doing. ⁸ Always wear white clothes and do not go without olive-oil on your head! ⁹ Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your pointless life, which He has given you under the sun! For that is your portion in life and in your toil, at which you are labouring under the sun.

The admonition to work with all one's might

¹⁰ Use all your strength to do everything that your hand finds to do! For there is no work, planning, knowledge or wisdom in the grave, to which you are going.

Proverbs about time and unpredictable events

¹¹ Again I saw that under the sun the foot-race does not belong to swift people, and the battle does not belong to strong people. Wise people do not have food, discerning people do not have riches, and people who have understanding are not popular, but time and chance happen to them all. ¹² For a human being also does not know his destined time. Like fish that are caught in a cruel net and like birds that are caught in a snare, so human beings are snared by a hard time, when it suddenly strikes them.

Proverbs about contempt for wisdom

¹³ I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed important to me. ¹⁴ There was a small city that had few men in it. A powerful king came against it, besieged it and built huge siege-works against it. ¹⁵ However, people found a poor, wise man in it, and he used his wisdom to deliver the city. Nevertheless, no one remembered that poor man. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, I say that wisdom is better than strength, although the poor man's wisdom is despised, and no one listens to what he has said. ¹⁷ The words of wise people that are listened to in quietness are better than the shouting of a ruler among fools. ⁸ Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner can destroy much good.

10

Various proverbs

¹ Dead flies will make a perfume-maker's ointment stink and ferment. Similarly a little folly will outweigh wisdom and honour.

Proverbs about the damage that may be caused by fools and foolish actions

² A wise man's mind will turn to the right, but the mind of a fool to the left.

³ Even while the fool is walking on the road, his sense is lacking, and he will tell everyone that he is a fool.

⁴ If a ruler becomes angry with you, do not resign from your position! For calmness can lay great offences to rest.

⁵ There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, a kind of unacceptable behaviour that proceeds from a ruler: ⁶ Fools are appointed to many higher positions, and rich people occupy lower positions. ⁷ I have seen slaves on horses and princes walking on the ground

like slaves.

⁸ He who digs a pit may fall into it, and a snake may bite a person who breaks down a wall. ⁹ He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, and he who splits logs may put himself in danger from them. ¹⁰ If the iron tool has become blunt and a person does not sharpen the blade, he will have to use more strength, but wisdom is an advantage that brings success. ¹¹ If a snake bites before it is charmed, the snake-charmer has no advantage.

¹² The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious, but the lips of a fool will swallow him up. ¹³ What he begins to say is foolish, and the end of his talk is wicked madness. ¹⁴ A fool will use many words when no human being knows what the future will bring. Who can tell him what will happen after him? ¹⁵ The toil of a fool will make him weary. For he does not know how to go to the city.

¹⁶ How sad for you, O land, when your king is a child and when your princes feast in the morning! ¹⁷ How happy are you, O land, when your king is from a noble family, and your princes feast at a proper time, to become strong and not to get drunk!

¹⁸ Because of extreme laziness the rafters will sag, and because hands hang slackly the house will leak.

¹⁹ Bread is made for pleasure and wine will make life cheerful, but money will be an answer to everything.

²⁰ Do not curse the king even in your thoughts, and do not curse a rich man in your bedroom! For a bird in the sky may carry your voice, and some other winged creature may report what you say.

11

Admonitions to live boldly with trust in God

¹ Cast out your bread over the surface of the water! For you will find it after many days. ² Divide your property into seven parts or even into eight! For you do not know what calamity will happen on the earth. ³ If the clouds are full of rain, they will pour it out on the earth and, if a tree falls towards the south or towards the north, the tree will remain where it falls. ⁴ He who watches the wind will not sow, and he who keeps on looking at the clouds will not harvest. ⁵ As you do not know the path of the wind or how the body is formed in the womb of a pregnant woman, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything. ⁶ Sow your seed in the morning and do not let your hand rest until the evening! For you do not know whether the one or the other will be successful or whether both of them will be good at the same time. ⁷ The light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun. ⁸ Indeed, if a person lives for many years, he should enjoy all of them. However, he should remember that there will be many dark days. All that is coming is pointless.

Remember your Creator while you are young

⁹ Enjoy yourself, young man, while you are young,

and let your heart make you happy while you are still young! Follow the direction of your heart and where your eyes lead you. However, realise that for all these things God will bring you into judgment! ¹⁰ Get rid of what irritates your heart and dismiss distress from your body! For the time of youth and the dawn of life are pointless.

12

¹ Remember also your Creator in the days when you are young, before the days of trouble come and the years arrive about which you will say, "I have no pleasure in them," ² before the sun, the light, the moon and the stars become dark and the clouds return after the rain, ³ when those who guard the house tremble and the strong men stoop over and the women who grind stop working because they become few and those who look through the windows grow dim ⁴ when the doors to the street are closed up when the sound of the grinding mill becomes quiet, a person rises up at the sound of a bird and all the sounds of singing fade away! ⁵ Then people will also be afraid of what is high and of dangers along the road. The almond tree will blossom, the locust will move forward slowly, and the stimulating caper-buds will be broken off, because the human being is going to his eternal home, and the mourners will go around in the streets. ⁶ Remember Him before the silver cord is removed, the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher is shattered beside the water-spring and the water-pulley is broken at the cistern. ⁷ Then the dust will return to the ground as it was, and the spirit will return to God, who has given it. ⁸ "Absolutely pointless!" is what the speaker at the assembly has said. "Everything is pointless!"

Conclusion that the lifelong duty of human beings is to fear God and keep His Commandments

⁹ The speaker at the assembly was not only wise but also taught the people what he knew. He used to weigh it carefully, search it out and arrange it in many proverbs. ¹⁰ The speaker at the assembly tried to find pleasing words, and what was written down was honest. He wrote truthful words. ¹¹ The words of wise people are like goading sticks and like the points of ox-goads, which are driven in. Those who collected the sayings were given them from the One Shepherd. ¹² Be warned, my son, of anything in addition to these! The making of many books is endless, and much study makes the body weary. ¹³ This is the end of the matter. All has been heard. Fear God and keep His Commandments! For this is the whole duty of a human being. ¹⁴ For God will bring every deed into judgment, together with every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Song of Solomon

SONG OF SOLOMON

1

Introduction (1:1)

¹ The most beautiful Song of Solomon.

The young woman arrives in Solomon's palace

[Bride]^{*126}

² Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your expressions of love are better than wine.

³ Your anointing oils are fragrant. Your name is perfume poured out. That is why virgins love you.

⁴ Lead me away! Let us run! The king has brought me into his private rooms.

[The chorus of young women]

Let us shout for joy and rejoice over you! Let us praise your expressions of love more than wine! It is right that they love you!

[Bride]

⁵ Young women of Jerusalem, I am dark and lovely, like the tents of Kedar, like the tent-curtains of Solomon.

⁶ Do not stare at me because I am dark, because the sun has tanned me! My mother's sons had been angry with me. They had made me take care of the vineyards. I have not even taken care of my own vineyard.

⁷ Tell me, you whom my soul loves, where do you graze your flock? Where do you allow your flock to lie down at noon? For why should I be like a veiled woman beside the flocks of your companions?

[The chorus of young women]

⁸ If you do not know, most beautiful among the women, follow the footmarks of the flock and pasture your young goats near the shepherds' tents!

The search of Solomon for the young woman's love

[Groom]

⁹ My darling, I say that you are like my filly among Pharaoh's chariots. ¹⁰ Your cheeks are lovely with strings of jewels, your neck with chains of pearls.

[The chorus of young women]

¹¹ We shall make strings of gold for you with silver beads.

[Bride]

¹² While the king has been at his round table, my nard-perfume has been giving out its fragrance.

¹³ To me the one whom I love is a pouch of myrrh that spends the night between my breasts.

¹⁴ The one whom I love is a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of En Gedi.

[Groom]

¹⁵ Look at you! You are beautiful, my darling! Look at you! You are beautiful! Your eyes are doves!

[Bride]

¹⁶ Look at you! You are handsome, my loved one, truly delightful! Our couch is full of green leaves.

¹⁷ The cedars will be the walls of our house. The juniper trees will be our rafters.

2

¹ I am an asphodel-lily of Sharon, a lily-blossom of the valleys.

[Groom]

My darling among the young women is like a lily among thorn bushes.

[Bride]

³ The one whom I love among the young men is like an apple among the trees of the forest. I have been sitting down in his shadow with passionate desire. His fruit has been sweet to my taste.

⁴ He has brought me into a banquet hall, and love has been his banner over me.

⁵ Strengthen me with raisin cake! Refresh me with apples! For I am lovesick.

⁶ His left hand is under my head, and his right hand is embracing me.

⁷ Young women of Jerusalem, I have made you promise solemnly by the gazelles and by the does in the field that you will not awaken love or arouse it until it feels inclined.

The recollection by the young woman of a say in spring with the one whom she loves

[Bride]

⁸ I hear the voice of the one whom I love. Look! There he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills. ⁹ The one whom I love is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look there! He is standing behind our wall, gazing through the windows, looking through the lattices. ¹⁰ The one whom I love spoke and told me: "Get up, my darling, my beautiful one, and come away! ¹¹ For look! The winter has passed. The rain has moved away and has gone. ¹² Blossoms have appeared on the ground. The time of singing has arrived. The cooing of the turtledove has been heard in our land. ¹³ The fig tree has ripened its green fruit. The blossom-clusters on the grapevines have been giving out a fragrance. Get up and come, my darling, my beautiful one! Come away! ¹⁴ My dove, in the crevices in the rock, in the hiding place of the steep mountainside, let me see your figure and hear your voice! For your voice is pleasant, and your figure is lovely."

¹⁵ Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards! Our vineyards are in bloom.

¹⁶ The one whom I love is mine, and I am his. He grazes his flock among the lilies.

¹⁷ Turn here, my loved one, until the day brings a cool breeze and the shadows flee! Be like a gazelle or a young stag on the rugged mountains!

3

The dreams of the young woman about searching for the one whom she loves

[Bride]

¹ Night after night on my bed I looked for the one whom my heart loves. I looked for him but did not find him. ² I should like to get up now and go around

¹²⁶ Masculine and feminine Hebrew forms indicate the different speakers.

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the city, in the streets and in the squares. I want to look for the one whom my heart loves. I have been looking for him but have not found him. ³ The watchmen who were going around in the city found me. I asked, "Have you seen the one whom my heart loves?"

⁴ Scarcely had I gone past them when I found him whom my heart loves. I held on to him and would not let him go until I had brought him into my mother's house, into the inner room of the woman who conceived me. ⁵ Young women of Jerusalem, I have made you promise solemnly by the gazelles and by the does in the field that you will not awaken love or arouse it until it feels inclined.

Report about how the young woman from Shunem had come to Jerusalem
[The chorus of young women]

⁶ Who is this woman coming up from the wilderness like columns of smoke? She is perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, made from all the scented powders of the merchants? ⁷ Look! The portable couch that belongs to Solomon! Sixty valiant soldiers of Israel are around it. ⁸ All of them are wearing swords and are expert in battle. Each one has his sword at his side, against the terrors of the night. ⁹ King Solomon has had a portable couch made for himself from the wood of Lebanon. ¹⁰ He has made its posts out of silver, its top out of gold and its seat out of purple wool. The young women of Jerusalem have lovingly inlaid its interior. ¹¹ Young women of Zion, come out and look at King Solomon! Look at his crown, the crown with which his mother crowned him on his wedding day, on the day when his heart was glad!

4

The charming of Solomon by the young woman from Shulam
[Groom]

¹ Oh, you are beautiful, my darling! Oh, you are beautiful! Your eyes are doves behind your veil. Your hair is like a flock of goats leaping down from Mount Gilead. ² Your teeth are like a flock of recently shorn sheep, which have come up from the washing. All of them bear twins, and not one among them has lost its young. ³ Your lips are like crimson thread. Your mouth is lovely. Your temple behind your veil is like a slice of pomegranate. ⁴ Your neck is like David's tower constructed in layers. A thousand shields hang on it, all of them round shields of warriors. ⁵ Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a female gazelle, which graze among the lilies.

⁶ Until the day brings a cool breeze and the shadows flee, I shall go to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense. ⁷ You are beautiful in every way, my darling. There is no blemish on you. ⁸ You will come with me from Lebanon, from Lebanon, as my bride. You will come down with me from the top of Amana, from the tops of Senir and Hermon, from the lairs of lions, from the mountains of leopards.

⁹ You have captivated my heart, my sister, my bride.

You have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one strand of your necklace. ¹⁰ How beautiful are your expressions of love, my sister, my bride! How much more pleasing are your expressions of love than wine, and the fragrance of your perfumes than any spices! ¹¹ Your lips drip honey, my bride. Honey and milk are under your tongue. The fragrance of your clothing is like the fragrance of Lebanon. ¹² My sister, my bride, is a locked garden, an enclosed spring, a sealed fountain. ¹³ Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates and delicious fruits, henna bushes and nard plants, ¹⁴ nard and saffron, calamus, cinnamon, with all kinds of incense trees, myrrh, aloes and all the finest spices. ¹⁵ You are a fountain for gardens, a well of living water and flowing streams from Lebanon.

[Bride]

¹⁶ Awake, north wind! Come, south wind! Blow through my garden! Let its spices distil from it! Let the one whom I love come to his garden and let him eat its delicious fruit!

5

[Groom]

¹ My bride, my sister, I have come to my garden. I have plucked my myrrh with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey. I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, my friends! Drink and become intoxicated with expressions of love!

The young woman's dreams of marriage with her husband

[Bride]

² Although I was asleep, my heart was awake. A sound! The one whom I love is knocking.

[Groom]

Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, my locks of hair with the dewdrops of the night.

[Bride]

³ I have taken off my tunic. How could I put it on again? I have washed my feet. How could I get them dirty again? ⁴ The one whom I love has put his hand through the hole in the door. My inner being has been throbbing for him.

⁵ I got up to open for the one whom I love. My hands dripped with myrrh, and drops of myrrh fell from my fingers on the hollows for the door-bolts. ⁶ I opened for the one whom I love, but the one whom I love had turned away. He had gone. My heart failed me when he turned away. Although I looked for him, I did not find him. Although I called him, he did not answer me. ⁷ The watchmen who were going around in the city found me. They hit me. They bruised me. The watchmen on the walls took my shawl away from me. ⁸ Young women of Jerusalem, I have made you solemnly promise. If you find the one whom I love, what will you tell him? Tell him that I am lovesick!

[The chorus of young women]

⁹ Most beautiful of women, what makes your lover different from any other lover? What makes your lover different from any other lover, that you have made

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us solemnly promise in this way?

[Bride]

¹⁰ The one whom I love is radiant and ruddy. He is outstanding among ten thousand. ¹¹ His head is the finest gold. The locks of his hair are date clusters and as black as a raven. ¹² His eyes are like doves beside streams of water, bathing in milk, perching on gem-settings. ¹³ His cheeks are like a garden bed of spices, mounds of fragrant herbs. His lips are lilies that drip with myrrh. ¹⁴ His forearms are golden cylinders mounted with chrysolite. His belly is a panel of ivory encrusted with lapis lazuli. ¹⁵ His legs are columns of alabaster set on bases of pure gold. His form is like Lebanon, as excellent as the cedars. ¹⁶ His mouth is most sweet. Everything about him is desirable! This is the one whom I love. This is my darling, young women of Jerusalem.

6

[The chorus of young women]

¹ Where has the one whom you love gone, most beautiful of women? Which way has the one whom you love turned, that we may look for him with you?

[Bride]

² The one whom I love has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to pasture his flock in the gardens and to gather lilies. ³ I belong to the one whom I love, and the one whom I love is mine. He is the one who is grazing his flock among the lilies.

Solomon's desire for the young woman more than for the rest of his wives
[Groom]

⁴ You are beautiful, my darling, like Tirzah, lovely like Jerusalem, as awesome as soldiers with banners.

⁵ Turn your eyes away from me! For they overwhelm me. Your hair is like a flock of goats moving down from Gilead. ⁶ Your teeth are like a flock of ewes, sheep that have come up from the washing. All of them bear twins, and not one among them has lost its young. ⁷ Your temple behind your veil is like a slice of pomegranate. ⁸ There are sixty queens, eighty concubines and countless virgins. ⁹ However, she, my dove, my perfect one, is the only one. She is pure to her mother, to the one who has given birth to her. The young women have seen her and have called her blessed, as well as queens and concubines, and they have been praising her.

A description of the young woman's home in Shulam

[The chorus of young women]

¹⁰ Who is this woman, who has been looking down from above, like the dawn? She is as beautiful as the full moon, as pure as the sun, as awesome as soldiers with banners.

[Bride]

¹¹ I went to the walnut garden to look at the green shoots on the date palm, to see if the grapevine had budded and if the pomegranates had bloomed. ¹² I had not realised it. My desire had set me among the chariots of my noble people.

[The chorus of young women]

¹³ Come back! Come back, young woman from Shulam! Come back! Come back, that we may gaze at you!

[Bride]

Why are you gazing at me, at the young woman from Shulam, as you would gaze at the dance of Mahanaim?

7

[The chorus of young women]

¹ How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O daughter of a prince! The curves of your thighs are like ornaments, the work of a craftsman's hands. ² Your navel is a round goblet. May it not lack spiced wine! Your belly is a heap of wheat enclosed in lilies. ³ Your breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle. ⁴ Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are pools in Heshbon beside the gate of Bath-Rabbim. Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon looking toward Damascus. ⁵ Your head is on you like Mount Carmel. The loose hair of your head is like wool dyed with red-purple. A king is held captive by the tresses.

Solomon's longing for the young woman's affection
[Groom]

⁶ How beautiful and how pleasant you are, O loved one, with your delights! ⁷ This great height of yours is like a date palm, and your breasts are like clusters of fruit. ⁸ I thought, "I shall climb the palm-tree and take hold of its fruit clusters." May your breasts be like clusters of the vine! May the fragrance of your breath be like apples! ⁹ May your mouth taste like the best wine!

[Bride]

...which goes down smoothly to the one whom I love and flows gently over the lips of those who are falling asleep! ¹⁰ I belong to the one whom I love, and he longs for me. ¹¹ Come, my loved one! Let us go out into the open country! Let us spend the night in the villages! ¹² Let us go out early to the vineyards! Let us see if the vines have budded, if the grape blossoms have opened, if the pomegranates are in bloom! There I shall give you my love. ¹³ The mandrake fruits have been giving out a fragrance, and at our door there are all kinds of precious fruits. I have saved up new things as well as old things for you, my loved one.

8

¹ I wish you had been my brother, one who had been my mother's breast-fed baby! If I found you outside, I would kiss you. Indeed, no one would despise me. ² I would lead you. I would bring you into my mother's house. She used to teach me. I would give you some spiced wine to drink, some of my pomegranate juice. ³ His left hand is under my head. His right hand is embracing me. ⁴ Young women of Jerusalem, I have made you solemnly promise that you will not awaken love or arouse it until it feels inclined!

The young woman's love for the one whom she loves
[The chorus of young women]

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⁵ Who is this woman coming up from the wilderness supporting herself on the one whom she loves?

[Bride]

I woke you up under the apple tree. There your mother went into labour with you. There she went into labour and gave birth to you. ⁶ Place me on your heart like a seal, like a seal on your arm! For love is as strong as death. Jealousy is as hard as the grave. Its flames are flames of fire, a flame of the LORD.

⁷ Much water cannot extinguish love, and rivers cannot flood it away. If a man gave all his family's wealth for love, people would utterly despise him.

The company of the young woman with her family and the one whom she loves

[The brothers]

⁸ We have a younger sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister on the day when someone proposes to her? ⁹ If she were a wall, we would build a silver battlement around her. If she were a door, we would shut her in with cedar boards.

[Bride]

¹⁰ I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers. So, he came to regard me as one who finds peace.

¹¹ Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-Hamon. He entrusted that vineyard to caretakers. Each one was to get twelve kilograms of silver for its fruit. ¹² My own vineyard is in front of me. Those twelve kilograms are yours, Solomon and those who take care of its fruit may get two and a half kilograms.

[Groom]

¹³ O woman, you who are living in the gardens, while your companions are listening attentively to your voice, make me hear it!

[Bride]

¹⁴ Come away quickly, my loved one! Be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices!

ISAIAH

1

sight¹ This is the revelation that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw in visions about Judah and Jerusalem at the time of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, who were kings of Judah.

An accusation of God against the sin of Israel

² Hear, heaven, and listen, earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I have reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against Me. ³ An ox knows its owner and a donkey the feeding trough of those who own it, but Israel is ignorant. My people do not behave intelligently."

⁴ How horrible it will be for a sinful nation, a people with a load of guilt, the offspring of evildoers and children who behave corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD. They have treated the Holy One of Israel disrespectfully. They have turned back. ⁵ Why will you be beaten still more? Why will you become more obstinate? Your whole head is sick. Your whole heart is ill. ⁶ From the sole of your foot to your head there is no healthy part in your body, only bruises, blows and fresh wounds. They have not been pressed out, bandaged up or softened with olive-oil. ⁷ Your country has been laid waste. Your cities have been burnt down. Foreigners are consuming your ground in your very presence. It has been devastated as when foreigners overthrow something. ⁸ The Daughter of Zion is left like a hut in a vineyard, like a shack in a cucumber patch, like a blockaded city. ⁹ **If the LORD of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we would have become like Sodom. We would have looked like Gomorrah.**

An admonition to Israel to get rid of its sin

¹⁰ Hear the Word of the LORD, rulers of **Sodom!** Listen to the Teaching of our God, people of Gomorrah!

¹¹ The LORD asks: "Of what use to Me are your many sacrifices? I have had enough burnt offerings of rams and enough fat from fattened steers. I also do not desire the blood of bulls, young rams and male goats.

¹² When you come to appear before Me, who has required from you this trampling of My courts? ¹³ You shall not bring any more worthless offerings! I detest incense. I also detest the festival on the first of the month, the Sabbath and the proclamation of an assembly. I cannot endure idolatrous worship and a festive assembly. ¹⁴ My soul hates your celebrations of the New Moon and your other appointed feasts. They have become a burden to Me, and I am tired of putting up with them. ¹⁵ When you spread out your hands in prayer, I shall shut My eyes that I may not see you. Even when you offer many prayers, I shall not listen. Your hands are full of spilt blood. ¹⁶ Wash yourselves! Make yourselves clean! Remove your evil deeds from My sight! Stop doing evil! ¹⁷ Learn to do good! Try to give right decisions! Straighten out the

oppressor! Administer justice to the orphan and plead the cause of the widow!

¹⁸ "Please come! Let us argue the case together!" says the LORD. "Although your sins are like bright red cloth, they will become as white as snow. Although they are red like crimson, they will become like wool.

¹⁹ If you were willing and obedient, you would eat the best things of the land. ²⁰ However, if you refuse and are rebellious, you will be consumed by the sword."

For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Threats about the future of Jerusalem

²¹ How the faithful city has become a prostitute! It used to be full of justice, and righteousness used to dwell in it. Now, however, murderers live there!

²² Your silver has become impure. Your wine has been diluted with water. ²³ Your rulers are rebellious and are companions with thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not administer justice to orphans. The legal case of a widow does not come before them."

²⁴ That is why the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, says: "How horrible it will be when I gratify Myself against My adversaries and take revenge on My enemies! ²⁵ I shall turn My hand against you. I shall smelt away your dross as with pot-ash. I shall remove all your slag. ²⁶ I shall restore your judges as you had them previously and your counselors as in the beginning. After that, you will be called the 'The Righteous City,' 'The Faithful City.'"

²⁷ Justice will redeem Zion, and righteousness will redeem those in her who repent. ²⁸ However, disloyal people and sinners will collapse together, and those who forsake the LORD will perish. ²⁹ For they will be ashamed of the tall trees in which you have taken pleasure. You will also be embarrassed because of the gardens that you have chosen. ³⁰ For you will be like a tall tree that has withering leaves and like a garden without water. ³¹ The strong man will become tinder, and his achievement will become a spark. Both of them will burn together, and no one will put out the fire.

2

A promise that God will give peace and teach the nations — Micah 4:1-3

¹ This is the Revelation that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw about Judah and Jerusalem. ² In the last days the mountain of the Temple of the LORD will be established as the highest of the mountains and will be elevated above the hills and all the nations will stream to it. ³ Then many peoples will come and say, "Come! Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the Temple of the God of Jacob! He will teach us His Ways, that we may walk in His paths."

For the Teaching will go out from Zion, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ Then He will be the Judge between the nations and will mediate between

many peoples. Then they will hammer their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning knives. No nation will take up a sword against another nation, and they will not learn war any longer. ⁵ Family of Jacob, come! Let us walk in the light of the LORD!

Israel's sins

⁶ However, LORD, You have abandoned Your people, the family of Jacob. For they are filled with things from the east. They are fortune-tellers like the Philistines and clasp hands with foreign people. ⁷ Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures. Their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots. ⁸ Their land is filled with idols. They worship what their own hands have produced and what their own fingers have made. ⁹ Therefore, people have been obliged to keep low. Everyone has been humiliated. Do not forgive them! ¹⁰ Go in **among the rocks** and **hide** yourself in the dust **away from** the terror of **the LORD and from His glorious majesty!** ¹¹ The haughty looks of people will be brought down. The lofty pride of men will be humiliated. On that day the LORD alone will be exalted.

The day of God's judgment

¹² Indeed, the LORD of hosts will have a day against everyone who is arrogant and conceited and everyone who lifts himself up, and he will be brought low, ¹³ against all the high and exalted cedars of Lebanon and all the large trees of Bashan, ¹⁴ against all the high mountains and all the exalted hills, ¹⁵ against every high tower and against every fortified wall, ¹⁶ against all the vessels of Tarshish and all the beautiful ships. ¹⁷ Then the haughtiness of human beings will be brought down, and the lofty pride of men will be humiliated. On that day the LORD alone will be exalted. ¹⁸ Then the idols will completely disappear. ¹⁹ People will go into caves in the rocks and into holes in the ground to get away from the terror of the LORD and His glorious majesty when He appears to terrify the earth. ²⁰ On that day mankind will throw away to the moles and to the bats the silver and golden idols that they have made for themselves to worship. ²¹ They will go into crevices in the rocks and into crannies in the cliffs to get away from the terror of the LORD, and His glorious majesty when He appears to terrify the earth. ²² Stop being concerned about human beings, who have only a breath in their nostrils! For what value can they be thought to have?

3

God's judgment on sinners in Zion

¹ For look! The Lord, the LORD of hosts, will take away from Jerusalem and Judah their stock and store, their entire supply of food and their entire supply of water. ² He will take away mighty man and soldier, judge and prophet, foreteller of the future and elder, ³ captain of fifty, respected and eminent man, counselor, expert in sorcery and clever enchanter.

⁴ "I shall make boys their leaders. Capricious people will govern them. ⁵ The people will be oppressed, each one by another, and each one by his neighbour. The young man will assault the old man, and the contemptible person will assault the honourable person. ⁶ For a person will take hold of a relative in his father's family and say: 'You have a coat. You must be our leader! This heap of ruins shall be under your control!' ⁷ On that day he will cry out: 'I am not a surgeon! I do not have any food or any coat in my home. You shall not make me a leader of the people!'"

⁸ Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen. For what they are saying and what they are doing are against the LORD. They are defying His glorious ability to see. ⁹ The expression on their faces has been testifying against them. They have been proclaiming their sins like Sodom. They have not been concealing them. How horrible for them! For they have brought calamity on themselves. ¹⁰ Tell righteous people that it will be well with them! For they will eat the fruit of their actions. ¹¹ How horrible it will be for the wicked person! It will be bad for him. For he will have done to him what his own hands have been doing. ¹² As for my people, a person who acts like a child is oppressing them. Women have been ruling over them. O my people, your guides are leading you astray and have been confusing the course of your paths. ¹³ The LORD is taking His place to conduct a lawsuit. He is standing to plead His case with peoples. ¹⁴ The LORD will begin to judge the elders and princes of His people: "You have set fire to the vineyard! Goods stolen from poor people are in your homes. ¹⁵ What is the matter with you that you are crushing My people and grinding the faces of the poor?" asks the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

Judgment on women's sophisticated display

¹⁶ The LORD has also said: "Because the women of Zion have been arrogant and have been walking with stretched necks, making flirting glances, walking with quick little steps, with ornaments jingling on their ankles, ¹⁷ the Lord will cause scabs on the heads of the women of Zion, and the LORD will make their foreheads bare."

¹⁸ On that day the Lord will take away the finery of the ankle ornaments, the sun-disks, the crescent-moon-shaped necklaces, ¹⁹ the ear-pendants, the bracelets and the veils, ²⁰ the head-dresses, the ankle-chains, the sashes, the perfume-boxes and the amulets, ²¹ the signet-rings and nose-rings, ²² the festival-dresses, the mantles, the shawls and the purses, ²³ the transparent garments, the linen undergarments, the turbans and the shawls. ²⁴ Then there will be a stench instead of balsam-oil, a rope instead of a sash, a head shaved bald instead of a hairstyle, sackcloth instead of a magnificent dress and branding instead of beauty. ²⁵ Women, your men will fall by the sword, and your warriors in battle. ²⁶ The gates of Zion will lament

and mourn, and Zion will sit on the ground, made destitute.

4

¹ On that day seven women will take hold of one man and say: “We shall eat our own food and provide our *own* clothes. Just let us be called by your name! Take away our disgrace!”

The new glory of God for Zion

² On that day the Branch of the LORD will be splendid and glorious. The fruit of the land will be the pride and honour of the survivors in Israel. ³ Then those who are left in Zion and remain in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been **recorded for survival** in Jerusalem. ⁴ When the Lord has washed away the filth of the women of Zion and rinsed away the spilt blood from the middle of Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment, by a spirit that removes it, ⁵ then the LORD will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over its assemblies a cloud by day and smoke and a bright flaming fire by night. For there will be a canopy over all the glory. ⁶ It will be a shelter to provide shade from the heat during the day as well as a refuge and a place that protects from storms and rain.

5

A song about God's unfruitful vineyard

¹ Let me sing, about the One whom I love, a song of the One whom I love about His vineyard! The One whom I love had **a vineyard** on a fertile hilltop. ² He dug it over, removed its stones and **planted it** with the choicest **vines**. **He built a watch-tower in the middle of it and cut out a wine-vat in it.** Then He waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced bad grapes.

³ “Now, you who are living in Jerusalem and you men of Judah, decide, please, between Me and My vineyard! ⁴ What more should have been done for My vineyard than I have already done in it? When I waited for it to produce grapes, why did it produce only bad grapes? ⁵ Now therefore, please let Me inform you what I shall do to My vineyard! I shall tear away its hedge, and it will be destroyed. I shall break down its wall, and it will be trampled down. ⁶ I shall make it a wasteland. It will not be pruned or cultivated. Briars and thorn-bushes will grow up. I shall also command the clouds not to let any rain fall on it.”

⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the family of Israel, and the men of Judah are the plantation in which He had taken pleasure. He had waited for legal decisions but saw legal infringements. He had waited for justice but heard calls for help.

Woes pronounced on evildoers

⁸ How horrible it will be for those who make one house touch another and join one field to another until there is no more room, and you must be landowners by yourselves in the middle of the land! ⁹ The LORD of hosts has declared in my hearing: “Many houses will certainly become desolate. Large, beautiful hous-

es will be unoccupied. ¹⁰ A four-hectare vineyard will produce forty litres and four hundred litres of grain will produce only forty litres.”

¹¹ How horrible it will be for those who get up early in the morning to go after intoxicating drink, who linger on in the evening while wine inflames them!

¹² Although they have lyres, harps, tambourines, flutes and wine at their feasts, they pay no attention to the deeds of the LORD and do not consider the work of His hands. ¹³ Therefore, my people will go into exile, because they lack discernment. Their nobles will go hungry, and their large numbers will be parched with thirst. ¹⁴ That is why the underworld has opened its throat wide. It has opened its mouth without limit, so that the city's nobility, its large numbers and its noisy and high-spirited people will go down into it.

¹⁵ People will be brought low. Each one will be brought down. The eyes of arrogant people will also be humbled. ¹⁶ The LORD of hosts will use justice to be exalted. The holy God will use righteousness to show Himself to be holy. ¹⁷ Then lambs will graze as if they were in their own pasture, and foreigners will eat fattened sheep among the ruins.

¹⁸ How horrible it will be for those who pull wickedness along with cords of lies and pull sin as with cart ropes! ¹⁹ They are saying: “He should hurry and do His work quickly, that we may see it! The plan of the Holy One of Israel should come closer and be fulfilled, that we may understand it!”

²⁰ How horrible it will be for those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness instead of light and light instead of darkness, who put bitter instead of sweet and sweet instead of bitter!

²¹ How horrible it will be for those who think that they are wise and regard themselves as discerning!

²² How horrible it will be for those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing intoxicating drinks, ³ who declare a guilty person innocent in return for a bribe and who deprive innocent people of their rights!

A threat that God will use another nation to punish His people

²⁴ As flames of fire burn up stubble and dried grass sinks down in flames, so their roots will rot and their blossoms will rise up like fine dust. For they have rejected the Instruction of the LORD of hosts and have despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel. ²⁵ That is why the anger of the LORD has been burning hot against His people, and He has stretched out His hand against them. The hills have been trembling, and their dead bodies have been like garbage in the middle of the streets. Despite all this, His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out.

God's threat of Assyrian invasion

²⁶ He will raise up a standard for the nations from far away and will whistle for them from the end of the earth. Look! They will come very quickly. ²⁷ None among them will become exhausted or stumble. None

will slumber or sleep. The loincloths on their waists will not be loosened, and their sandal straps will not be torn in two. ²⁸ Their arrows will be sharpened. All their bows will be bent. Their horses' hoofs will seem like flint. Their chariot-wheels will be like a gale. ²⁹ They will have a roar like that of a lioness. They will growl like young lions. They will growl as they seize their prey and carry it to safety to where no one can rescue it. ³⁰ On that day they will roar over their prey like the roaring of the sea. When someone looks across towards the land, he will see only stifling darkness. The daylight will grow dark because of the land's heavy clouds.

6

The commissioning of Isaiah as a prophet with a message for the people

¹ In the year when King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord **sitting on a high and lofty throne**. The train of His robe was filling the Temple. ² Seraphs were standing above Him. **Each had six wings**; each was using two wings to cover his face; each was using two wings to cover his legs; and each was using two wings to fly. ³ The one was calling to the other and saying: **“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts! His glory fills the whole earth!”**

⁴ The voices of those who were calling out caused the foundations of the doorposts to shake, and the **Temple was filled with smoke**. ⁵ Then I said: “How terrible for me! For I have been brought to silence. For I am a man with unclean lips and live among people with unclean lips. For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, with a glowing coal in his hand. He had used tongs to take it from the altar. ⁷ He touched my mouth with it and said: “Look! This has touched your lips. Your guilt has been taken away, and your sin has been atoned for.”

⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here I am. Send me!”

⁹ He said: **“Go and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening but do not understand, and keep on seeing but do not perceive!’** ¹⁰ **Make the heart of this people insensitive, make their ears dull and seal their eyes shut, that they may not see with their eyes or hear with their ears and that their hearts may not understand, so that they should not turn back and find healing for themselves!”**

¹¹ Then I said, “How long, O Lord?”

He replied: “Until the cities lie desolate with no inhabitants, the houses are without people and the ground is devastated and deserted, ¹² until the LORD completely removes the people far away, and there is a large abandoned area in the middle of the land. ¹³ Even if a tenth remains in the land, it will again serve as firewood. As the terebinth and the oak tree leave a stump when they are cut down, so a holy seed will be the stump of the land.”

7

An attack against Judah by Aram and Israel — 2 Kings 16:5, 2 Chronicles 26:5-15

¹ When Ahaz, the son of Jotham and the grandson of Uzziah, was the king of Judah, Rezin, the king of Aram, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, and the king of Israel marched up against Jerusalem to fight against it but could not defeat it. ² When the family of David was informed that the Arameans had made an alliance with Ephraim, the hearts of the king and his people were shaken as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind. ³ Then the LORD told Isaiah: “Go out with your son Shear-Jashub to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool on the track to the Fuller's Field! ⁴ Tell him, ‘Be careful, stay calm and do not be afraid! Do not be fainthearted because of these two smouldering stumps of firewood, because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and the son of Remaliah! ⁵ Do not be afraid because Aram, Ephraim and the son of Remaliah have planned evil against you, saying, ⁶ “Let us march against Judah, terrify them, conquer it for ourselves and make the son of Tabeel king over it!” ⁷ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “It will not take place. It will not happen. ⁸ On the contrary, Damascus is the capital of Aram, and Rezin is the ruler of Damascus. Ephraim will be broken in pieces within sixty-five years, so that it will not be a nation any longer. ⁹ Samaria is the capital of Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah is the ruler in Samaria. If you do not believe, you will certainly not remain.””

A promise that a virgin will have a child

¹⁰ The LORD spoke again to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Claim a miraculous sign for yourself from the LORD, your God! Make the request a deep one or make it high up above!”

¹² However, Ahaz answered, “I shall not ask for one. I shall not put the LORD to the test.”

¹³ Isaiah said: “Listen now, family of David! Is it too little for you to exhaust the patience of men, that you also exhaust the patience of my God? ¹⁴ Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a miraculous sign: **Look! The virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a Son and will call His name ‘Immanuel.’** ¹⁵ He will eat curds and honey when He knows how to reject what is evil and choose what is good. ¹⁶ Indeed, before the Boy knows how to reject what is evil and choose what is good, the land that you dread because of its two kings will be deserted. ¹⁷ The LORD will bring on you, on your people and on the family of your father such days as have not come since Ephraim broke away from Judah. He will bring the king of Assyria. ¹⁸ On that day the LORD will whistle for the flies that are at the farthest part of the river-branches of Egypt and for the bees that are in the land of Assyria. ¹⁹ All of them will come and settle

¹²⁷ Immanuel means “God with us.”

down in the steep valleys, in the crevices in the rocks, on all the thorn-bushes and at all the watering holes. ²⁰ On that day the Lord will use a razor that is hired on the other side of the Euphrates River, that is, the king of Assyria, to shave the head and the hair on the legs and to take off the beard. ²¹ On that day a person will keep a young heifer and two sheep alive. ²² That person will eat curds, because they will produce so much milk. For everyone who is left in the land will eat curds and honey. ²³ On that day every place where there used to be one thousand vines, worth twelve kilograms of silver, will become briars and thorns. ²⁴ A person will come there with a bow and arrows. For the whole land will be briars and thorns. ²⁵ You will also not go anywhere in the hills that used to be cultivated with a hoe, because you will be afraid of the briars and thorns. They will be places where oxen are let loose and where sheep tread.”

8

The birth of Isaiah's son as a sign of God's protection of Judah

¹ The LORD told me: “Take a large writing tablet and write on it with a stylus pen that ordinary people use: ‘Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz!’^{*128} ² I shall also provide Myself with these reliable witnesses: Uriah the priest and Zechariah, the son of Jeberechiah.”

³ I slept with the prophetess. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. The LORD told me: “Name him ‘Maher Shalal Hash Baz.’ ⁴ For, before the boy knows how to say ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’ men will carry away the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria in front of the king of Assyria.”

A prediction that, although Assyria will invade the north, it will not conquer Judah

⁵ The LORD spoke to me again: ⁶ “Because this people has rejected the gently-flowing water of Shiloah and rejoice over Rezin and the son of Remaliah, ⁷ therefore look! The Lord is bringing against them the mighty and copious water of the Euphrates River, the king of Assyria with all his glory. It will overflow all its channels and go over all its banks. ⁸ It will sweep through Judah. It will overflow and pass on until it reaches up to the neck. When he stretches out his wings, he will fill the breadth of Your land, O **Immanuel.**”

⁹ Be in a bad situation, you peoples, and be terrified! Listen, all you distant parts of the earth! Strap on your armour but be terrified! Strap on your armour but be terrified! ¹⁰ Devise your strategy! However, it will be thwarted. Propose your plan! However, it will not succeed, because **God is with us!**

A prophecy that some in Jerusalem will stumble because they do not trust God

¹¹ For the LORD said this with His powerful hand on me, to warn me not to follow the ways of this people: ¹² “You people shall not call everything a conspiracy

that this nation calls a conspiracy! **You people shall not fear what they fear! You shall not be terrified!”**

¹³ **The LORD of hosts** is the One whom **you shall regard as holy.** He is the One whom you should fear and the One who should terrify you. ¹⁴ He will become a Sanctuary, a **Stone against which people collide** and a **Rock over which people stumble** for both the families of Israel. He will become a Trapping-net and a Snare for those who live in Jerusalem. ¹⁵ Many people will **stumble over** them. They will fall and be broken. They will be trapped and caught. ¹⁶ Wrap up the Testimony! Seal up the Instruction among my disciples!

¹⁷ I shall wait for the LORD, who hides His face from the family of Jacob. **I shall hope in Him.** ¹⁸ **I am here with the children whom the LORD has given to me,** to serve as omens and signs in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who lives on Mount Zion. ¹⁹ When people tell you, “Resort to the spirits of the dead and the soothsayers, who whisper and mutter,” should a person not resort to his God? Should he resort to those who are dead on behalf of those who are alive? ²⁰ Resort to the Teaching and to the Testimony! If people do not speak according to this Word, it is because a person has not been intent on it.

A prophecy that Assyria will humble Galilee

²¹ A person will pass through the land when he is dejected and hungry. When he is hungry, he will fall into a rage and curse his king and his God and turn to unfaithfulness. ²² He will look out towards the land and see only distress, darkness and oppressive gloom, while he is led astray in the darkness.

9

¹ However, there will be no more gloom for the land that has had such distress, when, in an earlier time, He had treated with contempt **the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali.** However, in the later time He will bring glory to **the Road beside the Sea, to the Land across the Jordan and to Galilee of the Gentiles.**

A prophecy that a great light will shine in the north when a Child is born as the Prince of Peace

² **The people who were walking in darkness will see a bright Light. A Light will shine on those who were living in a land of deep darkness.** ³ You will enlarge the nation for them. You will make their joy great. They will rejoice before You as people rejoice at the harvest or like those who rejoice when they divide plunder. ⁴ For You will shatter the yoke that is a burden on them, the cane that is on their shoulders and the rod of those who forced them to work, as You did on the day of Midian. ⁵ For every warrior's boot that has been tramping in the noise of battle and every garment rolled in blood will be burnt as fuel for the fire. ⁶ For a Child will be born for us. A Son will be given to us. The government will be on His shoulder, and His name will be called: “Wonderful Counsellor,”

¹²⁸ “Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz” means: “Quick-is-the-Plunder, Swift-is-the-Spoil” or “Plunder speeds, prey hastens.”

“Mighty God,” “Everlasting Father,” “Prince of Peace.”⁷ There will be no end to the growth of His dominion and peace. He will be **on the throne of David** and over His kingdom, to make it firm and to support it with justice and righteousness from that time on and for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

A message from God against His people

⁸ The Lord has sent a Message against Jacob. The Message has fallen on Israel. ⁹ All the people of Ephraim and the people who live in Samaria will know it. They say with pride and with arrogant hearts, ¹⁰ “Although bricks have fallen, we shall rebuild with dressed stones. Although sycamore fig trees have been cut down, we shall replace them with cedars.”

¹¹ The LORD will increase the adversaries of Rezin against them and will stir up their enemies, ¹² the Arameans from the east and the Philistines from the west. They will devour Israel with open mouths. Despite all this, His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out. ¹³ However, the people have not turned back to the One who has struck them or been intent on the LORD of hosts. ¹⁴ So, on one day the LORD will cut off from Israel head and tail, palm-branch and reed-stalk. ¹⁵ The elder and the honoured man are the head. The prophet who teaches lies is the tail. ¹⁶ The leaders of these people have been causing them to go astray. Those who are led on by them are swallowed up. ¹⁷ That is why the Lord will not rejoice over their young men or have compassion on their orphans and widows. Each of them is alienated from God and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks godless folly. Despite all this, His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out. ¹⁸ For wickedness has been burning like fire. It consumes briars and thorns. It has been setting the thickets in the forest on fire, and they swirl up in a column of smoke. ¹⁹ The land has been scorched by the fury of the LORD of hosts, and the people have become like fuel for the fire. No one has pity on his brother. ²⁰ Someone has cut up meat on the right and has still been hungry. Others have eaten on the left and have not been satisfied. They each eat the flesh of their own arms. ²¹ Manasseh devours Ephraim. Ephraim devours Manasseh. Together they attack Judah. Despite all this, His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out.

10

A pronouncement of woes against social injustice

¹ How horrible it will be for those who enact unjust prescriptions and who keep writing oppressive regulations, ² to deprive helpless people of their legal claims, to rob those who are needy among my people of their rights, to make widows their spoil and to plunder orphans! ³ What will you do on the **day of punishment**, in the ruin that will come from far away? Where will you flee for help? Where will you

leave your riches? ⁴ Nothing is left but to crouch among prisoners and to fall with those who have been killed. Despite all this, His anger has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out.

A message from God about Assyria

⁵ “How horrible it will be for Assyria, the cane that I use when I am angry! My wrath is the staff in their hands. ⁶ I shall send them against an ungodly nation. I shall give them orders against a people with which I am furious, to take spoil, to seize plunder and to trample on them like mud in the streets. ⁷ However, that is not what he will intend or what his mind will plan. Rather, he will intend to exterminate and to cut off many nations. ⁸ For they will ask, ‘Are not our commanders all kings? ⁹ Is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus?’ ¹⁰ As My hand has reached to kingdoms that have idols, that have had more carved images than Jerusalem and Samaria, ¹¹ shall I not do to Jerusalem and its images as I have done to Samaria and its idols?”

¹² When the Lord has finished all His work on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, He will say, “I shall punish the king of Assyria for what his boasting has produced and for the haughty pride in his eyes.” ¹³ For he has been saying: “By my own strong hand I have done this and by my own wisdom. For I have had understanding, so that I do away with the boundaries of peoples. I have raided what they stored away, so that, like a despot, I subjugate the inhabitants. ¹⁴ My hand has reached out for the wealth of nations as someone finds a nest. As someone collects eggs that are left, I have collected the whole world. No one has been flapping a wing, opening his beak or chirping.”

¹⁵ Should an axe brag against him who chops with it? Or should a saw boast against him who saws with it? As if a rod were to wield him who lifts it up or as if a staff were to brandish him who is not wood! ¹⁶ That is why the Lord, the LORD of hosts, will send a degenerative disease among his sturdy warriors. He will light a fire like a blazing flame. ¹⁷ The Light of Israel will become a fire, and its Holy One a flame. In one day this Flame will burn and consume his thorns and briars. ¹⁸ The LORD will consume the splendour of his forest and his orchard, both soul and body. It will be as when a sick person is wasting away. ¹⁹ The rest of the trees in his forest will become so few that a boy could write them down. ²⁰ On that day the remnant of Israel, those of the family of Jacob who have escaped, will no longer lean on the one who has struck them but will lean on the LORD, who is truly the Holy One of Israel. ²¹ A remnant, the remnant of Jacob, will return to the mighty God. ²² **Although your people, Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of it will return.**

A decree about coming destruction

Destruction has been determined, overflowing with

righteousness. ²³ **For the Lord, the LORD of hosts, is making a complete destruction, which has been determined, in the middle of the whole land.**

²⁴ Therefore, this is what the Lord, the LORD of hosts, has said: “My people who live in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrians when they hit you with a rod and raise their staff against you, as the Egyptians did! ²⁵ For in a very little while My fury will come to an end, and My anger will be directed at their destruction.”

²⁶ Then the LORD of hosts will swing a whip against them, as He struck down Midian at the Rock of Oreb, and He will raise His staff over the sea, as He did with the Egyptians. ²⁷ On that day his burden will be removed from your shoulders. Their yoke will be removed from your neck. The yoke will be destroyed because of the fatness.

A prophecy about invasion by the Assyrians

²⁸ He has come to Aiath. He has passed through Migron. He deposits his baggage at Michmash. ²⁹ They have crossed over the pass. They have said, “We have lodged at Geba for the night.” Ramah has been trembling. Gibeah of Saul has fled. ³⁰ Cry out with a shrill voice, O daughter of Gallim! Listen to it, Laish! O poor Anathoth! ³¹ Madmenah has fled. Those who live at Gebim have brought their possessions to safety. ³² This very day, when he stops at Nob, he will shake his fist at the mountain of the Daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. ³³ Look! The Lord, the LORD of hosts, is cutting off his leafy branches with terrifying power. The towering trees that have grown high will be cut off. The tallest ones will be brought low. ³⁴ He will use an axe to cut down the undergrowth of the forest. Lebanon will fall before the Mighty One.

11

A prophecy that a Shoot from Jesse's stump will rule the kingdom of God

¹ **A Shoot** will come **out of the stump of Jesse**, and a **Branch** from his roots will produce fruit. ² **The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him**, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of advice and power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. ³ He will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what His eyes see or decide by what His ears hear. ⁴ However, **He will provide justice for** needy people by means of righteousness. He will rebuke fairly for humble people of the earth. **He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth. He will kill wicked people with the breath of His lips.** ⁵ **Righteousness** will be the **belt** around His waist. **Faithfulness** will be the **belt around His hips.** ⁶ The wolf will live like a foreigner with the young ram; the leopard will lie down with the young goat. The calf, the young lion and the fattened steer will be together, and a little boy will lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear will graze together. Their young ones will lie down together. The lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child will play near the hole of the cobra. The weaned child will put

out his hand on the viper's nest-hole. ⁹ “People will not treat anyone badly or destroy anyone on My entire holy mountain.” For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

A promise of return for exiles

¹⁰ On that day **there will be a Root of Jesse, who will stand** as a flag for **the peoples. The nations will resort to Him, and** His resting-place will be glorious.

¹¹ At that time the Lord will again extend His hand to recover the remnant that is left of His people from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Babylonia, Hamath and the lands near the sea. ¹² He will raise a flag for the nations, gather the dispersed people of Israel and assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four corners of the earth. ¹³ Ephraim will not be jealous any longer, and the enemies of Judah will be exterminated. Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, and Judah will not be hostile towards Ephraim. ¹⁴ They will swoop down on the slopes of the Philistines in the west. Together they will plunder the people of the east. They will have control over Edom and Moab, and the people of Ammon will be subject to them. ¹⁵ The LORD will divide the inlet of the Egyptian sea. He will shake His fist against the Euphrates with His strong wind, smash it into seven streams and allow people to walk through them in their sandals. ¹⁶ There will be a highway out of Assyria for the remnant who are left of His people as there had been for Israel when it came up out of Egypt.

12

A hymn of praise from the people of God

¹ On that day you will say: “I shall praise You, O LORD. Although You have been angry with me, Your anger is turning away, and You are comforting me. ² Look! God is my Salvation. I shall be confident and not be startled. Indeed, the LORD, the LORD, is my Protection and Might and He has become my Salvation.”

³ You will joyfully draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ On that day you people will say: “Praise the LORD! Call on His name! Make His deeds known among the peoples! Proclaim that His name is exalted! ⁵ Sing to the LORD! For He has done sublime things. Let this be known in all the earth! ⁶ Rejoice and shout for joy, O inhabitants of Zion! For the Holy One of Israel, who is among you, is great.”

13

Sentences against the nations; a pronouncement against Babylon

¹ This is the pronouncement about Babylon that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw in a vision. ² “Raise a flag on a bare mountain! Call out loudly to them! Wave your hands to them, to tell them that they should enter the Gates-of-the-Nobles! ³ “I Myself have ordered My consecrated ones. Yes, I have summoned My warriors, who rejoice over My majesty, to carry out My anger.”

⁴ Listen! There is a tumult in the hills! It is like the sound of many people. Listen! It is a tumult of kingdoms. Nations are gathering. The LORD of hosts is mustering an army for war. ⁵ They are coming from a distant country, from the end of heaven. The LORD is coming with the weapons that He uses in His anger to ruin the whole land. ⁶ Howl! For the day of the LORD is near. It will come like devastation from the Almighty. ⁷ That is why all arms will hang limp, and every human heart will melt. ⁸ They will be horrified. Pangs and labour-pains will take hold of them. They will writhe like a woman having a child. They will look at each other appalled. Their faces will be aflame. ⁹ Look! The day of the LORD is coming, a cruel day, with fury and blazing anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. ¹⁰ For **the stars in the sky** and their constellations will not let their light shine. **The sun will grow dark** when it rises. **The moon will also not shed its light.**

¹¹ "I shall call the world to account for its evil and wicked people because of their guilt. I shall put an end to the audacity of insolent people and bring the arrogance of tyrants down low. ¹² I shall make a human person scarcer than pure gold and a human being rarer than gold from Ophir. ¹³ That is why I shall make the heavens tremble, and the earth will quake out of its place at the wrath of the LORD of hosts, yes, on the day of His burning anger."

¹⁴ Each one will be like a gazelle that has been frightened away and a sheep that has no one to gather it. Each of them will turn to his own people, and each of them will flee to his own land. ¹⁵ Everyone who is found will be pierced through, and everyone who is captured will fall by the sword. ¹⁶ Their little children will be dashed to pieces before their eyes. Their houses will be plundered, and their wives will be raped.

¹⁷ "Look! I am going to stir the Medes up against them."

They will have no high regard for silver and will not delight in gold. ¹⁸ Rather, their bows will strike down young men. They will have no compassion on the fruit of the womb. Their eyes will not look with pity on children. ¹⁹ Then Babylon, the most glorious of the kingdoms, the proud splendour of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them. ²⁰ It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations. No Bedouin will set up his tent there, and no shepherds will allow their flocks to lie down there. ²¹ Rather, desert-animals will lie down there. Their houses will be full of howling creatures. Ostriches will live there, and wild goats will leap about there. ²² Hyenas will howl in Babylon's strongholds, and jackals will howl in the luxurious palaces. Its time has come near, and its days will not be prolonged.

14

A prophecy that Israel will be rescued from Babylon

¹ For the LORD will have compassion on Jacob. He will again choose Israel. He will settle them in their own country. Foreigners will join them and attach themselves to the family of Jacob. ² Nations will take them and bring them to their own place. The family of Israel will make them their own possession as men-servants and maidservants on the land of the LORD. They will hold as captives those who had held them captive and will rule over those who had oppressed them.

A prophecy of the fall of the king of Babylon

³ On the day when the LORD gives you relief from your hardship, your turmoil and your hard labour, in which you were forced to serve, ⁴ you will take up this saying against the king of Babylon: "How the tyrant has come to an end! How the demand for tribute has ended!" ⁵ The LORD has broken the stick of wicked people, the sceptre of rulers. ⁶ They were furiously striking peoples with floggings that did not stop. They were angrily dominating nations with persecution that no one restrained. ⁷ The whole world has begun to rest and be at peace. People have broken into happy jubilation. ⁸ Even the juniper-trees have been rejoicing over you, and the cedars of Lebanon are saying, "Since you have been laid low, no wood-cutter comes up against us." ⁹ Sheol underneath has been trembling about you, about meeting you when you come. It is stirring up the spirits of the dead for you, all the leaders of the earth. It had made all who had been kings of the nations get up from their thrones. ¹⁰ All of them respond to you and say: "You also have become weak like us! You have become the same as we are!" ¹¹ Your audacity has been brought down to Sheol with the music of your harps. Maggots have been spread under you, and worms cover you." ¹² How you have **fallen from heaven**, you morning **star**, you son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the ground, you who used to defeat nations! ¹³ Once you thought: "**I shall go up to heaven** and set up my throne above the stars of God. I shall sit on the mountain of assembly in the distant reaches of the north. ¹⁴ I shall go above the backs of the clouds. I shall consider myself equal to the Most High." ¹⁵ Nevertheless, **you** will be brought **down to Sheol**, to the deepest reaches of the pit. ¹⁶ Those who see you will stare at you. They will examine you closely and ask: "Is this the man who used to make the earth tremble, who used to cause kingdoms to quake, ¹⁷ who made the world like a desert, overthrew its cities and would not release his prisoners to go home?" ¹⁸ All the kings of the nations, all of them, have lain down in honour, each in his own tomb. ¹⁹ You, however, have been thrown out of your burial place like a detested branch, covered with those who have been killed, with those pierced by the sword, with those who go down to the stones of the pit. Like a trampled corpse, ²⁰ you will not be united with them in burial. For you destroyed your own country and

killed your own people. The descendants of such evildoers will never be mentioned again. ²¹ Prepare a place to slaughter their sons because of their ancestors' guilt, that they may not rise, take possession of the earth and fill the surface of the world with cities!

²² "I shall rise up against them," declares the LORD of hosts, "and I shall cut off from Babylon its fame, what remains of it, its posterity and its progeny," declares the LORD. ²³ "I shall make it a possession of hedgehogs and turn it into swampland. I shall sweep it away with a broom that destroys it," declares the LORD of hosts.

God's opposition against Assyria and the whole world

²⁴ The LORD of hosts has sworn an oath: "It will certainly happen as I have intended it. It will turn out as I have decided. ²⁵ I shall smash Assyria in My country and trample it down on My hills, that its yoke may be taken off them and its burden may be removed from their shoulders."

²⁶ This is the Decision that has been taken for the whole earth, and this is the hand that is being extended over all the nations. ⁷ For the LORD of hosts has decided it. Who, therefore, will prevent it? His hand is extended. Who, therefore, will bend it back?

A pronouncement of punishment against the Philistines

²⁸ In the year when King Ahaz died, this pronouncement came: ²⁹ "Do not be glad, all you Philistines, that the stick of the one who was striking you has been broken! For a viper will come out of that snake's root, and its offspring will be a winged, venomous snake. ³⁰ The most miserable people will eat and needy people will lie down in safety, but I shall kill your root with famine, and it will slay those of you who survive."

³¹ Howl, O city-gate! Call for help, O city! Despair, all you Philistines! For smoke is coming from the north, and there is no straggler in its ranks. ³² What answer therefore will be given to the messengers of that nation? Tell them that the LORD has laid the foundations of Zion! His needy people will take refuge in it."

15

A pronouncement against Moab

¹ A pronouncement about Moab: "Ar will be devastated in a night. Moab will be destroyed. In a night Kir in Moab will be devastated. It will be destroyed. ² The people will go up to the Temple. Dibon will go up to the high places to weep. Moab will be wailing over Nebo and Medeba. There will be a shaved patch on all their heads, and every beard will be cut off. ³ In their streets they will be wearing sackcloth around their waists. On their flat roofs and in their open squares all of them will be wailing and dissolving in tears. ⁴ Heshbon and Elealeh will cry out. Their voices will be heard as far as Jahaz. The reason why the armed men of Moab will be crying aloud is that their hearts will quiver. ⁵ My heart is crying out for Moab. Its fu-

gitives will go to Zoar, at Eglath-Shelishiyah. Yes, they will go up the ascent to Luhith while they weep. Yes, on the way to Horonaim they will keep on raising a cry over the destruction. ⁶ For the waters of Nimrim will be a wasteland. For the grass will wither. The green grass will fade away. Nothing green will be left. ⁷ That is why they will carry the wealth that they have gained and what they have stored up over the Wadi of the Poplars. ⁸ For the cry for help will go around the border of Moab. Their wailing will go as far as Eglaim. Their wailing will reach Beer-Elim. ⁹ Indeed, the waters of Dimon will be full of blood. Indeed, I shall bring additional calamities on Dimon. I shall bring a lion on the escaped survivors of Moab and on those who are left in their homeland."

16

¹ Send a young ram to the ruler of the land, from Sela, through the desert to the mountain of the daughter of Zion. ² The daughters of Moab will be like a bird that flees from its abandoned nest at the crossing places of the Arnon. ³ "Give us advice! Make a decision! Make your shadow like the night at high noon! Hide the outcasts! Do not betray those who are fleeing! ⁴ Let the people who have been scattered from Moab live as foreigners in your country! Become their shelter from the destroyer!" When the oppressor comes to an end, when the devastation has ceased and when he who tramples underfoot has been taken away from the land, ⁵ a throne will be set up in mercy, and the Judge will sit on it perpetually in David's tent. He will pursue justice and be diligent in doing what is right. ⁶ We have heard about the audacity of Moab. He is very arrogant. We have heard about his arrogance, his audacity and his insolence. However, his idle boasting is untrue. ⁷ That is why Moab will wail. Each of them will wail for Moab. They will all mourn. Utterly destroyed, you will groan for the raisin-cakes of Kir-Hareseth. ⁸ For the terraced fields of Heshbon will wither, as well as the vines of Sibmah. The lords of the nations will trample down its tendrils. Once they had reached as far as Jazer and wandered out to the desert. Its shoots had been rampant and had crossed the sea. ⁹ That is why I shall weep in the way in which Jazer weeps, for the vines of Sibmah. O Heshbon and Elealeh, I shall wet you thoroughly with my tears. For the jubilant shouting over your summer-fruits and your harvest will cease. ¹⁰ Joy and gladness will be taken away from this orchard. No one will sing for joy in the vineyards. No one will shout for joy. No treader will trample out wine in the winepresses. I shall stop the jubilant shouting. ¹¹ That is why my inner being is murmuring like a lyre for Moab, and my inward parts for Kir-Hareseth. ¹² When Moab has appeared and when he has become weary on the high place, he will come into his holy place to pray but will not be successful.

¹³ This is the Message that the LORD had spoken about Moab in the past. ¹⁴ Now therefore, the LORD has said: “Within three years, like the years of a hired labourer, the glory of Moab will be despised. Although its entire multitude is great, those who are left will be extremely few and feeble.”

17

A pronouncement against Damascus and Israel

¹ A Pronouncement about Damascus: “Look! Damascus will cease to be a city and will become a heap of ruins. ² The cities of Aroer will be deserted and will be used for flocks, which will lie down without anyone to make them afraid. ³ The fortified city will disappear from Ephraim, and royal power from Damascus. The remnant of Aram and the glory of the people of Israel will be alike,” declares the LORD of hosts. ⁴ “On that day the glory of Jacob will be brought low, and his fat body will become lean. ⁵ It will be like a reaper gathering standing grain and harvesting the heads of grain in his arm, like someone gleaning heads of grain in the valley of Rephaim. ⁶ Only gleanings will be left in it. It will be like an olive tree that is beaten, with only two or three ripe olive berries left at the top of the highest branch and with only four or five on the branches of the fruit tree,” declares the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁷ On that day a person will pay attention to his Maker, and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel.

⁸ He will not pay attention to the altars that **his own hands have made** or look to the Asherah posts and incense-altars that his own fingers have made. ⁹ On that day his fortified cities will be like the deserted forests and the hilltops, which they had abandoned because of the Israelites, and there will be a desolate waste. ¹⁰ For you have been forgetting the God who had saved you and have not been remembering the Rock that had protected you. That is why, although you set out the pleasant plants and plant the vine-cuttings of a strange god, ¹¹ although you make them grow on the day when you plant them and although you make them sprout on the morning when you sow them, yet the harvest will flee away in a day of sickness and incurable pain.

The end allotted to Assyria and Babylon

¹² How horrible the turmoil of many peoples will be! They will roar like the roaring of the seas! How horrible the din of the nations will be! They will roar like the roaring of mighty waters! ¹³ The nations will roar like the roaring of many waters. However, when He rebukes them, they will flee far away. They will be chased away like chaff on the mountains before the wind and like tumbleweed before a storm. ¹⁴ Look! At the time of evening there will be terror. Before morning they will be no more. This is what has been allotted to those who used to plunder us. It will be the lot of those who used to rob us.

18

A pronouncement about Cush

¹ How horrible it will be for the land of whirring wings that is on the other side of the rivers of Cush!

² It sends ambassadors by sea and in papyrus boats on the surface of the water. Go, nimble messengers, to a nation that is tall and smooth-skinned, to a people that is feared near and far, a mighty nation, which tramples others down, whose country rivers divide! ³ All you inhabitants of the world, you who dwell on the earth, when a flag is raised on the mountains, you must look! When a horn is blown, you must listen! ⁴ For this is what the LORD has told me: “I shall remain quiet and watch from My dwelling, like shimmering heat when the sun is shining, like a cloud of dew in the heat of the harvest.”

⁵ For before the harvest, when blossoming is over and the flower develops into nearly ripened fruit, He will cut off the fruit-bearing vines with pruning hooks. He will clear away and tear off the spreading branches.

⁶ They will all be abandoned to the birds of prey on the mountains and to the wild animals. The birds of prey will pass the summer on them, and all the wild animals will spend the winter on them. ⁷ At that time a people tall and smooth-skinned, a people that is feared near and far, a mighty nation, which tramples others down, whose country rivers divide, will bring tribute to the LORD of hosts at Mount Zion, at the place of the name of the LORD of hosts.

19

A proclamation against Egypt

¹ A proclamation about Egypt: Look! The LORD is riding on a swift cloud and coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and the hearts of the Egyptians will melt inside them. ² “I shall stir up one Egyptian against another Egyptian. Each one **will fight** against his brother and each one against his neighbour, one city against another city, and one **kingdom against** another **kingdom**. ³ The spirit in the Egyptians will be emptied out. I shall confuse their planning. They will inquire of idols, sorcerers, mediums and soothsayers. ⁴ Then I shall hand the Egyptians over to a hard master, and a powerful king will rule over them,” declares the Lord, the LORD of hosts.

⁵ Then the water of the Nile will be dried up, and the river will be parched and dry. ⁶ The channels will smell foul. The branches of the Nile in Egypt will thin out and dry up. The reeds and rushes will wither.

⁷ The reeds beside the Nile and beside the mouth of the Nile and all the sown land beside the Nile will wither, be blown away and be no more. ⁸ The fishermen and all others who cast fishhooks into the Nile will lament and mourn. Those who spread fishing nets on the surface of the water will pine away. ⁹ Those who work with combed flax and with white linen fab-

ric at weavers' looms will be ashamed. ¹⁰ The weavers of the country will be crushed. The hearts of all who work for wages will be distressed. ¹¹ The princes of Zoan are utterly foolish. The **wisest** counsellors of Pharaoh give **senseless** advice. How can you say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of **wise** men, a descendant of ancient kings"? ¹² **Where**, then, are your **wise** men? They should tell you now, that they may know what the LORD of hosts has planned against Egypt. ¹³ The princes of Zoan have become foolish, and the princes of Memphis have been deceived. The cornerstones of Egypt's tribes have led it astray. ¹⁴ The LORD has poured into them a spirit of confusion, and they are making the Egyptians stagger in everything that they do, like a drunkard staggering around in his vomit. ¹⁵ There will be no work for Egypt that head or tail or palm branch or reed-stalk may do. ¹⁶ On that day Egyptians will be like women. They will tremble and be startled because of the waving of the hand of the LORD of hosts. He will move His hand over them. ¹⁷ The land of Judah will terrify the Egyptians. Everyone to whom Judah is mentioned will be frightened by the plan that the LORD of hosts is forming against Judah.

A promise of blessing for Egypt, Assyria and Israel

¹⁸ On that day there will be five cities in Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and that swear allegiance to the LORD of hosts. One of them will be called "The City of Destruction." ¹⁹ On that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the middle of Egypt, and a memorial stone to the LORD will be near its border. ²⁰ They will serve as a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in Egypt. When they cry to the LORD because of those who oppress them, He will send them a Saviour and One who pleads their cause and He will rescue them. ²¹ The LORD will make Himself known to the Egyptians. The Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will serve Him with sacrifices and grain-offerings. They will make vows to the LORD and fulfil them. ²² The LORD will strike Egypt with a plague. When He strikes them, He will also heal them. When they return to the LORD, He will respond to their prayers and heal them. ²³ On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will come to Egypt, and the Egyptians to Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. ²⁴ On that day Israel will be the third member grouped with Egypt, and Assyria to be a blessing in the middle of the world. ²⁵ The LORD of hosts will bless them, saying: "Blessed are My people, the Egyptians and the Assyrians, whom My hands have made, and Israel, My inheritance."

20

A promise that there will be no alliance with Egypt and a warning that those who have been allied with Egypt will be ashamed

¹ It was in the year when the supreme commander, who was sent by Sargon, the king of Assyria, came to

Ashdod. He fought against Ashdod and captured it. ² At that time, the LORD spoke through Isaiah, the son of Amoz: "Come now, remove the sackcloth from your waist and take your sandals off your feet!"

³ Then the LORD said: "As My servant Isaiah has been walking naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Cush, ⁴ so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, young and old, naked, barefoot and with their buttocks uncovered, as the shameful exposure of Egypt."

⁵ Then they will be dismayed and ashamed, because of the Cushites, in whom they had been hoping, and because of the Egyptians, who had been their pride.

⁶ The inhabitants of this coastland will say on that day "Look! If this is what has happened to those in whom we had been hoping and to whom we had fled for help, to be delivered from the king of Assyria, how, then, shall we ourselves escape?"

21

A prophecy that Cyrus will capture Babylon

¹ A pronouncement about the Wilderness beside the Sea: As storm winds come one after another through the Negev, something is coming from the wilderness, from a terrible country. ² A harsh vision has been revealed to me: The treacherous person keeps on being treacherous and the one who devastates goes on devastating. Go up, Elam! Lay a siege, Media! I have caused all the groaning to cease. ³ That is why my waist is full of anguish. Pains have gripped me like the pangs of a woman in labour. I have been bent over by what I hear and have been horrified by what I see.

⁴ My heart has been staggering. Shuddering has been terrifying me. The twilight for which I was longing has caused me to tremble. ⁵ Set out the table! Spread out the rugs! Eat! Drink! Get up, princes! Smear your shields! ⁶ For this is what the Lord has told me: "Go! Post a watchman! Let him report what he sees! ⁷ When he sees chariots, a team of horsemen, a column of donkeys, a column of camels, he should watch carefully, very carefully."

⁸ [The watchman*¹²⁹] called out: "Lord, I keep standing constantly on the watchtower during the day and am positioned at my post every night. ⁹ Look! Here comes a column of men, a team of horsemen!"

Then he answered: "**Babylon has fallen. It has fallen!** He has shattered to the ground all the images of its gods."

¹⁰ O you who have been trodden down on the threshing-floor, I have told you what I have heard from the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel.

A pronouncement about Edom

¹¹ A proclamation about Dumah: Someone was calling to me from Seir: "Watchman, what is left of the

¹²⁹ In 21:8 the Masoretic text reads "A lion called." The Dead Sea Scrolls read, "The watchman."

night? Watchman, what is left of the night?"

¹² The watchman replied: "The morning is coming and also the night. If you must inquire, inquire! Come back again!"

A pronouncement against Arabia

¹³ A proclamation about Arabia: O caravans of Dedanites, you will stay overnight in the undergrowth of Arabia. ¹⁴ Bring water for the thirsty person, you who live in the country of Tema! You have come to meet the fugitive with food. ¹⁵ For they have been running away from swords, from drawn swords, from bent bows and from the intensity of battle.

A pronouncement about Kedar

¹⁶ For this is what the Lord has told me: "Within a year, as a hired man reckons years, all the glory of Kedar will end. ¹⁷ The remaining number of the archers, the warriors of Kedar, will also be few. For the LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken."

22

A pronouncement about Jerusalem

¹ A Pronouncement about the Valley of Vision: What has happened to you, then, that all of you have gone up on the housetops? ² You are a city filled with shouting. You are a tumultuous and exultant city. Your slain men have not been slain by the sword or died in battle. ³ All your commanders have fled together. They have been captured without using their bows. All you who were caught were taken prisoner together, although they had fled far away. ⁴ That is why I have said: "Turn your gaze away from me! Let me weep bitterly! Do not insist on comforting me about the destruction of the daughter of my people!"

⁵ For the Lord, the LORD of hosts, has chosen a day of panic, a day of trampling down and confusion in the Valley of Vision, a battering down of walls and a cry for help to the mountains. ⁶ Elam has taken up its quiver of arrows together with chariots, men and horses, and Kir has uncovered its shields. ⁷ The best of your valleys have been filled with chariots, and the horsemen have taken their positions at the gates. ⁸ He will uncover the defences of Judah. Although on that day you will look for weapons in the House of the Forest, ⁹ you will see that the breaches in the walls of the city of David are numerous. You will collect the water of the lower pool. ¹⁰ You will count the houses in Jerusalem and pull down the houses to make the wall impregnable. ¹¹ You will make a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool. However, you will not look to the One who is doing this. You will not consider Him who has planned this long ago. ¹² On that day the Lord, the LORD of hosts, will call you to weep and mourn, to shave a bald patch on your heads and to fasten on sackcloth. ¹³ Instead, He will see joy and gladness, the killing of cattle and the butchering of sheep. You will be eating meat and drinking wine. You will be saying: "**Let us eat and drink! For tomorrow we shall die.**" ¹⁴ The LORD of

hosts revealed this in my ears: "Certainly no atonement will be made for you for this wrong until you die." The Lord GOD of hosts has said this.

A prophecy that Shebna's position will be given to Eliakim

¹⁵ This is what the Lord, the LORD of hosts, has said: "Go, proceed to Shebna, this man who is in charge of the palace, and ask: ¹⁶ 'What is your business here and whom do you have here that you have cut out a tomb for yourself here, cutting it out in a high position and carving out a resting-place for yourself in the rock?'"

¹⁷ Look, mighty man! The LORD will violently hurl you away. He will grasp you forcibly. ¹⁸ He will roll you up tightly and throw you, wrapped like a ball, into a wide-open country. There you will die, and your splendid chariots will be there. You are a disgrace to your master's family.

¹⁹ "I shall depose you from your place."

He will throw you down from your position.

²⁰ "On that day I shall summon My servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah. ²¹ I shall dress him in your tunic and fasten it with your sash. I shall hand your authority over to him, and he will be a father to those who live in Jerusalem and to the family of Judah. ²² I shall also place **the key of the house of David** on his shoulder. **When he opens, no one will shut. When he shuts, no one will open.** ²³ I shall also drive him firmly in place like a peg, and he will become a throne of honour for his father's family. ²⁴ People will hang on him the whole honour of his father's family, the offspring, the offshoots and all the small vessels, from bowls to jars of every kind. ²⁵ On that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "the peg that is driven into a firm place will give way. It will be cut off and fall, and the load that had been on it will be eliminated." For the LORD has spoken.

23

A proclamation about Tyre

¹ A proclamation about Tyre: Wail, ships of Tarshish! For Tyre will be laid waste, without a home or a return home. The information has been announced from the land of Cyprus. ² Be silent, you who live on the coastland! The merchants of Sidon, who go across the sea, will fill you. ³ The grain of Shihor, the harvest of the Nile, used to be its revenue on many waters. It had been the merchandise of the nations. ⁴ Be ashamed, O Sidon! For the sea has spoken, O stronghold of the sea! It has said: "I have neither laboured nor given birth. I have raised no young men and reared no virgins."

⁵ When the news reaches Egypt, they will be in anguish over the news about Tyre. ⁶ Cross over to Tarshish! Wail, you who live on the coastland! ⁷ Is this your jubilant city, which originated in the distant past? Its feet used to carry it to live as a foreigner in distant places. ⁸ Who planned such a thing against Tyre, which used to distribute crowns, whose **businessmen**

used to be **princes**, whose traders used to be renowned **in the world**?⁹ The LORD of hosts has planned this, to defile all magnificent majesty and to humiliate all the honoured people of the earth.¹⁰ Overflow your land like the Nile, daughter of Tarshish! There is no restraint any longer.¹¹ He has stretched his hand out over the sea. He has shaken kingdoms. The LORD has given the Command concerning Canaan to destroy its fortifications.¹² He has said: “You will not be jubilant any longer, crushed virgin-daughter of Sidon! Arise! Go across to Cyprus! Even there you will have no rest.”

¹³ Look at the land of the Chaldeans! This is the people that had not existed. Assyria had allocated it for desert-animals. They had erected their siege-towers. They had stripped her fortified palaces bare. They had made it a heap of rubble.¹⁴ Howl, ships of Tarshish! For your fortress will be devastated.¹⁵ At that time, Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, like the lifetime of one king. At the end of seventy years, Tyre will fare as happened in the song about a prostitute:¹⁶ “Take a lyre! Go around the city, you forgotten prostitute! Play your lyre well! Sing many songs, that you may be remembered.”¹⁷ At the end of seventy years, the LORD will be troubled about Tyre. She will go back to her prostitute’s wages. She will **act like a prostitute** with all **the kingdoms of the world** on the surface of the earth.¹⁸ Her trading profits and her prostitute’s wages will be holy to the LORD. They will not be stored up or hoarded, but her merchandise will belong to those who live in the presence of the LORD, that they may have as much as they want to eat and splendid clothing.

24

A prophecy that God will punish the earth and have a great triumph

¹ Look! The LORD will lay the earth waste and devastate it. He will twist its surface and disperse the people living on it.² The same will happen to the priest as to the people, to the male slave as to his masters, to the female slave as to her mistress, to the buyer as to the seller, to the lender as to the borrower, to the creditor as to the one who has a creditor against him.³ The earth will be completely laid waste and completely plundered. For the LORD has spoken this threat.⁴ The earth will dry up and wither. The world will pine away and wither. The most elevated of the people of the earth will pine away.⁵ The earth will be polluted under those who live on it. For they have transgressed the Laws, discarded the Prescription and broken the everlasting Covenant.⁶ That is why a curse will consume the earth, and those who live on it will suffer for their guilt. That is why those who live on it will diminish, and only a few human beings will be left.⁷ The new wine will dry up, and the vine will dry out. All the merry-hearted people will groan.⁸ Joyful tambourine-playing will stop. The boisterous din of

exultant people will cease. The **joyful music of the lyre will stop**.⁹ No people will drink wine with a song. Strong drink will taste bitter to those who drink it.¹⁰ The ruined city will be broken down. Every house will be shut up so that no one can enter.¹¹ There will be a cry of distress in the streets over the wine. All joy will become as dark as the evening. The gladness of the earth will disappear.¹² Horror will be left in the city. The city-gate will be battered to pieces and made desolate.¹³ For it will be like this in the middle of the earth among the nations, like the knocking down of olives from an olive tree or like the gleanings when the grape harvest has come to an end.¹⁴ People will raise their voices. They will shout for joy. From the west they will cry out joyfully about the majesty of the LORD.¹⁵ Therefore, glorify the LORD in the eastern region of light! In the coastlands of the sea glorify the name of the LORD, the God of Israel!¹⁶ From the ends of the earth we shall hear songs of praise, “Honour to the Righteous One!”

However, I have been saying: “I am wasting away! I am wasting away! How horrible it is for me! Treacherous people have been acting treacherously. Yes, treacherous people have been acting very treacherously.”

¹⁷ Terror, a trapping-pit and a **trapping-net will come on you who are living on the earth**.¹⁸ He who flees at the sound of the terror will fall into the trapping-pit, and he who climbs out of the trapping-pit will be caught in the trapping-net. For the windows from on high will be opened, and the foundations of the earth will quake.¹⁹ The earth will be broken apart completely. The earth will be split apart. The earth will be violently shaken.²⁰ The earth will stagger like a drunkard. It will sway backwards and forwards like a hut. Its rebellion weighs heavily on it. It will fall and will not get up again.²¹ On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven in heaven and the kings of the earth on the earth.²² They will be gathered like prisoners in a dungeon. They will be shut up in prison and after a long time they will be punished.²³ Then the full moon will be embarrassed, and the hot sun will be ashamed. For the LORD of hosts will be King on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and His glory will be in front of His elders.

25

A response of praise and adoration

¹ O LORD, You are my God. I shall highly honour You. I shall praise Your name. For You have done wonderful things, which had been planned long ago.² For You have turned a city into a heap of stones, an unassailable city into a pile of rubble. A fortress of foreigners has ceased to be a city and will never be rebuilt.³ That is why strong peoples will honour You, and cities of ruthless nations will fear You.⁴ For You have been a Stronghold for the poor man, a Strong-

hold for the needy man in his distress, a Place of Refuge from heavy rain and a Shade from the heat. For the breath of ruthless men is like heavy rain against a wall, ⁵ like heat in a dry land. You will silence the uproar of foreigners. The song of ruthless men will quieten down like heat in the shadow of a cloud.

A promise that death will be swallowed up

⁶ On this mountain the LORD of hosts will prepare for all peoples a banquet of rich food, a banquet with aged wines, rich foods full of marrow and refined, aged wines. ⁷ On this mountain He will destroy the surface of the shroud that is covering all peoples and the blanket that has been woven over all nations. ⁸ He **will swallow up death** for ever. The **Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces** and remove the disgrace of His people from the whole earth. For the LORD has spoken. ⁹ On that day people will say: "Look! This is our God. We have been waiting for Him to save us. This is the LORD, for whom we have been waiting. Let us rejoice and be glad that He has saved us!" ¹⁰ For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain. However, the Moabites will be trampled down in their place, like a heap of straw that is trampled down in a pile of manure. ¹¹ They will spread out their hands in the middle of it like a swimmer who spreads his hands out to swim. The Lord will bring down their pride although their hands move skilfully. ¹² He will demolish your high, fortified walls. He will lay them low. He will throw them down to the ground, to the very dust.

26

Songs of praise for salvation

¹ On that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city. He will set up salvation as its walls and ramparts. ² Open the gates, that the righteous nation, which remains faithful, may come in! ³ You will preserve one who has a steadfast purpose in perfect peace, because he trusts in You. ⁴ Trust in the LORD for evermore! For the LORD, the LORD, is an everlasting Rock. ⁵ For He has cast low those who were living high up. He will lay low the towering city. He will lay it low to the ground and will throw it down to the dust. ⁶ The foot will trample on it, the feet of a needy person, the footsteps of powerless people."

⁷ The path of the righteous person is a level path. You clear a straight track for a righteous person. ⁸ Indeed, O LORD, we have been waiting for You in the path of Your Decisions. Our souls long for Your name and for the mention of You. ⁹ My soul has been longing for You in the night. Indeed, I shall look out for You in my spirit inside me. For, when the earth has had Your Decisions, those who live in the world have been learning what is right. ¹⁰ If a wicked person is shown compassion, he does not learn to be righteous. He will act unjustly in an upright land and will not see the majesty of the LORD. ¹¹ LORD, although Your hand

has been reaching high up, they do not see it. Let them see it, and let them be ashamed because of **the devotion of the people!** Let the **fiery** anger for Your **enemies consume** them! ¹² LORD, You will arrange prosperity for us. For You have also performed for us all that we have done. ¹³ LORD, our God, other masters besides You have been ruling over us, but, through You alone, we shall profess Your Name. ¹⁴ They are dead and will not revive. The departed spirits will not rise. To that end, you have punished and destroyed them and wiped out all memory of them. ¹⁵ You have enlarged the nation, O LORD. You have enlarged the nation. You have appeared in Your glory. You have extended all the borders of the land. ¹⁶ LORD, people have been searching for You in their distress. They poured out a whispered prayer when Your chastisement was on them. ¹⁷ Because of Your presence, O LORD, we have been like a pregnant woman who is close to giving birth and writhes and cries out in her labour-pains. ¹⁸ We have been pregnant. We have been writhing but have given birth only to wind. We do not accomplish deliverance for the earth, and more inhabitants of the world are not born. ¹⁹ Your dead will return to life. They will rise together with my dead body. Wake up and sing for joy, you who dwell in the dust! For your dew is the dew of daybreak, and the earth will give birth to the spirits of the dead. ²⁰ Come, my people! **Go into your private rooms and shut your doors** behind you! Hide yourself for a brief moment, until the anger has gone past! ²¹ For look! The LORD is coming out from His place to call to account those who live on the earth for their guilt. The earth will reveal the blood spilt on it and will not cover up its slain any longer.

27

A statement about Leviathan

¹ On that day the LORD will use His hard, great and strong sword, to punish Leviathan, the fleeing snake, Leviathan, that writhing snake. He will kill the monster that is in the sea.

A declaration about God's delightful vineyard

² On that day there will be a beautiful vineyard. Sing its praises! ³ "I, the LORD, am its Keeper. I water it continually. I watch it night and day that no one may harm it. ⁴ I am not angry. If only I had thorns and briars to battle! I would stride out against them. I would set all of them on fire. ⁵ Otherwise, let them lay hold of My protection! Let them make peace with Me! Let them make peace with Me!"

⁶ In times to come Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom, put out shoots and fill the surface of the world with fruit. ⁷ Will He strike Israel as He struck those who struck Israel? Or will He kill as He killed the others? ⁸ By driving them away and sending them away You will become their Adversary. By His fierce blast, He will expel them on a day with an east wind. ⁹ Therefore, in this way **the guilt of Jacob will be**

atoned for, and this will be the full fruit of **the removal of his sin**: when he makes all the stones of the altars like chalk stones that have been smashed to pieces, no Asherah posts or incense-altars will remain standing. ¹⁰ For the fortified city will be isolated, a deserted and abandoned grazing-place, like the wilderness. There a calf will graze. There it will lie down and destroy its branches. ¹¹ When its branches are dry, they will be broken off. Women will come and make fires with them. For this is a people without understanding. Therefore, He who has made them will have no compassion on them. He who formed them will not be kind to them.

A promise that God's people will worship on His holy mountain

¹² On that day the LORD will thresh out the grain from the channel of the Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt. People of Israel, you will be gleaned one by one. ¹³ On that day a **loud horn** will be blown, and those who had become lost in Assyria and those who had been driven out to Egypt will come and worship the LORD on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

28

A proclamation that Samaria with its drunken leaders will fall.

¹ How terrible it will be for the splendid garland of the drunkards of Ephraim and the fading flower of its glorious beauty! Although they are at the entrance to a fertile valley, they are overcome by wine! ² Look! The Lord has someone who is strong and powerful. Like a storm of hail, a calamitous tempest, like a storm with a powerful, overwhelming flood, He will violently dash them to the ground. ³ The splendid garland of the drunkards of Ephraim will be trampled underfoot. ⁴ The fading flower of its glorious beauty, which is at the entrance to a fertile valley, will be like an early fig before the summer. When someone sees it, he swallows it as soon as it is in his hand. ⁵ On that day the LORD of hosts will be a glorious crown and a beautiful wreath for the remnant of His people. ⁶ He will become a spirit of justice for him who presides as a judge and become a source of strength to those who drive back the battle at the city-gate.

A proclamation against the priests and the prophets

⁷ These also have been reeling from wine and staggering from strong drink. Priests and prophets have been reeling from strong drink. They have become confused by wine. They have been staggering from strong drink. They have been reeling in vision; they have been staggering when they give decisions. ⁸ For all the tables are full of filthy vomit, so that there is no space left. ⁹ To whom will he teach knowledge and to whom will he explain a Message? To those who have just been weaned from milk, to those who have just been removed from a mother's breasts? ¹⁰ For it is "rule on rule, rule on rule, line on line, line on line, a little here, a little there." ¹¹ For God **will use** people with stammering lips and with **a strange language to speak to this people**. ¹² He has told them: "This is the

place where it is quiet. Give rest to the person who is tired! This is the place to repose."

Nevertheless, they have refused to listen. ¹³ The Word of the Lord will become for them: "Rule on rule, rule on rule, line on line, line on line, a little here, a little there." As a result, they will go, stumble backwards, be broken, be snared and be captured.

A proclamation about evil rulers at Jerusalem who oppose the Cornerstone

¹⁴ Therefore, listen to the Word of the LORD, arrogant men who are ruling this people in Jerusalem!

¹⁵ For you have been saying: "We have made a contract with death. We have made an agreement with Sheol. The flood will overwhelm but will pass through. It will not reach us. For we have made lies our refuge and hidden ourselves under falsehood."

¹⁶ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: "Look! **I** am the One who has **laid a Stone** as a foundation **in Zion**, a tested Stone, **a precious Cornerstone**, a sure Foundation Stone: **The person who believes will not** be dismayed. ¹⁷ I shall make justice the line and righteousness the plumb line. Hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the hiding-place. ¹⁸ Then your contract with death will be cancelled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand. The flood will overwhelm. When it passes through, you will become the thing that is beaten down by it. ¹⁹ Whenever it passes through it will snatch you. For it will pass through morning after morning, by day and by night. The understanding of this Message will bring nothing but terror. ²⁰ For the bed is too short to stretch oneself out on, and the blanket is too narrow to wrap around oneself."

²¹ For the LORD will rise up as He did on Mount Perazim. He will fly into a passion, as He did in the Valley of Gibeon, to do His work, His strange work, and to perform His task, His foreign task. ²² Now therefore, do not show yourselves to be mockers, that your chains may not be made stronger! **For I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts that complete destruction has been decided against the whole land.** ²³ Open your ears and listen to what I am saying! Give attention and hear what I am telling you! ²⁴ When a ploughman ploughs to sow seed, will he do it constantly? Will he keep on breaking up and harrowing his ground? ²⁵ When he has smoothed its surface, will he not scatter dill, sow cumin and plant wheat in rows, barley in its own area and spelt on the edges? ²⁶ His God instructs him what is right. He teaches him. ²⁷ For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge. A cartwheel is not rolled over cumin. Rather, dill is beaten out with a rod, and cumin with a stick. ²⁸ Grinding is carried out to make bread. One does not go on threshing for ever. When he drives his cartwheel over grain with his horses, he does not grind it. ²⁹ This also comes from the LORD of hosts. He has given wonderful advice and has made His sound wisdom great.

29

A prophecy that, in the siege of Jerusalem God's Word will be hidden from some but revealed to others

¹ “How horrible it will be for you, Ariel, Ariel, city where David camped! Add one year to another! Let the feasts go through their cycle! ² I shall prepare oppression for Ariel, there will be mourning and lamentation, and it will become an altar-hearth to Me. ³ I shall set up a camp against you on every side, I shall besiege you with a siege-wall and raise siege-works against you.”

⁴ When you have been brought low, you will speak from the ground. Your speech will be a muffled sound from the dust. Your voice will come from the ground like the voice of a ghost. Your words will be whispered from the dust. ⁵ Nevertheless, your many foreign enemies will be like fine dust. The large number of ruthless men will be like scattering chaff. This will happen quite suddenly. ⁶ You will be punished by the LORD of hosts with thunder, with earthquake and loud noise, with whirlwind, high wind and the flame of a devouring fire. ⁷ The large number of all the nations that fight against Ariel, yes, all that fight against it and its stronghold and oppress it will be like a dream, a vision in the night. ⁸ It will be like a hungry man who dreams that he is eating but wakes up to find that his throat has an unsatisfied longing. It will be like a thirsty man who dreams that he is drinking but wakes up to find that he is faint, and that his throat is dried out. The large number of all the nations who fight against Mount Zion will be like them. ⁹ Gaze at each other in horror and be horrified! Blind yourselves and be blind! Become drunk but not with wine! Stagger but not from strong drink! ¹⁰ For **the LORD will pour out on you a spirit of deep sleep**. He will tightly shut your eyes, which are the prophets, and will cover your heads, which are the seers.

¹¹ The vision about all this will become like the **words in a sealed scroll** for you. If people give the scroll to a man who can read and tell him, “Please read this!” he answers, “I cannot. For it is **sealed**.”

¹² If the **scroll** is given to someone who cannot read, and he is told, “Please read this!” he answers, “I do not know how to read.”

¹³ The Lord has said: “Because **this people has been coming near Me with their mouths and has been honouring Me with their lips, while their hearts have been keeping far away from Me, and their fear of Me is a commandment of men that has been taught them**, ¹⁴ Therefore, look! I shall again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder on wonder. **The wisdom of their wise men will become lost, and the intelligence of their intelligent men will be hidden.**”

¹⁵ How horrible it will be for those who bury their plans deeply to conceal them from the LORD! Their deeds are done in the dark, and they ask, “Who sees

us? Who knows us?” ¹⁶ Such is your perversity! Should the potter be regarded as the clay, that the thing that is made should say about the one who has made it, “He did not make me,” or that **a thing that is shaped** should say about **him who has shaped it**, “He has not been intelligent”? ¹⁷ Is it not just a little while until Lebanon changes into a fertile land, and the fertile land is regarded as a forest? ¹⁸ On that day **the deaf people will hear** the Words of a scroll and, out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of **blind people will begin to see**. ¹⁹ **Humble people** will have joy after joy in the LORD, and the poorest of people will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. ²⁰ For the ruthless man will be gone. The scoffer will be finished, and all who are intent on doing wrong will be cut off. ²¹ So also for those who use words to mislead a man into sin, those who lay a snare for the arbitrator in the city-gate and those who use trivial arguments to deprive an innocent person of his rights. ²² Therefore, this is what the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, has said about the family of Jacob: “Now Jacob will no longer be ashamed. His face will no longer now turn pale. ²³ For when they see their children, the work of My hands, among them, they will keep My name holy.”

They will treat the Holy One of Jacob as holy. They will be in awe of the God of Israel. ²⁴ Then those who had gone astray in spirit will know and understand, and those who had been grumbling will learn insight.

30

A warning that Judah should trust in God instead of looking to Egypt for protection

¹ “How horrible it will be for those stubborn children!” declares the Lord, “They carry out a plan but not one of Mine. They use a drink-offering to conclude an alliance but without My Spirit. They carry away one sin after another. ² They set out to go down to Egypt without asking for My direction. They take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh. They look for shelter in the shadow of Egypt. ³ Therefore, the protection of Pharaoh will become your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt will become your disgrace. ⁴ For, although his officials have been at Zoan and his messengers reach Hanes, ⁵ everyone becomes odious by using a people that cannot benefit them. It brings neither assistance nor benefit but shame and disgrace.”

⁶ A proclamation about the animals in the Negev. Through a land of trouble and distress, out of which come the lioness, the lion, the adder and the fiery snake that darts about, people carry their riches on the backs of donkeys and their treasures on the humps of camels, to a people that cannot benefit them. ⁷ Egypt will give help that is pointless and futile. That is why I have called it “Rahab who sits still.” ⁸ Come now! Write it on a tablet in their presence and inscribe it on a scroll, that it may be there in the future as a permanent witness! ⁹ For they are a rebellious people, de-

ceitful children, children who have refused to listen to the Instruction of the LORD. ¹⁰ They have been telling the seers, “You shall not see!” and those who have visions, “You shall not see visions for us! Speak smooth words to us! Have prophetic visions that are illusions! ¹¹ Leave the road! Turn aside from the path! Stop speaking in our presence about the Holy One of Israel!” ¹² Therefore, this is what the Holy One of Israel has said: “Because you have rejected this Word, have trusted in oppression and crookedness and have relied on them, ¹³ therefore this sin will become for you like a gap in a high wall, which is about to collapse and bulges out. It will crash quite suddenly. ¹⁴ It will break as a potter’s jar does when it is crushed so ruthlessly that no potsherd can be found in its fragments to use in carrying fire away from a hearth or in skimming water out of a cistern.”

¹⁵ For this is what the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said: “You will be saved by turning back and being patient. You will be strong by keeping silent and by trusting.”

However, you have refused. ¹⁶ You have been saying, “No! Rather, we shall flee on horses.”

Therefore, you will flee. You have been saying, “We shall ride on fast horses.”

Therefore, those who pursue you will prove to be fast.

¹⁷ One thousand will flee when one person threatens them. You will flee when five persons threaten you, until you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a flag on a hill.

A promise that God will heal His people’s wounds and give prosperity

¹⁸ Therefore, the LORD will wait to be gracious to you. Therefore, He will rise to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a just God. Blessed are all who wait for Him! ¹⁹ For a people will live in Zion at Jerusalem. You will certainly not weep any longer. He will certainly be gracious to you at the sound of your cry for help. When He hears it, He will answer you.

²⁰ Although the Lord gives you the bread of trouble and the water of oppression, yet your Teacher will not hide Himself any longer. Your own eyes will see your Teacher. ²¹ Your ears will hear a voice coming from behind you, saying, “This is the way. Walk in it!” when you go to the right or when you go to the left.

²² Then you will defile your silver-plated carved idols and your gold-covered molten images. You will scatter them like something contaminated. You will say to them, “Filth!” ²³ He will give rain for your seed, with which you will sow the ground, and the food that the ground produces will be rich and delicious. On that day your livestock will graze in broad pastureland.

²⁴ The oxen and the donkeys that cultivate the ground will eat mash as fodder, which has been winnowed with shovels and pitchforks. ²⁵ There will be channels of running water on every lofty mountain and every high hill in the day of heavy slaughter, when the towers fall. ²⁶ The light of the full moon will be like the

light of the sun. The light of the sun will be seven times as strong, like the light of seven days, on the day when the LORD bandages the fractures of His people and heals the wounds that He has inflicted.

A proclamation that God will triumph

²⁷ Look! The name of the LORD is coming from far away. His anger will be burning, and there will be heavy cloud. His lips will be full of fury, and His tongue will be like a devouring fire. ²⁸ His breath will be like an overflowing torrent that reaches up to the neck. He will sift the nations with the sieve of destruction and will place on the jaws of the peoples a bridle that leads them astray. ²⁹ You will have a song, as on the night when you keep yourselves in ritual purity for a holy feast. Your hearts will be joyful, like someone in a procession to the sound of a flute on the way to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.

³⁰ The LORD will make His majestic voice be heard and show the descending blow of His arm, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst, a storm and hailstones. ³¹ For the Assyrians will be dismayed by the voice of the LORD. He will strike them with His rod. ³² Every stroke that the LORD lays on them as He uses His appointed rod will be to the sound of tambourines and lyres. He will wave His arms in the battles in which He fights against them.

³³ For a burning-place was prepared long ago. Indeed, it has been made ready for the king. He has made Assyria’s pile of wood deep and wide, with fire and plenty of logs. The breath of the LORD, like a torrent of sulphur, will set fire to it.

31

A warning not to trust in Egypt, because God will protect His people against Assyria

¹ How terrible it will be for those who go down to Egypt for help, who depend on horses and who trust in chariots because there are many of them and in horsemen because they are very strong! They do not look to the Holy One of Israel and do not consult the LORD. ² He also is wise and may bring harm. He will not cancel His Words but will rise up against the families of evildoers and against the helpers of those who commit sin. ³ The Egyptians are human beings and not God. Their horses are flesh and not spirit. When the LORD stretches out His hand, the one who gives help will stumble, and he who receives help will fall. They will all perish together.

A prophecy that God’s sword will attack Assyria

⁴ For this is what the LORD has told me: “As a lion or a young lion growls over his prey when a band of shepherds is mustered against him, as he is not terrified by their shouting and does not cringe at their noise, so the LORD of hosts will come down to fight on Mount Zion and on its hill.”

⁵ The LORD of hosts will defend Jerusalem like birds that hover. He will defend and deliver it. He will pass over it and rescue it. ⁶ Return to Him, against whom the Israelites have deeply rebelled! ⁷ For on that day

each one of you will reject his idols of silver and gold, which your own sinful hands have made for yourselves. ⁸ Then the Assyrians will fall by a sword that is not used by man. A sword not used by a human being will consume them. They will flee from the sword, and their young men will become forced labourers. ⁹ “Their stronghold will fall in fright, and their officers will abandon the flag in panic,” declares the LORD, who has His fire in Zion and who has His furnace in Jerusalem.

32

A declaration about the results of a righteous rule when God pours out His Spirit and brings peace

¹ Look! A king will reign righteously, and princes will rule justly. ² Each ruler will be like a shelter from the wind, a protection in a rainstorm. They will be like streams of water in a dry place, like the shade of a heavy rock in an exhausted land. ³ Then the eyes of those who see will not look away, and the ears of those who hear will be fully alert. ⁴ The minds of rash people will be able to know, and the tongues of those who do not speak clearly will speak fluently and clearly. ⁵ The godless fool will not be called noble any longer, and people will not say that the scoundrel is honourable. ⁶ For the fool will speak folly, his mind will plan evil and he will behave wickedly. He will tell lies about the LORD. He will leave the throat of a hungry person empty and will deprive a thirsty person of drink. ⁷ The weapons of a scoundrel are evil. He plans wicked schemes to ruin poor people with lies, even when the claim of a needy person is just. ⁸ However, a noble person has planned noble things and will stand firm on things that are noble.

A warning against sinful women

⁹ You carefree women, get up! Listen to what I am saying! You complacent women, hear what I have to say! ¹⁰ In a little more than a year you complacent women will be trembling. For the grape harvest will fail, and the harvest will not be brought in. ¹¹ Tremble, carefree women! Quake, complacent women! Take off your clothes, make yourselves bare and tie sackcloth around your waists! ¹² Beat your breasts as you wail for the beautiful fields, for the fruitful vines, ¹³ for my people’s land, where thorns and thorn-bushes will grow up! Yes, mourn for all the happy homes and for the joyful city! ¹⁴ For the fortress will be deserted. The noisy city will be abandoned. The stronghold and the watchtower will become wastelands for ever. They will be a delight for wild donkeys and a pasture for flocks, ¹⁵ until the Spirit is poured out on us from on high.

A promise of salvation

Then the wilderness will become a fertile field, and the fertile field will be considered a forest. ¹⁶ Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness will remain in the fertile field. ¹⁷ Then righteousness will produce peace, and the effect of righteousness

will be quietness and security for ever. ¹⁸ Then my people will live in a peaceful settlement, in secure dwellings and in undisturbed places of rest. ¹⁹ Although it will hail when the forest sinks down and the city is completely laid low, ²⁰ how blessed you will be, as you sow your seed beside all the waters and as you let your cattle and donkeys roam freely!

33

A promise that Jerusalem will be rescued from Assyria

¹ How horrible it will be for you, you devastator, although you have not been devastated! It acts treacherously although others have not acted treacherously towards it. When you have ended your devastation, you will be devastated. When you have stopped acting treacherously, others will act treacherously towards you.

² O LORD, be gracious to us! We have been waiting for You. Be their arm every morning! Yes, save us in a time of trouble! ³ Peoples flee from the noise of an army. When You exalt Yourself, nations are scattered.

⁴ Then, nations, your plunder will be gathered as the locusts harvest. Men will pounce on it like the infestation of swarms of locusts.

⁵ The LORD is exalted. For He dwells on high. He will fill Zion with justice and righteousness. ⁶ He will be the security for your times and a rich store of salvation, wisdom and knowledge. The fear of the LORD is your treasure.

⁷ Look! Their brave men have been calling out in the streets. The envoys of peace are weeping bitterly.

⁸ The highways have been deserted. No one travels on the road any longer. He has broken the treaty. He has despised cities. He has had no regard for any human being. ⁹ The land has been mourning and languishing. Lebanon has felt ashamed and has withered away. Sharon has become like a desert region and Bashan and Carmel have dropped their leaves.

¹⁰ “Now I shall arise,” says the LORD. “Now I shall lift Myself up. Now I shall exalt Myself. ¹¹ You will be pregnant with dry grass. You will give birth to stubble. Your own breath is a fire that will burn you up. ¹² Peoples will be burnt to lime. Like thorn bushes that have been cut down, they will catch alight in fire.

¹³ “Listen, you who are far away, to what I have done! You who are near, acknowledge My power!”

¹⁴ The sinners in Zion have been trembling. Quaking has gripped godless persons: “Who among us can dwell with a consuming fire? Who among us can dwell in a fire that burns for ever?”

¹⁵ He who walks honestly and speaks the truth, who despises making gain through acts of oppression, who waves his hands to refuse to grasp a bribe, who blocks his ears from hearing about murder and closes his eyes so that they do not see evil, ¹⁶ such a person will dwell on high. He will take refuge in a high and rocky

fortress. His bread will be given to him. His supply of water will be dependable. ¹⁷ Your own eyes will see the King in his beauty. They will see a land that extends into the distance. ¹⁸ Your mind will ponder about the frightful memories: **Where is the scribe? Where is he who used to calculate the weight? Where is he who used to count the towers?** ¹⁹ You will not see the insolent nation any longer, the people with an obscure speech, which you could not comprehend, stammering in a language that you could not understand. ²⁰ Look at Zion, the city of our appointed feasts!

Your eyes will see Jerusalem as a settlement that is at ease, a tent that cannot be packed up. Its pegs will never be pulled out, and none of its ropes will be broken. ²¹ Rather, there the LORD will be our Mighty One, in a place where there are wide rivers and streams. No ship with oars will sail on them, and no majestic ship will go past. ²² For the LORD is our Judge. The LORD is our Ruler. The LORD is our King. He Himself will save us. ²³ If your ropes hang loose, they cannot hold the base of their mast firm and do not keep the sail spread out. Then a large amount of plunder will be divided. Even lame people will carry away plunder. ²⁴ No one living there will say, "I am ill." The people who live there will have their sins forgiven.

34

A prophecy of the fall of Edom, which is a glimpse of God's judgment

¹ Come closer, you nations, to listen! Pay attention, you peoples! The earth and all that fills it, the world and all that comes out of it, should listen! ² For the LORD is angry at all the nations and furious against all their armies. He will totally destroy them. He will hand them over to be slaughtered. ³ Those of them who have been killed will be thrown out. A stench will rise from their corpses. The mountains will be melted with their blood. ⁴ The entire starry host will melt away, and **the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll**. Their entire host will decay, like leaves falling from a vine, like withering leaves from a fig tree.

⁵ "For My sword will drink its fill in the heavens. Look! It will descend for judgment on Edom, yes, on the people whom I have marked down for total destruction."

⁶ The LORD has a sword. It is covered with blood. It is thick with fat, with the blood of young rams and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, yes, a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ⁷ Arabian antelopes will go down with them, young bulls and strong bulls. Their land will drink its fill of blood, and their soil will be drenched with fat. ⁸ For the LORD has a day of vengeance, a year of retribution for the cause of Zion. ⁹ The streams of Edom will be turned into pitch, and its soil into sulphur. Its land will become burning

pitch. ¹⁰ It will not go out by night or by day. **Its smoke will go up for ever**. It will lie in ruins from one generation to another. No one will ever pass through it. ¹¹ However, the desert-owl and the porcupine will possess it. The ibis and the crow will live there. He will stretch the measuring-line of chaos and the depth-gauge of emptiness over it. ¹² There will be none of its nobles there to call it a kingdom, and all its princes will have gone completely. ¹³ Thorns will grow over its palaces. Nettles and thorn-bushes will grow over its fortified cities. It will be a home for jackals and a haunt for ostriches. ¹⁴ Desert-animals will meet with hyenas. One shaggy goat will bleat to another. Indeed, **the screech-owl will settle there** and find a resting-place for itself. ¹⁵ Owls will make their nests there, lay eggs, hatch them out and care for them in its shadow. Indeed, there the birds of prey will gather, each one with its mate. ¹⁶ Search in the scroll of the LORD and read it! Not one of these will be missing. None will miss its mate. For the mouth of the Lord has commanded it, and His Spirit will gather them. ¹⁷ He Himself has cast the lot for them. His hand has allocated it to them with a measuring-line. They will possess it for ever. They will live there from one generation to another.

35

A prophecy that God's redeemed people will be happy

¹ The wilderness and the dry land will be glad. The desert will rejoice and blossom like a crocus. ² The land will blossom richly. It will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and of Sharon. These will see the glory of the LORD, the splendour of our God.

³ **Strengthen the slack hands and make the stumbling knees firm!** ⁴ Say to those whose hearts are dismayed: "Be strong, do not be afraid! Look! Your God will come with vengeance, with the retribution of God. He Himself will come and save you!"

⁵ Then **the eyes of blind people will be opened, and the ears of deaf people will be opened**. ⁶ Then **the lame man will leap like a deer**, and the tongue of the dumb man will shout for joy. For water will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.

⁷ Then the parched ground will become a pool, and the thirsty ground will become springs of water. In the haunts where jackals lay, the grass will become reeds and papyrus. ⁸ A highway will be there, a roadway. It will be named "The Holy Way." No unclean person will travel on it. It will be for those who walk on that way. Stubborn fools will not wander about there. ⁹ No lion will be there, and no predatory animals will come up on it. They will not be found there, but the redeemed will walk there. ¹⁰ Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return. They will enter Zion with singing. Everlasting joy will be on their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sigh-

ing will flee away.*¹³⁰

36

The threatened attack on Jerusalem by Sennacherib — 2 Kings 18:13, 17-37, 2 Chronicles 32:1-19

¹ In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. ² The king of Assyria sent his chief cupbearer with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. He stood at the channel of the Upper Pool on the road to the Fuller's Field. ³ Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, who was the manager of the palace, and Shebna, the secretary, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, went out to him. ⁴ The chief cupbearer told them: "Please, tell Hezekiah, 'This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, has asked: "On what have you based this confidence of yours? ⁵ Have you thought that mere words dropped from the lips are strategy and power for war? On whom are you relying now, that you have rebelled against me?" ⁶ Look! You are depending on Egypt, that staff, which is a crushed reed, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. That is what Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, is to all who are depending on him. ⁷ However, if you tell me, "We are depending on the LORD, our God," is not He the One whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed and who has told Judah and Jerusalem, "You shall worship before this altar"? ⁸ Now therefore, please, make a wager with my master, the king of Assyria: I shall give you two thousand horses, if you on your part can put riders on them! ⁹ How then can you drive back a single captain among the least of my master's officials, although you are depending on Egypt for chariots and horsemen? ¹⁰ Moreover, have I come up against this land to destroy it without the consent of the LORD? The LORD has told me, "Go up against this land and destroy it!"'"

¹¹ Then Eliakim, Shebna and Joah told the chief cupbearer: "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic! For we understand it. Do not speak to us in the Jewish language while the people on the wall are listening!"

¹² However, the chief cupbearer asked them: "Has my master sent me to say these things to your master and to you? Has he not sent me to say them to the men sitting on the wall, when, like you, they will be eating their own dung and drinking their own urine?"

¹³ Then the chief cupbearer stood up and shouted loudly in the Judean language: "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! ¹⁴ This is what the king has said: 'Hezekiah should not deceive you!' For he will not be able to deliver you. ¹⁵ Hezekiah should not persuade you to trust in the LORD by saying, 'The LORD will certainly deliver us. This city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria.' ¹⁶ Do not listen to Hezekiah! For this is what the king of Assyria has

said: 'Surrender to me! Come out to me! Then eat, each one of you, from his own vine and, each one of you, from his own fig tree and drink, each one of you, the water from his own cistern, ¹⁷ until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards!' ¹⁸ Beware that Hezekiah does not mislead you by saying, 'The LORD will deliver us!' Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ¹⁹ Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Indeed, have they delivered Samaria from my hand? ²⁰ Who among all the gods of these countries have delivered their lands from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?"

²¹ However, they remained silent and did not answer him at all. For the king had commanded: "You shall not answer him!"

²² Then Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, who managed the palace, and Shebna, the secretary, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, went to Hezekiah, with their clothes torn and reported to him what the chief cupbearer had said.

37

Isaiah's prediction about deliverance for Jerusalem — 2 Kings 19:1-13

¹ When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and went into the Temple of the LORD. ² He sent Eliakim, the manager of his palace, and Shebna, the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah, the son of Amoz, the prophet. ³ They told him: "This is what Hezekiah has said, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke and disgrace. For children have come to the point of birth, and there is no strength to give them birth.' ⁴ It may be that the LORD, your God, will hear what the chief cupbearer has been saying, whom his master, the king of Assyria, has sent to insult the living God, and will rebuke him for the words that the LORD, your God, has heard. Therefore, lift up your prayer for the remnant that still survives!"

⁵ So, the officials of King Hezekiah went to Isaiah.

⁶ Isaiah answered them: "This is what you shall tell your master, 'This is what the LORD has said: "Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have been blaspheming Me! ⁷ Look! I am putting such a spirit in him, that, when he hears a rumour, he will go back to his own land. Then I shall cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."'"

⁸ When the chief cupbearer returned, he found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah. For he had heard that the king had left Lachish. ⁹ The king received a report about Tirhakah, the king of Cush: "He has set out to fight against you."

When he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah: ¹⁰ "This is what you shall tell Hezekiah, the king of Judah: 'Your God, on whom you are depending,

¹³⁰ With 35:10 compare 51:11.

should not deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria!¹¹ Look! You yourself have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. Will you yourself be delivered?¹² Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my forefathers have destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph and the people of Eden who were in Tel-Assar?¹³ Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim or of Hena or of Ivvah?”

The prayer of Hezekiah — 2 Kings 19:14-19

¹⁴ When Hezekiah had received the letter from the messengers and read it, he went up to the Temple of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD.¹⁵ Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: ¹⁶ “O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, You who are enthroned between the cherubim, You, You alone, are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. ¹⁷ Turn Your ear, O LORD, and hear! Open Your eyes, O LORD, and see! Listen to all the words that Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God!¹⁸ It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the countries and their lands. ¹⁹ They have put their gods into the fire. For they were not gods but what men’s hands have made of wood and stone, and so they have destroyed them. ²⁰ Now therefore, LORD, our God, save us from his hands, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are LORD, You alone!”

A prophecy that Sennacherib will be defeated — 2 Kings 19:20-37, 2 Chronicles 22:20.

²¹ Then Isaiah, the son of Amoz, sent a Message to Hezekiah: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said about what you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib, the king of Assyria: ²² ‘This is the Word that the LORD has spoken against him: “The virgin, the daughter of Zion, has despised you! She has ridiculed you! The daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head behind you! ²³ Whom have you insulted and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel! ²⁴ Through your officials you have been insulting the Lord. You have been saying, ‘With my many chariots I myself have gone up the heights of the mountains, to the most distant part of Lebanon. I have cut down its tallest cedars, its choicest juniper-trees. I have entered its most remote height, its densest forest. ²⁵ I myself have dug wells and drunk waters! I have dried up all the branching streams of Egypt with the soles of my feet!’” ²⁶ Have you not heard? I prepared it long ago. I shaped from days of old what I have now caused to happen, that you should be turning fortified cities into desolate heaps of ruins. ²⁷ Their inhabitants, stripped of their power, have been filled with terror and become ashamed. They had been like plants in the field and like fresh green grass. Like grass on the housetops, they have now been

scorched before they have grown up. ²⁸ However, I know where you sit down, when you go out, when you come in and how you are working yourself into a passion against Me. ²⁹ Because you have worked yourself into a passion against Me and your smugness has come up into My ears, I shall put My hook through your nose and My bridle through your lips and make you go back by the way on which you have come.” ³⁰ This will be the sign for you: This year eat what grows by itself and in the second year what grows of its own accord. Then in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit! ³¹ What has been spared from the family of Judah and is left will again take root down below and bear fruit up above. ³² For a remnant will come out of Jerusalem, and what has been spared will come out of Mount Zion. The eager devotion of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this. ³³ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said about the king of Assyria: ‘He will not come into this city, he will not shoot an arrow there. He will not come before it with a shield or heap a siege-mound up against it. ³⁴ He will go back on the way by which he came and will not enter this city,’ declares the LORD. ³⁵ ‘For I shall protect this city and save it, for My own sake and for the sake of My servant David.’”

The defeat and death of Sennacherib — 2 Kings 19:35-37

³⁶ The angel of the LORD went out and struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians. When people got up in the morning, they saw all the dead bodies. ³⁷ Then Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, broke camp and withdrew. He went back to Nineveh and stayed there. ³⁸ While he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword and escaped to the land of Ararat. Then his son Esarhaddon succeeded him as king.

38

The cure of Hezekiah’s illness — 2 Kings 20:1-11, 2 Chronicles 32:24-26

¹ In those days Hezekiah became ill and was dying. The prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, came to him and told him: “This is what the LORD has said, ‘Give instructions to your family! For you will die. You will not recover.’”

² Then he turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD. ³ He said: “Oh, please, LORD, please remember that I have been living before You faithfully and with complete loyalty! I have been doing what You consider good.”

Hezekiah wept very much. ⁴ Then the Word of the LORD came to Isaiah: ⁵ “Go and tell Hezekiah: ‘This is what the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, has said: “I have heard your prayer. I have seen your tears. Look! I shall add fifteen years to your life. ⁶ I shall also deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria and defend this city. ⁷ This will also be the sign for you from the LORD, that the

LORD will do this thing, which He has promised.
⁸ Look! I shall make the shadow cast by the sun move back the ten intervals by which it has gone down on the sundial of Ahaz.”””

Therefore, the sunlight on the sundial moved back the ten intervals by which it had gone downwards.

Hezekiah's thanksgiving after his recovery

⁹ This is a writing of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, after he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness: ¹⁰ “I myself had thought, ‘I must depart at the halfway point of my life to the gates of Sheol. I have been summoned away for the rest of my years.’ ¹¹ I had thought, ‘I shall not see the LORD, the LORD, in the land of the living. I shall no longer look on another human being when I am among the inhabitants of the underworld.’ ¹² My dwelling-place had been pulled out and laid bare away from me like a shepherd’s tent. I had rolled up my life like a weaver. He was going to cut me off from the warp on the loom. From day to night You were going to bring me to an end. ¹³ I had waited patiently until morning. Like a lion, He was going to smash all my bones. From day to night You were going to bring me to an end. ¹⁴ I was chirping like a swallow or a songbird. I was moaning like a dove. My eyes were weak from looking to heaven: ‘O Lord, I am oppressed. Support my cause!’ ¹⁵ What shall I say? Yes, He spoke to me and He Himself has done it. I shall walk deliberately all my years because of this bitterness of my soul. ¹⁶ O Lord, people live as they rely on these things, and everything in these things possesses the life of my spirit. May You restore me to health and keep me alive! ¹⁷ Look! It was for my own welfare that I had My great bitterness. You Yourself have lovingly delivered my life from the pit of corruption. For You have thrown all my sins behind Your back. ¹⁸ For Sheol does not thank You. Death does not praise You. Those who go down to the pit do not wait for Your faithfulness. ¹⁹ The living person, the living person alone is the one who will thank You, as I am doing today. A father will make Your faithfulness known to his children. ²⁰ The LORD is going to save me, and we shall play my music on stringed instruments all the days of our lives at the Temple of the LORD.”

²¹ Isaiah had said, “People should take a pressed cake of figs and spread it over the ulcer, that he may recover.” ²² Hezekiah had also asked, “What is the sign that I shall go up to the Temple of the LORD?”

39

Hezekiah's permission for envoys from Babylon to inspect the treasures in Jerusalem — 2 Kings 20:12-19, 2 Chronicles 32:31-33

¹ At that time Merodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan, the king of Babylon, sent a letter and a gift to Hezekiah. He had also heard that Hezekiah had been ill and had recovered. ² Hezekiah was glad about the messengers and showed them his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the perfumes, the precious oil, his whole

armoury and all that was available in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in his entire realm that Hezekiah did not show them. ³ Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and asked him, “What did these men say? From where did they come to you?”

Hezekiah answered, “They came to me from a distant country, from Babylon.”

⁴ The prophet asked, “What have they seen in your palace?”

Hezekiah answered: “They have seen everything in my palace. There has not been anything in my storehouses that I have not shown them.”

⁷ Then Isaiah told Hezekiah: “Hear the Word of the LORD of hosts: ⁶ ‘Look! The days are coming when everything that is in your palace and that your fathers have stored up until this day will be carried away to Babylon. Nothing will be left.’ The LORD has said so. ⁷ ‘Some of your own descendants, who will come from you, whose father you will be, will be taken away and will be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.’”

⁸ Hezekiah answered Isaiah: “The Word of the LORD, which you have spoken, is good.”

For he thought, “There will be peace and security in my lifetime.”

40

Comfort, consolation and promise — compare v. 3-5 with Luke 3:4-6

¹ “Comfort, comfort My people!” says your God.

² “Speak kindly to Jerusalem and announce to it that its compulsory military service is over, that its iniquity has been paid for and that it has received a double equivalent from the hand of the LORD for all its sins!”

³ **A voice of someone calling out in the wilderness: “Prepare a road for the LORD! Make a smooth highway in the desert for our God! ⁴ Every valley must be raised up, and every mountain and hill must be levelled! The uneven land must become a plain, and the rugged ground must become a plain!**

⁵ The glory of the LORD will be revealed, and **every human being will see it together.**” For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

⁶ A voice was saying: “Make an announcement!”

He kept asking, “What shall I announce?”

“All human beings are like grass, and all their beauty is like a flower in the field. ⁷ Grass dries up, and a flower withers. For a breath from the LORD blows on it. Certainly, the people are grass! ⁸ Grass dries up, and a flower withers, but the Word of our God will endure for ever.”

⁹ O Zion, you who **bring good news**, go up on a high mountain! O Jerusalem, you who **bring good news**, raise your voice loudly! Raise it! **Do not be afraid!** Say to the cities of Judah: “Here is your God!”

¹⁰ **Look!** The Lord GOD will **come** as a Mighty One, and His arm will rule for Him. **Look! His reward** will

be **with Him**, and what He has accomplished will go before Him. ¹¹ He will take care of His flock like a shepherd. He will gather the lambs in His arm. He will carry them in His lap. He will carefully guide those that are suckling young ones.

A promise that the all-powerful God will give strength to those who depend on Him

¹² Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and calculated the size of the sky with the span of his hand? Who has held the dust of the earth in a one-third measure and weighed the mountains on a scale and the hills on a balance? ¹³ Who has determined the Spirit of the LORD, and **what man can be His adviser to instruct Him**? ¹⁴ Whom has He consulted? Who has given Him understanding? Who has instructed Him about the path of justice? Who has taught Him knowledge, and who can inform Him about the way to understanding? ¹⁵ Look! The nations are like a drop from a bucket. They have been regarded as dust on a balance. Look! He weighs the coastlands like fine dust. ¹⁶ There is not enough wood in Lebanon to light a fire, and its animals are not enough for a burnt offering. ¹⁷ All the nations are like nothing before Him. He considers them less than nothing and worthless. ¹⁸ To whom will you compare God? To which likeness will you equate Him? ¹⁹ To an idol? A craftsman has cast it, a goldsmith overlays it with gold and a smith makes silver chains for it. ²⁰ A man who is too poor for such an offering chooses wood that will not rot. He searches for a skilful craftsman for himself to set up an idol that will not topple.

²¹ Do you not know? Do you not hear? Have you not been told from the beginning? Have you not understood the foundations of the earth? ²² He is the One who is enthroned above the circle of the earth, and those who live on it are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a veil and spreads them out like a tent to live in. ²³ He reduces princes to nothing. He has made the rulers of the earth worthless. ²⁴ Indeed, they have hardly been planted, they have hardly been sown and their stem has hardly taken root in the ground, when He has blown on them, they have dried out and a windstorm carries them away like stubble.

²⁵ "To whom will you compare Me, that I should be equal to him?" asks the Holy One. ²⁶ Lift up your eyes on high and see! Who has created these? He brings out their army by number. He calls them all by name. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. ²⁷ Jacob, why do you say, and Israel, why do you complain, "My way has been hidden from the LORD, and my just claim is disregarded by my God?" ²⁸ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not become tired or weary. His understanding is unsearchable.

²⁹ He gives power to weary people and increases the strength of those who have no vigour. ³⁰ Even young people will become tired, and weary and young men will indeed stumble, ³¹ but those who wait on the LORD will receive new strength. They will cause their feathers to grow like eagles. They will run and not become weary. They will walk and not grow tired.

41

A prophecy about a conqueror sent by God

¹ "You coastlands, listen to Me in silence! Let the peoples gain new strength! Let them approach! Then let them speak! Let us come closely together for a trial! ² Who has stirred up from the east one whom victory meets wherever he goes? He will hand nations over to him and subdue kings. He will use his sword to make them like dust and use his bow to make them like stubble that is blown about. ³ He will pursue them and pass on safely. He will not come by foot on any road. ⁴ Who has performed and done this, summoning the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD, have been the First and, with those who are last, I am He."

⁵ The coastlands have seen it and been afraid. The ends of the earth are trembling. They have approached and come.

A warning against the making of idols in an attempt to avoid the threat

⁶ Each one helps another and tells his brother, "Be brave!" ⁷ The craftsman encourages the goldsmith. The one who smoothes out with a hammer encourages the one who strikes with a small hammer. He says, about the soldering, "It is good." He fastens it with nails to prevent it from toppling.

God's address to Israel as His servant

⁸ "However, you, **Israel, My servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, My friend,** ⁹ you whom I have seized from the ends of the earth and summoned from its remotest parts, I have told you, 'You are My servant. I have chosen you and have not rejected you.' ¹⁰ **Do not be afraid! For I am with you.** Do not be alarmed! For I am your God. I shall strengthen you. Yes, I shall help you. Yes, I shall support you with My righteous right hand. ¹¹ Look! All who are angry with you will be ashamed and humiliated. Those who oppose you will be as nothing and will perish. ¹² You will search for those who are hostile towards you but will not find them. Those who are at war with you will be as nothing, yes, as altogether nothing. ¹³ For I, the LORD, your God, am grasping your right hand. It is I who am telling you, 'Do not be afraid! I shall help you. ¹⁴ Do not be afraid, Jacob, you worm! You people of Israel, I shall help you,'" declares the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵ "Look! I shall make you into a threshing sledge, sharp, new and one with double-edges. You will thresh the mountains and crush them to dust and turn the hills into chaff. ¹⁶ You will winnow them. The

wind will carry them away, and a gale will scatter them.”

However, you will rejoice in the LORD. You will boast in the Holy One of Israel. ¹⁷ Poor and needy people are looking for water, but there is none. Their tongues have been parched with thirst.

“I, the LORD, shall answer them. I, the God of Israel, shall not forsake them. ¹⁸ I shall make rivers flow on barren heights and make springs flow in the middle of valleys. I shall turn the wilderness into a pool of water and dry land into springs of water. ¹⁹ I shall put the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle and the olive in the wilderness. I shall set the cypress, the fir and the box tree together in the desert, ²⁰ that people may see and know, that together they may take it to heart and understand, that the hand of the LORD has done this and that the Holy One of Israel has created it.”

Although the nations chose idols, idols can do nothing

²¹ The LORD says: “Submit your case!” The King of Jacob says: “Adduce your strong evidence!”

²² They should adduce it, that they may tell us what will happen. Tell us what events have taken place in the past, that we may consider them and know what their outcome will be! Or declare future events to us!

²³ Predict what is going to happen later, that we may know that you are gods! You really should do some good or do some harm, that we may be afraid and see it completely! ²⁴ Look! You are less than nothing, and your achievement is less than worthless. Whoever chooses you is disgusting.

²⁵ “I shall stir up someone from the north, and he will come. He will call on My name from the sunrise, that he may come against officials of state as if they were earth and as if he were a potter treading on clay.”

²⁶ Who has predicted this from the beginning, that we may know it? Who has told this beforehand, that we may say, “He has been correct?” There was no one at all who predicted it. There was no one at all who proclaimed it. There was no one at all who heard any words from you.

²⁷ “I was the first to tell Zion, ‘Look! Here they are!’ I was also giving Jerusalem a messenger to tell the good news. ²⁸ When I look, there is no one. There is not even one among these who can give advice. There is no one who will give an answer when I ask them a question. ²⁹ Look! They are all deceptive. Their works are nothing. Their metal images are wind and emptiness.”

42

The first song about God’s Messianic Servant, who will bring righteousness to the world

¹ **“Here is My Servant, whom I support, My Chosen One, in whom I delight! I have put My Spirit on Him. He will bring righteousness to the nations. ² He will not cry out. He will not raise His voice or make His voice heard in the street. ³ He will not break off a bruised reed or extinguish a smoulder-**

ing wick. He will faithfully bring forth justice. ⁴ He will not become faint and will not be broken until He establishes justice on the earth. The coastlands will wait for His teaching.”

⁵ This is what **God**, the LORD, has said, the One who **created the heavens** and stretched them out, who spread out **the earth**, together with what comes out of it, **who gives breath** to the people who are on it and spirit to those who walk on it: ⁶ “I am the LORD. I have called You **in righteousness**, that I may grasp Your hand and watch over You and that **I may appoint You** as a Covenant for the people and **as a Light for the Gentiles, ⁷ to open eyes that are blind**, to bring captives out of the dungeon and to bring those who live in darkness from the prison house. ⁸ I am the LORD. That is My Name, and I shall not give My glory to another or My praise to idols. ⁹ Look! The former predictions have taken place, and I am predicting new things. I am causing you to hear them before they spring up.”

A battle hymn about God

¹⁰ **Sing a new song** to the LORD! Sing His praise from the end of the earth, people who go down to the sea, all that fills it, coastlands and you who live on them! ¹¹ Let the wilderness, its cities and those who live in the settlements of Kedar lift up their voices! Let the people who live in Sela sing for joy! Let them shout loudly from the tops of the mountains! ¹² Let them give glory to the LORD and let them proclaim His praise in the coastlands! ¹³ The LORD will march out like a warrior. He will stir up His fighting spirit like a man of war. He will raise a war-cry. Yes, He will raise a battle-cry. He will prevail over His enemies.

¹⁴ “I have been silent for a long time. I used to keep quiet and hold Myself back. Now I shall moan like a woman in labour. I shall pant and gasp at the same time. ¹⁵ I shall lay waste mountains and hills and cause all their vegetation to wither. I shall turn rivers into islands. I shall dry up swamplands. ¹⁶ I shall lead blind people on a road that they have not known. I shall guide them on paths that they have not known. I shall turn the darkness into light before them and the rough places into level ground. These are the things that I shall do. I shall not abandon them. ¹⁷ Those who trust in idols and those who tell metal images, ‘You are our gods’ will turn back and will be deeply ashamed.

A warning that Israel is blind and deaf, but a promise that God will bring Israel home

¹⁸ “Listen, deaf people! Look, blind people, that you may see! ¹⁹ Who is blind except My servant or deaf like My messenger, whom I am sending? Who is blind like the one who is to be rewarded or blind like the servant of the LORD? ²⁰ Although you see many things, you do not pay any attention. Although his ears are open, he does not hear anything.”

²¹ The LORD has been willing because of His own

righteousness. He will make the Teaching great and will make it glorious. ²² However, this is a people that has been plundered and looted. He traps all of them in pits, and they have been hidden in prison houses. They have become plunder with no one to rescue them. They have become booty without anyone to say, "Give it back!" ²³ Who among you will listen to this? Who will pay attention and listen in the future? ²⁴ Who has handed Jacob over as booty and handed Israel to the plunderers? Has it not been the LORD? We have been sinning against Him. They have been refusing to walk in His Ways. They have not been listening to His Instruction. ²⁵ He has poured His burning anger and the might of war on them. It has scorched them on every side. However, they have not understood. Although it has burnt them, they have not taken it to heart.

43

God's declaration that the people are His own

¹ Now, however, this is what the LORD has said, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: "Do not be afraid! For I have redeemed you. I have called you by your name. You are Mine. ² When you go through the waters, I shall be with you. When you go through rivers, they will not flood over you. When you walk through fire, you will not be scorched, and the flames will not burn you. ³ For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour. I have given Egypt as a ransom for you, Sudan and Seba in exchange for you. ⁴ Since you have been precious in My sight, you have been honoured, and I Myself have **loved** you. Therefore, I shall give other human beings in exchange for you and nations in exchange for your life. ⁵ **Do not be afraid! For I am with you.** I shall bring your descendants from the east and gather you from the west. ⁶ I shall tell the north, 'Give them up!' and the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring My sons from far away and My daughters from the ends of the earth! ⁷ Bring everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed and made!"

⁸ Bring out those people, who are blind, although they have eyes, and those who are deaf, although they have ears! ⁹ All the nations have gathered and peoples are assembling. Who among them was predicting this and was informing us about former things? Let them produce their witnesses, that they may prove that they have been right! Let them listen and say, "It is true!"

¹⁰ "You are My witnesses," declares the LORD. "You are My servant, whom I have chosen, that you may know, and that you may believe in Me and understand that I am He. No god had been formed before Me, and there will be none after Me. ¹¹ I, I am the LORD, and there is no Saviour except Me. ¹² I Myself have announced it. I shall save and I shall proclaim it, and not some strange god among you. You are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "and I am God. ¹³ Indeed from

the first day on I have been He, and no one can deliver from My hand. When I do something, who can cancel it?"

¹⁴ This is what the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, has said: "For your sake I have sent to Babylon. I shall bring down all of them as fugitives, yes, the Chaldeans, in the ships in which they had taken pride. ¹⁵ I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King."

A prediction of a new exodus when God forgives Israel's past sin

¹⁶ This is what the LORD has said — who makes a road through the sea and a path through the mighty waters, ¹⁷ who leads out chariots and horses, an army and reinforcements together, so that they lie down and do not get back up, so that they are extinguished and snuffed out like a wick — ¹⁸ "Do not remember former things and do not pay attention to events of long ago! ¹⁹ **Look! I am going to do a new thing.** It is springing up already. Do you not recognise it? Indeed, I shall make a roadway through the wilderness and rivers through the desert. ²⁰ Wild animals, jackals and ostriches, will honour Me, because I shall provide water in the wilderness and rivers through the desert to give drink to **My own chosen people,** ²¹ **the people** whom I have formed for Myself. They **will proclaim My praise.** ²² Nevertheless, you have not called on Me, Jacob. Rather, you have grown weary of Me, Israel. ²³ You have not brought Me the sheep for your burnt offerings or honoured Me with your sacrifices. I have not made you serve with grain-offerings and have not wearied you with frankincense. ²⁴ You have not used money to buy Me sweet cane or satisfied Me with the fat of your sacrifices. Rather, you have burdened Me with your sins. You have wearied Me with your wrongdoings. ²⁵ I, I, am the One who blot out your rebellious actions, for My own sake; and I shall not remember your sins.

²⁶ "Remind Me! Let us argue our case together! You must set it forth yourself, that you may prove that you are right! ²⁷ Your first ancestor sinned, and your mediators have rebelled against Me. ²⁸ Therefore, I shall profane the leaders of the Holy Place. I shall consign Jacob to utter destruction and Israel to abuse."

44

A blessing on Israel's descendants

¹ "Now therefore, listen, Jacob, My servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen! ² This is what the LORD has said, He who has made you, who has formed you from the womb and who will help you: 'Do not be afraid, My servant Jacob, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen!'

³ For I shall pour out water on thirsty ground and streams on dry land. I shall pour out My Spirit on your offspring and My blessing on your descendants. ⁴ They will spring up among the grass like poplars beside flowing streams."

An assertion that God alone, who has formed Israel, is God.

⁵ One person will say, "I belong to the LORD." An-

other will give himself the name of Jacob. Another will write on his hand, "Belonging to the LORD," and will adopt the name of Israel.

⁶ This is what the LORD, Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD of hosts, has said: "**I am the First and I am the Last**, and there is no God except Me. ⁷ Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it! Let him recount to Me what has happened since I established an ancient people! Then let them predict what is to come and what will happen to them! ⁸ Do not be terrified and do not be afraid! Have I not been telling you and declaring it from long ago? You are My witnesses. Is there any God except Me? There is no other Rock. I do not know of any."

The absurdity of idol worship

⁹ All who form idols are nothing, and the things in which they delight are worthless. Their witnesses do not see or know anything, so that they will be ashamed. ¹⁰ Who has formed a god or has cast an idol, which has been unable to give any benefit? ¹¹ Look! Everyone associated with him will be ashamed. The craftsmen themselves are only human. Let them all assemble! Let them take their stand! They will be terrified and ashamed together. ¹² After the iron-smith has taken a cutting tool and worked it over the coals, he shapes it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He also becomes hungry, and his strength fails. If he does not drink water he will become exhausted. ¹³ After the carpenter stretches out a measuring-line, he draws an outline with a marker. He shapes it with chisels and traces out its shape with a compass. Then he has made it like the figure of a man, in the beautiful likeness of a human being, that it may dwell in a house. ¹⁴ To cut fine boards for himself, he has chosen a cypress or an oak and let it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He has planted a laurel, that the rain may make it grow. ¹⁵ Then it becomes something for a human being to burn. He takes a part of it and warms himself. He also lights a fire and bakes bread. He also makes a god and worships it. He has made it into an idol and bowed down to it. ¹⁶ He has burnt half of it in a fire. Over this half of it he eats meat. He cooks a roast and has enough to eat. He also warms himself and says, "Great! I am warm. I have felt the glow of the fire." ¹⁷ Then he makes the rest of it into a god, his idol. He bows down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, "Deliver me! For you are my god."

¹⁸ Such people do not know or understand anything. For He has smeared their eyes over, so that they do not see and their hearts, so that they have no insight.

¹⁹ No one considers. No one knows or discerns enough to think: "I have used half of it to burn in a fire. I have also baked bread over its coals, roasted meat and eaten it. Now I am making the rest of it into a disgusting thing. I am bowing down to a block of wood." ²⁰ He busies himself with ashes. His deluded heart has led him astray. He cannot rescue himself or

ask, "Is not this thing in my right hand a delusion?"

An assurance that Israel is not forgotten

²¹ "Remember these things, Jacob! Remember them, Israel! For you are My servant. I have formed you. You are My servant, Israel. I shall not forget you. ²² I have blotted out your rebellious acts like a cloud and your sins like mist. Return to me! For I have redeemed you."

²³ **Sing** for joy, **heavens!** For the LORD has done it. Shout, deep places of the earth! Break into joyful singing, mountains, forest and every tree in it! For the LORD has redeemed Jacob and will display His splendour in Israel.

A prophecy that Cyrus will do God's will

²⁴ This is what the LORD has said, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: "I am the LORD and I have made all things. I alone have stretched out the heavens and spread out the earth by Myself. ²⁵ I frustrate the signs of false prophets and make fools of those who practise divination. I make wise men turn back and **make a mockery of their knowledge.**"

²⁶ He confirms the Word of His servant and carries out the plan of His messengers. He says, about Jerusalem, "It will be inhabited," and, about the cities of Judah, "They will be rebuilt, and I shall restore their ruins." ²⁷ He says to the deep sea, "Dry up! I shall **dry up** your **currents.**" ²⁸ He says, about Cyrus, "He is My shepherd and **will carry out everything that I purpose.**" He says to Jerusalem, "You will be rebuilt," and to the Temple, "Your foundation will be laid."

45

A prophecy about Cyrus as God's instrument

¹ This is what the LORD has said to Cyrus, His anointed one, "whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him, whom I shall use to undo the weapon-belts of kings and to open doors before him, so that the city-gates will not be shut: ² 'I Myself shall go before you and smooth down the elevated places. I shall break bronze gates in pieces and cut through iron crossbars. ³ I shall give you treasures from dark places and riches stored in secret places, that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, and that I am calling you by your name. ⁴ For the sake of My servant Jacob and Israel, My chosen one, I have called you by your name. I am giving you a title of honour, although you do not know Me. ⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no one else. Apart from Me there is no other God. I shall equip you for action, although you do not know Me, ⁶ that people from the sunrise to the sunset may know there is no one except Me. I am the LORD, and there is no one else. ⁷ I form light and create darkness. I cause prosperity and create calamity. I am the LORD and I do all these things."

⁸ "Send rain from above, heavens! Let the clouds pour down righteousness! Let the earth open, and let salvation and righteousness produce fruit! Let the earth

cause them both to sprout! I, the LORD, have created them.”

⁹ How horrible it will be for the one who quarrels with the One who has formed him, one pot among other earthenware pots! **Would the clay ask the one who shaped it, “What are you making?”** or “Your work has no handles”? ¹⁰ How horrible it would be for the one who asks his father, “What are you begetting?” or a woman, “With what are you in labour?”

¹¹ This is what the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, has said, the One who has formed him: “Ask Me about the things that will happen to My children! Will you give Me orders about the work of My hands? ¹² I made the earth and created mankind on it. My own hands stretched out the heavens, and I commanded their entire starry host. ¹³ I Myself have stirred him up in righteousness. I shall make all his roads straight. He will rebuild My city and set My exiles free, without any payment and without any gift,” the LORD of hosts has said.

¹⁴ This is what the LORD has said: “The products of Egypt and the trade of Cush and the Sabeans, who are tall men, will come across to you and will be yours. They will follow you. They **will come** across in chains. **They will bow down to you.** They will plead with you: ‘**Surely God is among you,** and there is no one else. There is no other God.’”

¹⁵ Certainly, You are God and You hide Yourself! You are the God of Israel, the Saviour! ¹⁶ All of them will be ashamed and even disgraced. Those who make idols will go away in complete contempt. ¹⁷ The LORD has saved Israel with **an everlasting salvation.** You will never, to all eternity, be ashamed or disgraced. ¹⁸ For this is what the LORD has said — He who has created the heavens, He who is God, who has formed the earth and made it, He who has established it, who has not created it empty but who has formed it to be inhabited — He has said: “I am the LORD, and there is no one else. ¹⁹ I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a dark land. I have not told the offspring of Jacob, ‘Search for Me in vain!’ I am the LORD and I speak what is fair. I declare what is right.”

A prediction that idols will not save Babylon

²⁰ “Assemble and come! Gather, you who have escaped from the nations! Those who carry about their wooden idols know nothing. They keep on praying to a god that cannot save. ²¹ Speak up and present your case! Yes, let them consult one another! **Who announced this in the distant past?** Who declared it long ago? Was it not I, the LORD? There is no other God except Me, a righteous God and a Saviour. There is no one besides Me. ²² Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. ²³ I have sworn by Myself. A Word has gone out from My righteous mouth and will not be changed, that **every knee will bow down to Me, and**

every tongue will swear allegiance. ²⁴ ‘Only in the LORD,’ it will be said about Me, ‘are righteousness and strength.’”

All who are angry with Him will come to Him and will be ashamed. ²⁵ In the LORD all of Israel’s descendants will be justified and will glory in Him.

46

A prediction that Babylon’s idols will go into captivity and a promise that God will carry His people

¹ Bel has bowed down. Nebo is stooping low. Their idols have been on animals and livestock. These things of yours that are transported are loaded as burdens on exhausted animals. ² They have stooped down. They have bowed down low together. They have been unable to carry the heavy load safely and have gone into captivity themselves.

³ “Listen to Me, family of Jacob, and all you remnant of the family of Israel! You have been carried since your birth and have been lifted up since you were born. ⁴ Even to your old age I am He. Even until your hair is grey I Myself shall transport you. I Myself have made you and I Myself shall carry you along. I Myself shall transport you and shall rescue you.

A declaration that God is incomparable

⁵ “To whom will you liken Me? To whom will you make Me equal? With whom will you compare Me, that we may be like each other?”

⁶ People pour gold out of their purses, weigh out silver in the scales and hire a goldsmith, that he may make it into a god. Then they bow down to it and even worship it. ⁷ They lift it up on their shoulders and transport it. They set it in its place, that it may stand up. It will not move away from its own position. If someone cries out to it for help, it will not answer or save him from his trouble.

⁸ “Remember this and take courage! Recall it to mind, rebels! ⁹ Remember the former things, which happened long ago! For I am God, and there is no other. I am God, and there is no one like Me. ¹⁰ I keep predicting the future from the beginning. From long ago I have been telling about things that had not yet happened. I have been saying, ‘My purpose will stand, and I shall carry out whatever I desire.’ ¹¹ I am summoning a bird of prey from the east, the man from a far country who will carry out his plan. I have spoken and shall bring it about. I have purposed and shall also do it.

¹² “Listen to Me, obstinate people, you who are far from being righteous! ¹³ I have brought My righteousness near. It is not far away. My salvation will not delay. I shall put salvation in Zion. I shall give My **splendour to Israel.**”

47

A lament over the fall of Babylon

¹ Come down and sit in the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon! Sit on the ground without a throne, daughter of the Chaldeans! For people will no longer call you

tender and delicate. ² Take a pair of millstones and grind flour! Take off your veil! Strip off your flowing skirt! Uncover your legs! Wade through the streams!

³ Your naked body will be exposed, and your shame will be seen.

“I shall take revenge and not spare anyone.”

⁴ Our Redeemer, whose name is the LORD of hosts, is the Holy One of Israel. ⁵ Sit in silence and go into the dark, daughter of the Chaldeans! For you will no longer be called “the queen of kingdoms.”

⁶ “I have been angry with My people. I have profaned My inheritance. I have handed them over to you. You have not shown them any mercy. You have made your yoke exceedingly heavy on old people. ⁷ You have been saying, ‘I shall be queen for ever.’ You have not carefully considered these things or remembered how they will end. ⁸ Now therefore, listen to this, **lover of pleasure!** You live securely and **tell yourself:** ‘I am the one, and there is no one except me. **I shall not live as a widow** and shall never suffer the loss of children.’ ⁹ **These two things will happen** to you suddenly, **on one day**, the loss of children and widowhood. They will come on you completely, despite your great deal of sorcery and despite your very powerful magic spells. ¹⁰ You have felt secure in your wickedness. You have been saying, ‘No one sees me.’ Your wisdom and your knowledge have led you astray. You have been telling yourself, ‘I am the one, and there is no one except me.’ ¹¹ However, evil will happen to you. You will not know how to conjure it away. Calamity will fall on you. You will not be able to ward it off. Ruin will come on you suddenly when you do not expect it. ¹² Persevere with magic spells and your many sorceries, then, with which you have been striving since you were young! Perhaps you will be able to succeed. Perhaps you will inspire terror. ¹³ You have been worn out by your many plans. The people who map out the sky, who gaze at the stars, who make forecasts at each new month should stand up and save you from what will come on you!”

¹⁴ Look! They will become like stubble. Fire will consume them. They will not rescue themselves from the fierce flames. These will be no coals for warming oneself. This will not be a fire to sit beside. ¹⁵ This is what those with whom you have been labouring, with whom you have been doing business since you were young, will mean for you. They will wander off, each in his own direction. There will be no one to save you.

48

God's assertion that He has predicted events

¹ Listen to this, family of Jacob! You are called by the name of Israel. You have come out of the fountain of Judah. You swear by the name of the LORD. You acknowledge the God of Israel but not truthfully or righteously. ² For they call themselves after the holy city and rely on the God of Israel. His name is the LORD of hosts.

³ “I had predicted the previous things long ago. My mouth had announced them, and I had made them known. I suddenly carried them out, and they happened. ⁴ Because I knew that you were stubborn, that your neck was an iron sinew and that your forehead was brazen, ⁵ I predicted them to you long ago, before they happened. I announced them to you, that you might not say, ‘My idol did them. My carved image and my metal image commanded them.’

⁶ “You have heard these things. Now look at all this! Will you not declare it yourselves? From now on I shall announce new things to you, things that have been kept secret, which you have not known. ⁷ They have been created just now and not long ago. Before today you have never heard about them, that you may not say, ‘Look! I had known about them.’ ⁸ You have neither heard nor known about them. You have not been opening your ears for a long time. For I knew that you would certainly act treacherously and that you have been called a rebel since you were born.”

A declaration that God will refine His people before He rescues them from Babylon

⁹ “For My name’s sake I shall delay My anger. For the sake of My praise I shall restrain Myself for your benefit, so that I do not cut you off. ¹⁰ Look! I shall refine you but not like silver. I shall test you in the furnace of affliction. ¹¹ I shall do this for My own sake, for My own sake. For how should what is for My sake be defiled? I shall not give My glory to anyone else.

¹² “Listen to Me, Jacob, and Israel, whom I have called! I am He. **I am the First. I am also the Last.**

¹³ My hand laid the foundation of the earth. My right hand spread out the heavens. While I was summoning them, they stood up together.”

¹⁴ Assemble, all of you, and listen! Who among them has predicted these things? The LORD loves him. He will carry out His purpose on Babylon. He will use His arm against the Chaldeans.

¹⁵ “I, yes, I, have spoken. Yes, I have called him. I have brought him, and his way will be successful.

¹⁶ Come close to Me! Listen to this: ‘From the beginning I have not spoken anything in secret. I have been there from the time when it began to happen. Now therefore, the Lord GOD has sent Me and His Spirit.’”

¹⁷ This is what the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel has said: “I am the LORD, your God, I am teaching you for your benefit and am leading you on the way on which you should go. ¹⁸ If only you had paid attention to My Commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. ¹⁹ Your descendants would have been like the sand, and the children coming from you would have been like its grains. Their names would never have been cut off or destroyed from before Me.”

²⁰ **Leave Babylon!** Flee from the Chaldeans! Declare this with a shout of joy! Proclaim this! Send it out to the end of the earth! Say, “The LORD has redeemed

His servant Jacob!”²¹ They had not been thirsty when He led them through the deserts. He had made water flow down from a rock for them. He had split a rock, and water had gushed out.

²² “There is no peace for wicked people,” the LORD has said.

49

The second song of God’s Messianic Servant, who will bring salvation to the nations

¹ “Listen to Me, coastlands! Pay attention, distant nations! **The LORD has called Me from the womb.** Before My mother gave birth to Me, He made mention of My Name. ² He has made My **mouth** like a **sharp sword** and has hidden Me in the shadow of His hand. He has made Me into a polished arrow and has hidden Me in His quiver. ³ He has told Me, ‘You are My Servant, Israel, through whom I shall glorify Myself.’ ⁴ However, I Myself said, ‘**I have laboured in vain.** I have spent My strength uselessly and for nothing.’ Yet surely My just cause is with the LORD, and My recompense is with My God. ⁵ Now the LORD has spoken — the One who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him and to gather Israel to Him and that I may be glorified in the sight of the LORD. My God has also become My Strength —. ⁶ He has said, ‘It is too insignificant for You to be My Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back those in Israel whom I have preserved. I shall also make You **a Light for the Gentiles, that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.**’”

A promise that God will achieve redemption through His Servant

⁷ This is what the LORD, who redeems Israel and who is his Holy One, has said to the One whose soul is held in contempt and whom a nation loathes, to the Servant of rulers: “Kings will see You and rise up, and princes will see You and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, who is the Holy One of Israel and who has chosen You.”

⁸ This is what the LORD has said: “**In the time of favour I shall answer You and in the day of salvation I shall help You.** I shall protect You and make You the Covenant of the people, to restore the land and to cause people to inherit the possessions that have been laid waste. ⁹ You will tell the prisoners, ‘Come out,’ and those who are in the dark, ‘Show yourselves.’ They will graze on the roads and find their pasture on all the barren heights.”

¹⁰ **They will not be hungry or thirsty, and the scorching heat and the sun will not strike them. For the One who has compassion on them will lead them and guide them beside springs of water.**

¹¹ “I shall turn all My mountains into a road and My highways will be raised up. ¹² Look! Some of them **will come** from far away. Look! Others will come **from the north and the west**, and others from the land of Sinim.”

¹³ **Shout for joy, heavens!** Rejoice, earth! Break forth with joyous shouting, mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people and will have compassion on His afflicted people.

A promise that God will not forget Israel

¹⁴ “However, Zion has said, ‘The LORD has forsaken me. The Lord has forgotten me.’ ¹⁵ Does a woman forget the baby whom she is breast-feeding, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I shall not forget you.

¹⁶ Look! I have engraved you on the palms of My hands. Your walls are continually before Me. ¹⁷ Your children will come quickly. Those who have destroyed you and those who have laid you in ruins will leave you. ¹⁸ Lift up your eyes and look around! All of them have gathered and have come to you. **As surely as I live,” declares the LORD,** “you will wear all of them like ornaments and fasten them on yourself as a bride does. ¹⁹ For, although your places are ruined and deserted, and your land is a waste, you will surely now be too cramped for your inhabitants.

Those who have swallowed you up will also be far away. ²⁰ The children who had been taken away from you will yet tell you personally: ‘This place is too cramped for us. Give us more space to live here!’

²¹ Then you will ask yourself: ‘Who has fathered these children for me? I had been bereaved of children and had been barren. I had gone into exile and been rejected. Yet who has reared these? Look! I had been left alone. Where have these come from?’”

²² This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I shall beckon with My hand to the nations and raise My standard to the peoples. Then they will bring your sons in the folds of their garments, and your daughters will be carried on their shoulders. ²³ Then kings will be your foster-fathers, and their princesses your breast-feeding mothers. **They will bow down to you** with their faces to the ground and will lick the dust on your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD. Those who wait for Me will not be ashamed.”

²⁴ Can plunder be taken away from a mighty man or can the captives of a person whose cause is just be rescued? ²⁵ For this is what the LORD has said: “Even the captives of a mighty man will be taken away, and the plunder of a tyrant will be rescued. I Myself shall contend with your opponent and I Myself shall save your children. ²⁶ I shall make those who are oppressing you eat their own flesh, and they will become drunk with their own blood as on sweet wine. Then all human beings will know that I am the LORD, your Saviour and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

50

A declaration that the people of Israel have been sold because of their sin

¹ This is what the LORD has asked: “Where is your mother’s certificate of divorce, with which I divorced her? Or to which of My creditors have I sold you?

Look! You have been sold because of your sins. Your mother has been sent away because of your rebellious acts. ² Why was no one here when I came? Why was no one here to answer when I called? Was My arm altogether too short to redeem you or do I have no power to rescue you? Look! When I rebuke the sea, I dry it up. I turn rivers into a desert. Their fish stink because there is no water and die of thirst. ³ I clothe the heavens with darkness and make sackcloth their outer garment.”

The third song of God's Messianic Servant, who trusts in God's help in spite of suffering

⁴ “The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of disciples, to know how to use a Word to sustain him who is tired out. He awakens Me morning after morning. He awakens My ear to listen, like those who are disciples. ⁵ The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I Myself have not been rebellious. I have not turned back. ⁶ I have given My **back** to **those who struck Me** and My cheeks to those who plucked out My beard. I have not hidden My **face** from **insults** and **spittle**. ⁷ The Lord GOD will help Me. That is why I have not been disgraced. That is why I have set My face like flint and know that I shall not be ashamed. ⁸ He who **declares Me righteous** is near. Who will contest a lawsuit against Me? Let us stand up together! Who is My accuser? Let him confront Me! ⁹ Look! The Lord GOD will come to help Me. **Who** is he who **will condemn Me**? Look! **They will all wear out like a garment**. The moths will eat them.”

An admonition to heed God's Servant

¹⁰ Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of His Servant? Let the one who has been walking in darkness and has had no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God! ¹¹ Look, all you who light a fire and who equip yourselves with flaming torches! Walk by the light of your own fire and by the torches that you have lit!

“This is what you will receive from My hand: You will lie down in a place of torment.”

51

An admonition to look at Abraham

¹ “Listen to Me, you who pursue righteousness and who search for the LORD. Look to the rock from which you have been hewn and to the quarry from which you have been dug! ² Look to Abraham, your ancestor, and to Sarah, who gave you birth! When I called him, he was only one person, and I blessed him and made him many.”

³ For the LORD will comfort Zion. He will comfort all its ruins. He will make its wilderness like Eden and its desert like the Garden of the LORD. Joy, gladness, thanksgiving and the sound of singing will be found in it.

A promise that God is ready to save His people

⁴ “Pay attention to Me, My people! Listen to Me, My nation! For Teaching will go out from Me, and I shall establish My justice in an instant as a light for the

peoples. ⁵ My righteousness is near. My salvation will go out, and My arms will bring justice to the peoples. The coastlands will put their hope in Me and wait eagerly for My arm. ⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look at the earth beneath! For the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth **will wear out like a garment**, and those who dwell in it will die like gnats. However, My salvation will last for ever, and My righteousness will not be frustrated.

⁷ “Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, you who have My Teaching in your hearts! Do not be afraid of the taunt of a human being! Do not be terrified because of their scornful words! ⁸ For the moth will eat them like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool. However, My righteousness will last for ever, and My salvation will last to all generations.”

⁹ Awake! Awake! Put on strength, O arm of the LORD! Awake, as in days long past, as in generations of long ago! Was it not You who cut Rahab in pieces and pierced the dragon? ¹⁰ Was it not You who dried up the sea, the water of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a road that the redeemed people might go across? ¹¹ Those whom the LORD has ransomed will return and come to Zion with singing. Everlasting joy will be on their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*¹³¹

¹² “I, I am the One who comforts you. Who are you that you are afraid of a mortal human being, of a son of man who is given up like grass?”

¹³ You have forgotten the LORD, your Maker. He stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth. You have been in constant dread all day long because of the wrath of the oppressor, while he is preparing to destroy you. Where is the wrath of the oppressor? ¹⁴ He who is oppressed will soon be set free. He will not die and go down to the pit. He will also not go without his food.

¹⁵ “I am the LORD, your God and I stir up the sea so that its waves roar. His name is ‘the LORD of hosts.’”

¹⁶ “I have put My Words in your mouth and covered you in the shadow of My hand. I have put the heavens in place, laid the foundations of the earth and have told Zion, ‘You are My people.’”

An admonition to Jerusalem to wake up

¹⁷ Wake up! Wake up! Stand up, Jerusalem! You have drunk from the hand of the LORD **the cup of His wrath**. You have drunk, you have drunk deeply from the bowl, the cup that makes people stagger. ¹⁸ Out of all the children to whom she has given birth, there is no one to guide her. Out of all the children whom she has reared there is no one to take her by the hand. ¹⁹ These two things have happened to you — who will show sympathy to you? — devastation and destruction, famine and the sword. How can I comfort you? ²⁰ Your children have fainted. They have been

¹³¹ With 51:11 compare 35:10.

lying at every street corner like an antelope in a net. They are full of the wrath of the LORD, the rebuke of your God. ²¹ Therefore, please listen to this, you who are afflicted, who are drunk but not from wine!

²² This is what your Lord, the LORD, your God, who pleads the cause of his people, has said: “Look! I have taken the cup out of your hand that has been making you stagger, the bowl, the cup of My wrath. You will not drink from it any longer. ²³ I shall put it into the hands of your tormentors, who have been telling you, ‘Lie flat, that we may walk over you!’ You had been making your back like the ground and like the street for those who were walking across.”

52

An admonition to Zion to rejoice

¹ Wake up! Wake up! Clothe yourself with your strength, Zion! **Put on your splendid clothes, Jerusalem, you holy city!** For an uncircumcised or **unclean person will not come into** you any longer.

² Shake yourself free from the dust! Stand up! Take your seat, Jerusalem! Rid yourself from the chains on your neck, captive daughter of Zion! ³ For this is what the LORD has said: “You were sold without compensation and **will be redeemed without money.**”

⁴ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “At first My people went down into Egypt to live there as foreigners. The Assyrians also oppressed them without cause.

⁵ Now therefore, what do I have here,” asks the LORD, “seeing that My people have been taken away without compensation? Those who rule over them are howling,” declares the LORD, “and constantly, all day long, **My name is being slandered.** ⁶ Therefore, My people will know My name. Therefore, on that day they will know that it is I who am saying, ‘Here I am!’”

The beauty of good news

⁷ **How beautiful** on the mountains **are the feet** of the messenger **who brings the good news**, who **announces peace**, who tells the good news of good things, who proclaims salvation and who tells Zion, “Your God is King!” ⁸ Listen! Your watchmen have raised their voices and are shouting together joyfully. For eye to eye they will see it when the LORD returns to Zion. ⁹ Be happy and shout joyfully together, ruins of Jerusalem! For the LORD has comforted His people. He has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰ The LORD has made bare His holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth **will see the salvation of our God.** ¹¹ Go away! Go away! **Go out from there! Do not touch anything unclean! Go outside of it!** Purify yourselves, you who carry the vessels of the LORD! ¹² For you will not go out hastily or leave by fleeing. For the LORD will go ahead of you and the God of Israel will guard you from behind.

In the fourth Messianic Servant-song the LORD promises His exalted Servant

¹³ “Look! My Servant will be successful. He will be

high, be lifted up and be highly exalted. ¹⁴ As there have been many who have been horrified because of You, — since His appearance has been more disfigured than any other man and His form more than any other human being, — ¹⁵ so He will sprinkle many nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of Him. **For they will see what they had not been told and will understand what they had not heard.**”

53

¹ **Who has believed our Message? To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?** ² He grew up before Him like a young shoot, like a root out of dry ground. He had no form or majesty that we should look at Him. He had nothing in His appearance that we should desire Him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom people hide their faces, He was despised, and we thought of Him as nothing. ⁴ Surely, **He has taken on Himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows.** Yet we considered Him to be wounded, struck down by God and afflicted. ⁵ However, He was pierced for our rebellious acts. He was bruised for our wrongdoings. The chastisement that brought us peace was on Him, and **through His wounds we have been healed.** ⁶ We have all gone **astray, like sheep.** Each one of us has turned to his own way, and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ Although He was oppressed and afflicted, He did not open His mouth. **He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and, as a ewe is silent before those who shear off her wool, so He did not open His mouth.** ⁸ **He was taken away through oppression and without justice. As for His generation, who considered that He was cut off from the land of the living?** Because of the rebellion of my people He was struck down. ⁹ He assigned His grave with wicked people but was with a rich man in His death, **although He had done nothing violent, and there was no deceit in His mouth.**

¹⁰ Nevertheless, it was the will of the LORD to crush Him with suffering. When You make His life a sacrifice for guilt, He will see His offspring. He will have a long life, and the will of the LORD will be successful in His hand. ¹¹ Because of the anguish of His soul, He will see and be satisfied.

The LORD promises success for His suffering Servant

“Through His knowledge, My righteous Servant will **justify many** and bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore, I shall divide Him a portion among great people, and He will divide the plunder with strong people, **because He poured out His life to death and was numbered with wrongdoers.** Nevertheless, **He has carried the sin of many people** and intercedes for the wrongdoers.”

54

God's compassion for His people, who have been like women without children

¹ “**Sing for joy, barren woman, you who have not had any children! Break into shouts of joy and cry aloud, you who have not been in labour! For the children of the desolate woman will be more numerous than the children of the one who has a husband,**” is what the LORD has said.

² Expand the place of your tent! Let the tent-curtains of your dwellings be stretched out! Do not hold back! Lengthen your ropes and make your tent-pegs firm!

³ For you will spread out to the right and to the left, and your descendants will be heirs to the other nations and will inhabit the deserted cities.

A declaration that God loves His people

⁴ Do not be afraid! For you will not be ashamed. Do not be confounded! For you will not feel embarrassed. For you will forget the shameful things when you were young. You will no longer remember the disgrace when you were a widow. ⁵ For He who has made you is your Husband. His name is “the LORD of hosts.” Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel. He is called “the God of the whole earth.” ⁶ For the LORD has called you like a wife who has been deserted and who is deeply distressed, like a wife who had married young but was rejected.

This is what your God has said: ⁷ “I deserted you for a brief moment but shall bring you back with great compassion. ⁸ I hid My face from you for a moment in a surge of anger but shall have compassion on you with everlasting mercy,” is what your Redeemer, the LORD, has said. ⁹ “This is like the water of Noah to Me. As I swore that the water of Noah would not cover the earth again, so I have sworn not to be angry with you or rebuke you. ¹⁰ For the mountains may withdraw, and the hills may be shaken, but My faithful love will not withdraw from you, and My Covenant of peace will not be shaken.” This is what the LORD, who has compassion on you, has said.

¹¹ “You who are afflicted, lashed by storms and without consolation, look! I shall set your precious stones in hard mortar and use sapphires to lay your **foundations**. ¹² I shall use rubies to make your battlement-walls, beryl to make your city-gates and **precious stones** to make all your boundary-walls.”

¹³ **All** your children will be **taught by the LORD**, and your children will have great peace. ¹⁴ You will be firmly established in righteousness. You will be far away from oppression. Indeed, you will not be afraid. You will be far away from terror. Indeed, it will not come near you.

¹⁵ “Look! If anyone does attack you, it will not be My doing. Whoever attacks you will fall because of you.

¹⁶ See! I Myself have created the blacksmith who blows the coals in the fire and produces an artefact for its purpose. I Myself have also created a destroyer to work havoc. ¹⁷ No weapon that is forged against you will be successful. You will also condemn every tongue that brings an accusation against you.”

This is the inheritance of the servants of the LORD. “Their righteousness comes from Me,” declares the LORD.

55

A promise of an everlasting Covenant

¹ “**Come! Everyone who is thirsty, come to the water!** You who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come! Buy wine and milk **without money** and without cost! ² Why do you spend money for what is not bread and your labour for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me! Eat what is good and enjoy rich food! ³ Turn your ears toward Me and come to Me! Listen, that your souls may stay alive! **I shall establish an eternal Covenant with you, the long-lasting mercies shown to David.** ⁴ Look! I have given Him as a Witness to the nations, a Leader and a Commander of the nations.”

⁵ Look! You will summon a nation that you do not know, and a nation that has not known you will run to you, because of the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel. For He has honoured you.

An admonition to search for God

⁶ Search for the LORD while He may be found! Call on Him while He is near! ⁷ Let the wicked person forsake his way, and the sinful man his thoughts! Let him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion on him! Let him return to our God! For He will abundantly pardon.

⁸ “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not My ways,” declares the LORD. ⁹ “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts are higher than your thoughts. ¹⁰ For, as the rain and the snow come down from the sky and do not go back there without watering the earth and causing it to bring forth and to sprout, so that it **gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater**, ¹¹ so My Word will be, which goes out of My mouth. It will not return to Me without results but will accomplish what I desire and be successful in what I have sent it to do.”

¹² For you will go out with joy and be led out in peace. The mountains and the hills will break into shouts of joy in your presence, and all the trees in the field will clap their hands. ¹³ A cypress tree will grow up instead of the thorn-bush, and a myrtle tree will grow up instead of the stinging nettle. This will also make a name for the LORD and become an everlasting sign, which will not be cut off.

56

A promise of salvation for all nations

¹ This is what the LORD has said: “Maintain justice and do what is right! For My salvation is coming close, and My righteousness will soon be revealed.

² Blessed is the one who does this, and the human being who keeps hold of it, who keeps the Sabbath, without profaning it and who keeps his hands from

doing anything evil!”

³ No foreigner who joins himself to the LORD should say: “The LORD will surely separate me from His people!” No castrated man should say, “Look! I am only a dry tree!”

⁴ For this is what the LORD has said: “To the castrated men who keep My Sabbaths, who choose the things in which I delight and who hold firmly to My Covenant, ⁵ to them I shall give, inside My Temple and inside My walls, a monument and a **name** that is better than sons and daughters. I shall give them an everlasting name, which will not be cut off.

⁶ “As for the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD to minister to Him, to love the name of the LORD and to be His servants, and, as for everyone who keeps the Sabbath without profaning it, and, as for those who hold firmly to My Covenant, ⁷ these I shall bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My House of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar. For **My House will be called ‘a house of prayer’ for all the peoples.**”

⁸ The Lord GOD, who gathers the dispersed people of Israel, declares, “I shall gather still others to them besides those who have already been gathered to them.”

An expression of regret that the leaders of Israel are blind and a warning that the sins of Israel bring God’s anger

⁹ All you animals in the field, come and eat, all you animals in the forest! ¹⁰ Israel’s watchmen are blind. They all lack knowledge. They are all silent dogs. They cannot bark. They dream, lie down and love to slumber. ¹¹ These dogs have mighty appetites. They never have enough. However, they are shepherds who cannot understand. They have all turned to their own way. Each one, without exception, seeks his personal gain. ¹² “Come! Let me get wine! Let us drink plenty of strong drink! Tomorrow will also be like today, very great indeed!”

57

A condemnation of Israel’s futile idolatry

¹ The righteous man has perished, and no one has cared about it. Devout men are being gathered to their fathers, while no one understands that the righteous man has been gathered to his fathers to escape the calamity. ² He will begin to have peace. Those who live uprightly will rest in their own beds.

³ “However, children of a sorceress, come closer here, descendants of adulterers and prostitutes! ⁴ Whom are you mocking? Against whom are you opening your mouth wide and sticking out your tongue? Are you not rebellious children, the descendants of liars?

⁵ You burn with lust among the large trees, under every leafy tree. You slaughter your children in the ravines and under the splits in the rocks. ⁶ Your portion is among the smooth stones in the ravine. They, they, are your destiny. You have even poured out drink-offerings and sacrificed food offerings to them.

Should I relent about these things? ⁷ You have been setting up your bed on a high and lofty mountain. You have also been going up there to offer sacrifices.

⁸ You have also been setting up your pagan signs behind the doors and the doorposts. For you have deserted Me but have been uncovering your bed, have been going up on it and have been spreading it wide. You have also made a pact for yourself with some of those whose beds you love and have been looking at their genitals. ⁹ You have been journeying to Molech with olive-oil and have been putting on plenty of your perfumes. You have been sending your envoys far away and have been making them go down to Sheol.

¹⁰ Although you were tired out by your long journeys, you did not think that they were hopeless. You found renewed strength and so you did not become faint.

¹¹ Whom have you been dreading, and whom do you fear, that you tell lies, that you have not remembered Me and that you have not cared about Me? Have I not been silent, yes, for a long time, with the result that you do not fear Me? ¹² I Myself shall expose how righteous you have been and what you have been doing, and they will not benefit you. ¹³ When you cry for help, let your collection of idols deliver you! A wind will lift all of them up. A breath will carry them away. However, he who takes refuge in Me will possess the land and will inherit My holy mountain.”

A promise of comfort for humble people

¹⁴ It will be said: “Build up the road! Build it up! Prepare it! Clear away every obstacle from the road of My people!”

¹⁵ For this is what the High and Lofty One, who lives for ever and **whose name is the Holy One**, has said: “I dwell in a high and holy place and with him who is crushed and is **lowly in spirit**. I revive the spirit of lowly people and revive the hearts of **crushed** people.

¹⁶ For I shall not contend for ever and not always be angry. For then the spirits, the living beings that I Myself have made, would grow faint before Me. ¹⁷ I was angry and struck him because of his sinful greed. I hid Myself and was angry, but he continued on rebelliously in the way of his own heart. ¹⁸ I have seen his ways but shall heal him. I shall lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners. ¹⁹ I shall create the response of praise on their lips. **Peace, peace, to the one who is far away and to the one who is near!**” the LORD has said, “and I shall heal him.”

²⁰ However, wicked people are like the churning sea. For it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mud and dirt. ²¹ “Wicked people have no peace,” is what my God has said.

58

An instruction to worship God as He wants to be worshipped

¹ “Cry out aloud! Do not hold back! Raise your voice like a trumpet! Tell My people about their rebellion and the family of Jacob about their sins! ² Every day they keep searching for Me and take delight in know-

ing My Ways, as if they were a nation that had been doing what is right and had not been disregarding the judgment of their God. They demand Decisions about justice from Me. They take delight in approaching God. ³ They are asking, ‘Why have we been fasting when You have not seen it? We have been humiliating ourselves and do You not know about it?’ In fact, on the day when you fast, you find delight in it and exploit all your labourers. ⁴ Look! When you fast, you quarrel, brawl and hit with wicked fists. You will not make your voices heard on high by the fasting that you are doing today. ⁵ Is this the fast that I choose like this, that a person should humiliate himself for only a day? Is it to bow down his head like a reed and to spread out sackcloth and ashes for a bed? Do you call this ‘a fast,’ and ‘a day that pleases the LORD’? ⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose: that you should untie the **chains of injustice**, undo the straps of the yoke, **let oppressed people go free** and break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your food with the hungry person, that you should take homeless, poor people into your house, that, when you see a naked person, you should cover him and not hide yourself from your own relatives?”

⁸ Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and you will quickly be healed. Your righteousness will go ahead of you, and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind. ⁹ Then you will call, and the LORD will answer. When you call for help, He will say, “Here I am!” If you get rid of the yoke from among you, your finger-pointing and your wicked talk, ¹⁰ if you let the hungry person find you and satisfy the needs of the afflicted person, then your light will shine in the darkness, and your darkness will be as bright as noon. ¹¹ The LORD will guide you constantly and satisfy your needs in arid regions. He will strengthen your bones. You will be like a well-watered garden and like a spring of water that has water that does not fail. ¹² Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins, and you will restore the foundations of many generations. You will be called “The Rebuilder of Gaps in Walls” and “The Restorer of Paths Where People Live.”

The right keeping of the Sabbath

¹³ “If you stop trampling on the Sabbath and stop conducting your own business on My holy day, if you call the Sabbath delightful and the holy day of the LORD honourable, and, if you honour it by not carrying out your own undertakings, by not finding your own pleasure and by not talking idly, ¹⁴ then you will take delight in the LORD. I shall cause you to ride over the heights of the earth and feed you on the inheritance of your father Jacob.”

For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

59

A promise that God will turn His people away from wrongdoing

¹ Look! The hand of the LORD is not too short to

save, and His ear is not too dull to hear. ² However, your wrongdoings have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear. ³ For your hands have been defiled with blood, and your fingers with wrongdoing. Your lips have been telling lies. Your tongues have been speaking malicious things. ⁴ No one summons another in a righteous way. No one makes a legal plea honestly. People rely on empty arguments. They tell lies. They conceive mischief and give birth to calamity. ⁵ They have been hatching vipers’ eggs. They are spinning spider-webs. He who eats their eggs will die, and a viper is hatched from one that is pressed open. ⁶ Their webs will not serve as clothing. They cannot cover themselves with what they make. Their deeds are unjust deeds, and their hands commit violent acts. ⁷ **Their feet run to evil. They hurry to murder innocent people.** Their plans are unjust plans. Desolation and **destruction are on their paths.** ⁸ **They do not know the way of peace.** There is no justice in their paths. They have made their roads crooked. No one who treads on them knows peace. ⁹ That is why justice is far from us and righteousness does not reach us. We hope for light but see darkness, for brightness but move about in gloom. ¹⁰ We grope for a wall like blind people. We grope along like people without eyes. We have been stumbling at noon as in the twilight. We are like dead men among healthy people. ¹¹ We all growl like bears. We moan mournfully like doves. We hope for justice, but there is none, for salvation but it is far from us. ¹² For our rebellious acts have become numerous in Your sight, and our sins have testified against us. For our rebellious acts are with us, and we acknowledge our wrongdoings: ¹³ behaving as criminals, denying the LORD, becoming disloyal to our God, speaking about oppression and falsehood and conceiving and uttering lying words that come from the heart. ¹⁴ Justice is being pushed back, and righteousness is standing far away. For truth has stumbled in the public square, and honesty cannot come in. ¹⁵ Truth has been missing, and he who shuns evil becomes a victim of plunder. The LORD has seen that there is no justice and has been displeased. ¹⁶ He has seen that there is no one. He has been amazed that there is no one to intercede. So, His own arm has brought Him salvation, and His righteousness has upheld Him. ¹⁷ He has put on **righteousness like a coat of armour** and **a helmet of salvation** on His head. He has put on garments of revenge as a uniform and has wrapped Himself in zeal as a cloak. ¹⁸ He will pay them back according to what they have done, wrath to His adversaries and retribution to His enemies. He will make repayment to the coastlands. ¹⁹ Therefore, **people** will fear the name of the LORD **from the west** and His glory **from the rising of the sun.** For He will come like a pent-up stream, which the wind of the LORD will drive along.

²⁰ “Then a **Redeemer will come to Zion**, to those in **Jacob** who **turn from rebellion**,” declares the LORD.

²¹ “As for Me, **this is also My Covenant with them**,” the LORD has said: “My Spirit, which is on you, and My Words, which I have put in your mouth, will not leave your mouth, the mouths of your offspring or the mouths of your children’s offspring,” the LORD has said, “from now on and for ever.”

60

God’s promise that He will be the glory of Jerusalem

¹ Arise! Shine! For **your Light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen like the dawn on you**.

² For look! The darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples. However, the LORD will shine on you, and His glory will appear over you.

³ **Gentiles will come to your light, and kings** to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴ Lift your eyes and look around! They have all assembled and come to you. Your sons will come from far away. Your daughters will be carried on your hip. ⁵ Then you will see it and become radiant. Your heart will tremble and swell with joy, because the abundance of the sea will turn toward you. The wealth of the nations will come to you. ⁶ Many camels will cover your land, young camels from Midian and Ephah. All those from Sheba will come. They will **bring gold and frankincense**. They will proclaim the praises of the LORD as good news.

⁷ “All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered to you. The rams of Nebaioth will minister to you. They will be presented to be accepted on My altar. I shall also glorify My splendid Temple. ⁸ Who are these that fly like a cloud and like doves to their nesting holes? ⁹ For the coastlands will wait in hope for Me.”

The ships of Tarshish will be the first to bring your children from far away and their silver and their gold with them, for the name of the LORD, your God, for the Holy One of Israel. For He has adorned you. ¹⁰ Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will minister to you.

“For, although I had struck you in My anger, in My favour I shall have compassion on you. ¹¹ Your **city-gates** will be open constantly. They **will not be shut** by **day** or by night, **that people may bring** to you **the wealth of the nations**, with their kings led in procession. ¹² For the nation and kingdom that does not serve you will be destroyed. Those nations will certainly lie in ruins. ¹³ The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the juniper, the elm and the pine tree together, to adorn the place of My sanctuary, and I shall make the place where My feet rest glorious. ¹⁴ The sons of those who oppress you **will come bending down low to you**. All who used to despise you **will bow down** at the soles of **your feet**. They will call you, ‘The City of the LORD,’ ‘The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.’

¹⁵ Although you had been forsaken and hated, with no one passing through you, I shall, instead, make you

majestic for ever, a delight for all generations. ¹⁶ You will suck the milk of nations. You will suck at royal breasts. Then you will know that I, the LORD, am your Saviour and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. ¹⁷ I shall bring gold instead of bronze. I shall bring silver instead of iron, bronze instead of wood and iron instead of stones. I shall appoint peace as your sentry and righteousness as your ruler.”

¹⁸ No one will hear about violence any longer in your land or about devastation and destruction inside your borders. You will call your walls, “Salvation,” and your city-gates, “Praise.” ¹⁹ **The sun will no longer be your light** by day, and **the moon will not shine** to provide brightness for you, but **the LORD will be** your everlasting **Light**, and your God will be your Glory. ²⁰ Your sun will not go down any longer, and your moon will not wane. For the LORD will be your everlasting Light, and your time of mourning will come to an end.

²¹ “Your people will all be righteous. They will possess the land for ever. They will be the shoots that God has planted, the work of My hands, that I may show My glory. ²² The least one will become a clan, and the smallest one a mighty nation. I am the LORD and I shall do this quickly when the time is right.”

61

God’s Servant promises that He will be anointed with His Spirit to carry out His work

¹ “**The Spirit of the Lord GOD is on Me because the LORD has anointed Me to tell good news to poor people. He has sent Me** to bandage up broken-hearted people, **to announce freedom to the captives and** the opening of the prison to those who are bound, ² **to announce the year of the favour of the LORD and** the day of the vengeance of our God, **to comfort all who mourn**, ³ to provide for those who grieve in Zion, to give them a splendid head-dress instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called ‘The Oaks of Righteousness, which the LORD has planted,’ that He may get glory for Himself.”

⁴ They will build up the ancient ruins. They will raise up the former devastated places. They will repair the ruined cities, which have been devastated for many generations. ⁵ Strangers will come forward and become shepherds for your flocks, and foreigners will be your ploughmen and your vine-dressers. ⁶ You will be named “**The priests of the LORD**,” and you will be called “The servants of our God.” You will eat the wealth of the nations and will boast in their splendour. ⁷ You will receive a double portion instead of your shame. They will rejoice in the property allocated to them instead of being in disgrace. Therefore, they will inherit a double amount in their land. They will have everlasting joy.

⁸ “For I, the LORD, love justice. I hate robbery and injustice. I shall faithfully reward their work and make

an everlasting Covenant with them.”

⁹ Their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants among the peoples. All who see them will recognise that they are the offspring whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰ I rejoice greatly in the LORD. Let my soul shout with joy to my God! For He has clothed me with garments of salvation. He has wrapped me in a robe of righteousness, like a bridegroom who puts on a splendid head-dress, such as a priest wears, and like a bride who decorates herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For, as the ground makes its sprouts come up, and, as a garden causes its seedlings to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

62

A declaration that Jerusalem is God's delight

¹ For Zion's sake I shall not keep silent and for Jerusalem's sake I shall not remain quiet until her righteousness goes forth like a bright light and her salvation burns brightly like a torch. ² The nations will see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory. You will be called by a **new name**, which the mouth of the LORD will designate. ³ Then you will be a splendid crown in the hand of the LORD and a royal headband in the palm of your God. ⁴ You will not be called “Deserted” any longer, and your land will not be called “Desolation” any longer but you will be named “Hephzibah,”^{*132} and your land will be named “Beulah.”^{*133} For the LORD delights in you, and your land will be married. ⁵ For, as a young man marries a maiden, so your sons will marry you, and your God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.

⁶ “I have stationed watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem. They will never be silent by day or by night.”

You who profess the LORD, do not take any rest!

⁷ Do not give Him any rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes it something that is praised in the earth!

A promise that the salvation of Jerusalem is coming

⁸ The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by His mighty arm: “I shall certainly no longer give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners will certainly not drink your new wine, for which you have toiled. ⁹ Rather, those who harvest it will eat it and praise the LORD, and those who pick it will drink it in My holy courts.”

¹⁰ Go through, go through the gates! Prepare a way for the people! Build up, build up the highway! Clear away the stones! Raise a flag for the nations! ¹¹ Look! The LORD has announced to the ends of the earth: “Tell the daughter of Zion: ‘Look! Your salvation is coming.’”

Look! His reward is with Him, and what He has ac-

complished is before Him. ¹² They will be called “The Holy People,” “The Redeemed of the LORD,” and you will be called, “Searched for,” and “A City Not Deserted.”

63

A prophecy that God alone will win His victory and will appear for judgment

¹ Who is This who is coming from Edom, in bright red garments from Bozrah? Who is This in His splendid clothing, striding with great strength?

“It is I and I am speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.”

² Why is Your clothing red, and why are Your garments like those of one who is treading in the wine-press?

³ “I have been **treading the wine-vat** alone, and there has been no one from the peoples with Me. **I was treading** them in My **anger** and trampling them in My **wrath**. Their **blood** was spattering My **garments**, and I was staining all My **clothing**. ⁴ For the day of vengeance was in My mind, and the year of My redemption had come. ⁵ Although I was looking, there was no one to help. Although I was appalled, there was no one to support Me. So, My own arm has brought Me victory, and My wrath has supported Me. ⁶ I was trampling on peoples in My anger. I was making them drunk in My wrath. I was making their blood flow down to the ground.”

A prayer for help for the people who rely on God's goodness

⁷ I shall recount the merciful acts of the LORD, the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, and His great goodness to the family of Israel, which He has bestowed on them according to His compassion and according to His many merciful acts. ⁸ He has said: “Certainly they are My people, children who will not act unfaithfully.” Therefore, He has become their Saviour. ⁹ He has been troubled during all their troubles, and the Angel of His Presence has been saving them. In His love and His pity, He has redeemed them. He has been lifting them up and maintaining them all the days of long ago. ¹⁰ However, they **rebelled** and grieved **His Holy Spirit**. Therefore, He turned against them as their enemy. He Himself fought against them. ¹¹ Then He remembered the days of old, Moses and His people. Where is the One **who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of His flock?** Where is the One who put His Holy Spirit among them? ¹² Where is the One who caused His magnificent arm to move to support the right hand of Moses? Where is the One who divided the water in front of them to establish an everlasting reputation for Himself? ¹³ Where is the One who led them through the deep waters? Like a horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble. ¹⁴ Like cattle that go down into a valley, the Spirit of the LORD kept giving them rest. You led Your people in this way to make a magnificent name for Yourself.

A repentant prayer

¹³² Hephzibah means, “My delight is in her.”

¹³³ Beulah means, “Married.”

¹⁵ Look down and see from heaven, from Your holy and magnificent dwelling! Where are Your determination and Your mighty deeds? The seething of Your inner being and Your compassion have been holding themselves back from me. ¹⁶ For You are our Father, although Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us. You, LORD, are our Father. Your name is “Our-Redeemer From Everlasting.” ¹⁷ LORD, why do you let us wander away from Your Ways and harden our hearts, so that we do not fear You? Return, for the sake of Your servants, the tribes that are Your inheritance! ¹⁸ Your holy people have possessed their inheritance for only a little while. Our adversaries have **trampled** down Your sanctuary. ¹⁹ We have become like those over whom You have never ruled, like those who have not been called by Your name.

64

¹ If only You would tear the heavens apart and come down! If only the mountains might quake at Your presence, ² as when fire sets dry twigs ablaze or when fire causes water to boil! Come down to make Your name known to Your enemies, that the nations may tremble in Your presence! ³ When You did awesome things that we were not expecting, You came down, and the mountains quaked at Your presence. ⁴ Since ancient times **no one has heard or perceived with his ears**, and **no eye has seen** any God except You. You act on behalf of the one who waits for You. ⁵ You have been coming to meet him who gladly does what is right and those who remember You according to Your Ways. Look! You have been angry, we have been sinning against Your Ways for a long time. Therefore, shall we be saved? ⁶ All of us have become like something that is unclean, and all our righteous actions are like a filthy garment. All of us have withered like a leaf, and our wrongdoings carry us away like the wind. ⁷ There is no one who calls on Your Name or rouses himself to take hold of You. For You have hidden Your face from us and made us melt because of our wrongdoing. ⁸ Nevertheless, LORD, You are our Father. We are the clay, and You are our Potter. All of us are the work of Your hand. ⁹ Do not be extremely angry, LORD! Do not remember wrongdoing for ever! Indeed, please look! We are all Your people. ¹⁰ Your holy cities have become a wilderness. Zion has become a wilderness. Jerusalem has become a wasteland. ¹¹ Our holy and magnificent Temple, where our fathers praised You, has become a victim of flames, and all our pleasant places have become ruins. ¹² Despite these things, LORD, will You restrain Yourself? Will You keep silent and oppress us very severely?

65

God's wrath over idolatry

¹ **“I have let Myself be searched for by those who**

have not been asking for Me. I have let Myself be found by those who have not been looking for Me. I have been saying, ‘Here I am! Here I am!’ to a nation that has not been calling on My name. ² **I have been stretching out My hands all day long to a stubborn people**, who have been walking in a way that is not good and have been following their own plans. ³ This people has been constantly provoking Me to anger to My face, sacrificing in their gardens and burning incense on their bricks. ⁴ They sit in the tombs and spend their nights in secret places. They eat the meat of pigs, and broth made from unclean things is in their pots. ⁵ They say, ‘Keep to yourself! Do not come near me! For I am too holy for you.’ These people are smoke in My nostrils, a fire that keeps smouldering all day long. ⁶ Look! It has been written in front of Me: ‘I shall not be silent but shall pay them back. I shall pay them back into their laps ⁷ for your wrongs and your fathers’ wrongs together,’” the LORD has said. “For they have been burning offerings on the mountains and have been insulting Me on the hills. I shall measure into their laps the retribution for their former deeds.”

⁸ This is what the LORD has said: “As juice is found in a cluster of grapes, and someone says, ‘Do not destroy it! For there is a blessing in it,’ this is what I shall do for the sake of My servants, that I may not destroy them all. ⁹ I shall bring a Descendant out of Jacob and One who will inherit My mountains out of Judah. My chosen people will inherit them, and My servants will live there. ¹⁰ Sharon will become a pasture for flocks. The Valley of Achor will become a place for herds to lie down, for My people, who have been searching for Me. ¹¹ However, you who forsake the LORD, who forget My holy mountain, who set a table for Fortune and fill cups of mixed wine for Destiny, ¹² I shall destine you for the sword, and all of you will bow down to be slaughtered. For, when I called, you did not answer. When I spoke, you did not listen. You did what I regarded as evil; you chose what I did not delight in.”

¹³ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! Although My servants will eat, you will be hungry. Look! Although My servants will drink, you will be thirsty. Look! Although My servants will rejoice, you will be ashamed. ¹⁴ Look! Although My servants will shout for joy because their hearts are cheerful, you will cry out, because your hearts are in pain, and you will wail because your spirits are broken. ¹⁵ You will leave your name behind for My chosen people to use as a curse.”

The Lord GOD will put you to death and give His servants **another name**. ¹⁶ Therefore, he who blesses himself in the land will bless himself by the God of truth. He who swears an oath in the land will swear by the God of truth.

“For the former difficulties will be forgotten and will

be hidden from My sight.”

A promise of a new heaven and a new earth

17 “For look! I am creating a **new heaven and a new earth**. The earlier things will not be remembered or come to mind. 18 However, be glad and rejoice for ever in what I am creating! For look! I am creating Jerusalem to be a joy and its people to be a delight. 19 I shall rejoice over Jerusalem and be glad about My people. The sounds of **weeping** and lamentation will **no longer** be heard in the city. 20 No longer will there be a baby in it who lives for only a few days or an old man who does not live out his days. For anyone who dies at a hundred years old will still be a young man. Anyone who fails to reach a hundred years old when he dies will be regarded as cursed. 21 They will build houses and live in them. They will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They will not build and have someone else live there. They will not plant and have another eat from it. For the days of My people will be like the days of a tree, and My chosen people will enjoy what their hands produce. 23 They will **not toil for nothing** or bear children for sudden calamity.”

For they will be the offspring of those whom the LORD has blessed, and their children will be with them.

24 “I Myself shall answer even before they call and I Myself shall hear while they are still speaking. 25 The wolf and the lamb will graze together. The lion will eat straw like the ox, but the snake’s food will be dust. They will not do any harm or destroy anything anywhere on My holy mountain,” the LORD has said.

66

A promise that God will dwell with His people in His new creation

1 **This is what the LORD has said: “Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Where is the Temple that you will build for Me, and where is the place for Me to rest? 2 My hand has made all these things, and so all of these things have come into being,” declares the LORD.** “However, this is the person on whom I shall look graciously: on him who is humble and broken in spirit and who trembles at My Word.”

3 “One who slaughters a bull is like one who kills a man. One who sacrifices a lamb is like one who breaks a dog’s neck. One who presents a grain-offering is like one offers pig’s blood. One who makes a memorial offering of frankincense is like one who blesses an idol. These people have certainly chosen their own ways, and their souls delight in their detestable idols. 4 I also shall choose harsh treatment for them and bring on them what they dread. For, when I called, no one answered. When I spoke, they did not listen. Rather, they have been doing what I regard as evil. They have been choosing what displeases Me.”

5 Listen to the Word of the LORD, you who tremble at His Word! “Your relatives, who hate you and who are excluding you for My name’s sake, are saying,

‘Let the LORD be glorified, that we may see your joy!’ However, they themselves will be ashamed.”

6 Listen! There is a roar from the city! There is a **sound from the Temple!** It is the sound of the LORD, paying back His enemies as they deserve.

Joy over the birth of God’s nation

7 “Before she went into labour, **she gave birth to a child**. Before pains of childbirth came on her, **she delivered a male child**. 8 Who has heard of anything like this? Who has seen such things? Can a country be brought forth in one day? Or can a nation be born in one moment? For, as soon as Zion had her labour-pains, she gave birth to her children. 9 Shall I Myself cause water to break and not cause a child to be born?” asks the LORD. “Or shall I Myself, who cause a child to be delivered, prevent its birth from happening?” is what your God has asked.

10 All you who love Jerusalem, rejoice with her and be glad for her! All you who are in mourning over her, rejoice greatly with her, 11 that you may suckle and drink your fill from her consoling breast, that you may drink deeply and refresh yourselves from her full nipples! 12 For this is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am extending peace to her like a river and the splendour of the nations like an overflowing stream. You will suckle, you will be carried at her side and be bounced on her knees. 13 I shall comfort you as a mother comforts her child. You will be comforted in Jerusalem. 14 **Your hearts will rejoice** when you see this. Your bones will flourish like young grass.”

The hand of the LORD will be made known to His servants, but He will express His wrath against His enemies. 15 For look! The LORD will come with fire, and His chariots will be like the whirlwind, to pay back His anger in fury and His rebuke **with flames of fire**. 16 For the LORD will begin to judge with fire. He will use His sword to judge all human beings, and those whom the LORD slays will be numerous.

17 “Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go into the gardens, behind someone in the middle, eating pigs’ meat and other abominations and mice, will come to an end together,” declares the LORD.

18 “For I know their actions and their thoughts, and the time is coming to assemble all the nations and languages. They will come and see My glory. 19 I shall set up a sign among them and send some of those who have been spared to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul and the Lydians, who draw the bow, to Tubal, the Ionians and the distant coastlands, which have not heard of My fame or seen My glory. They will proclaim My glory among the nations.”

20 They will bring all your brothers out of all the nations, as an offering to the LORD.

“They will come, on horses, on chariots, in covered wagons, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain, Jerusalem,” the LORD has said, “They will come like the people of Israel, who will bring their grain-offering in ceremonially clean vessels to the Temple

Isaiah

of the LORD. ²¹ I shall also take some of them to be the priests and the Levites,” the LORD has said. ²² “For, as **the new heavens** and the **new earth** that I am about to make will endure before Me,” declares the LORD, “so your descendants and your name will endure. ²³ From one New Moon to the next New Moon and from one Sabbath to the next Sabbath all

human beings will come **to worship before Me,**” the LORD has said.

²⁴ “Then they will go out and look at the corpses of the men who have rebelled against Me. For **their worms will not die, their fire will not go out,** and all human beings will detest them.”

JEREMIAH

1

¹ These are Words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests who were at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. ² The Word of the LORD came to him at the time of Josiah, the son of Amon, the king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. ³ It also came during the time of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, until the people of Jerusalem were taken into exile in the fifth month.

The call of Jeremiah to give messages from God to the people

⁴ The Word of the LORD came to me, ⁵ **“I knew you before I formed you in the womb. I consecrated you before you were born. I have made you a prophet to the nations.”**

⁶ Nevertheless, I said: “Alas, O Lord GOD! Look! I do not know how to speak. For I am only a youth.”

⁷ However, the LORD told me: “Do not say, ‘I am only a youth!’ For **you shall go to everyone to whom I send you** and say whatever I command you! ⁸ **Do not be afraid of them! For I am with you to rescue you,**” the LORD declared.

⁹ Then the LORD stretched out His hand and touched my mouth. The LORD told me: “Look! I have put My Words in your mouth. ¹⁰ See! Today I have appointed you to be over the nations and the kingdoms, to pull out by the roots and to tear down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.”

¹¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: “What do you see, Jeremiah?”

I answered, “The branch of an almond tree.”

¹² Then the LORD said to me: “You have seen correctly. For I am ‘watching’^{*134} over My Word, to carry it out.”

¹³ The Word of the LORD came to me a second time: “What do you see?”

I said, “I see a boiling pot, and the front of it is facing away from the north.”

¹⁴ Then the LORD told me: “Calamity will be let loose from the north on all those who live in the land.

¹⁵ For look! I am calling all the clans of the kingdoms in the north,” declares the LORD. “They will come, and each one will set up his throne at the entrance of the city-gates of Jerusalem. They will attack the walls all around it and all the other cities of Judah. ¹⁶ I shall pronounce My judgments against them because of all their wickedness in forsaking Me. They have been burning offerings to other gods and have been worshipping what their own hands have made.

¹⁷ However, you must tuck your tunic into your belt! Get up and tell them everything that I Myself shall command you. Do not be intimidated in front of them,

that I may not shatter you in front of them! ¹⁸ Look! Today I Myself have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and bronze walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against its officials, against its priests and against the people of the land. ¹⁹ They will fight against you but will not defeat you. For I am with you,” declares the LORD, “and I shall rescue you.”

2

An accusation that the people continue to reject God’s love for them

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Go and announce for Jerusalem to hear: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “I remember your faithful love when you were young, your love when you were betrothed. I remember that you used to follow Me in the wilderness, in a land that had not been sown. ³ Israel was holy to the LORD, the first part of His harvest. All who devoured Israel became guilty. Calamity used to come on them,”” declares the LORD.

⁴ Hear the Word of the LORD, family of Jacob, and all you clans of the family of Israel! ⁵ This is what the LORD has asked: “What wrong have your fathers found in Me that they have gone so far away from Me? They have been following worthless idols and become worthless. ⁶ They have not asked, ‘Where is the LORD, who brought us up from Egypt and who led us through the wilderness, through a land with deserts and gorges, through a land of drought and deep darkness, through a land that no one crossed, and where no human being lived?’

⁷ “I brought you to an orchard-land to eat its fruit and its good things. However, when you went in, you defiled My land and made My inheritance disgusting.

⁸ The priests did not ask, ‘Where is the LORD?’ Those who handled the Law did not know Me. The rulers also rebelled against Me. The prophets prophesied by invoking Baal and followed things that could not benefit them. ⁹ That is why I shall contest a lawsuit with you again,” declares the LORD, “and I shall contest a lawsuit with your children’s children. ¹⁰ For go across to the coasts of Cyprus and look! Send someone to Kedar and examine carefully! See whether there has ever been anything like this! ¹¹ Has any nation exchanged its gods, even though they are not gods? However, My people have exchanged their Glory for something that could not benefit them. ¹² Be appalled at this, you heavens! Let your hair stand on end and be utterly desolate!” declares the LORD.

¹³ “For My people have committed two wrongs: They have forsaken Me, **the Fountain of living water**, and have hewn out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns, which cannot hold water.

¹⁴ “Is Israel a slave? Has he been born in the home as a slave? Why, then, has he become a prey? ¹⁵ Young lions used to roar against him. They roared loudly and

¹³⁴ The Hebrew word for “watching” in Jr 1:12 sounds like the word for “almond tree” in 1:11.

made his country a wasteland. His cities have been made desolate, so that no one is living there. ¹⁶ Moreover, the men of Noph and Tahpanhes were shaving the crown of your head. ¹⁷ Have you not brought this on yourself by forsaking the LORD, your God, when He was leading you along the way? ¹⁸ Since this is so, what do you gain by going to Egypt to drink the water of the Nile? What do you gain by going to Assyria to drink the water of the Euphrates? ¹⁹ Your own wickedness will correct you, and your own rebellious ways will chasten you. Experience, then and see that it is evil and bitter for you to forsake the LORD, your God, and to have no fear of Me in you," declares the Lord GOD of hosts. ²⁰ "For long ago I smashed your yoke and tore your chains apart. However, you said, 'I will not serve!' Yes, you kept lying down like a prostitute on every high hill and under every spreading tree. ²¹ Yet I Myself had planted you as an entire bright-red grape-cutting, of genuine stock. How, then, could you change into the degenerate shoots of a wild vine for Me? ²² Even though you washed yourself with natron and used much soap, the stain of your guilt would remain before Me," declares the Lord GOD. ²³ "How can you say, 'I have not defiled myself. I have not been following the Baals'? Look at your conduct in the valley! Acknowledge what you have been doing, you nimble young she-camel running about aimlessly! ²⁴ You are a wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness, which has been sniffing the wind in her craving! Who can restrain her when she is on heat? No one who is searching for her needs to tire himself out. They will all find her during her mating season. ²⁵ "Prevent yourself from going with bare feet and stop your throat from becoming thirsty! However, you kept saying, 'It is no use! No! For I love strangers and will follow them!' ²⁶ "As a thief feels ashamed when he is caught, so the family of Israel, their kings, their princes, their priests and their prophets are ashamed. ²⁷ You tell a piece of wood, 'You are my father.' You tell a stone, 'You gave me birth.' For they have been turning their backs to Me, instead of their faces. However, when they are in trouble, they say, 'Rise up and save us!' ²⁸ Nevertheless, where are your gods that you have made for yourself? Let them rise up, if they can save you, when you are in trouble! For, Judah, your gods have been as numerous as your cities. ²⁹ "Why do you complain to Me? You have all been rebelling against Me," declares the LORD. ³⁰ "I have been striking your children down without any result. They have not been responding to correction. Your own sword has been devouring your prophets like a ravaging lion. ³¹ You class of people, pay attention to the Word of the LORD! Have I been a wilderness to Israel or a very dark land? Why have My people been

saying, 'We have begun to wander around freely; we shall not come to You any longer'?' ³² Can a virgin forget her pieces of jewellery or a bride her sashes? Yet My people have forgotten Me, for days beyond counting. ³³ How skilfully you go about searching for love! That is why you have been teaching your ways even to wicked women. ³⁴ The blood of innocent poor people has even been found on your skirts. You had not caught them while they were breaking into your home. Rather, despite all these things, ³⁵ you say, 'I am innocent. Surely His anger will turn away from me.' Look! I am going to begin to judge you for saying, 'I have not been sinning.' ³⁶ How much you go about, as you change your ways! You will be ashamed because of Egypt, as you have been ashamed because of Assyria."

³⁷ You will also come away from there with your hands on your head. For the LORD has rejected those on whom you rely. They will not make you successful.

3

An accusation that Judah is being unfaithful

¹ "There is a saying: 'If a man divorces his wife, and she leaves him and marries another man, should the first man go back to her again?' Would that land not become thoroughly defiled? Yet you have committed fornication with many lovers. Should you come back to Me?" asks the LORD. ² "Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see! Where have you not been having sexual relations? You have been sitting beside the roads waiting for them like an Arab in the wilderness. You have been defiling the land with your acts of fornication and other wickedness. ³ Therefore, the Spring-showers have been held back, and the Spring-rain has not come. Yet you have had the forehead of a prostitute. You have refused to be ashamed. ⁴ Have you not just now called to Me, 'My Father, You have been my Friend since I was young! ⁵ Would He hold a grudge for ever? Would He keep on being angry for ever?'"

"Look! You have been saying and doing all the evil of which you have been capable."

A call to repentance

⁶ The LORD asked me in the days of King Josiah: "Have you seen what unfaithful Israel has been doing? She has been going up onto every high hill and underneath every spreading tree and has been committing fornication there! ⁷ I thought, 'After she has done all this she will turn back to Me.' However, she has not turned back, and her treacherous sister Judah has been watching her. ⁸ Then I saw that, although I had divorced unfaithful Israel just because of the adultery that she had been committing and, although I had given her certificate of divorce to her, her unfaithful sister Judah was not afraid. She also went and committed fornication. ⁹ Because she has been so frivolous about her fornication, she has defiled the land, committing

fornication with stones and pieces of wood. ¹⁰ Even despite all this, her treacherous sister, Judah, has not come back to Me with her whole heart, except in a deceitful way,” declares the LORD.

¹¹ Then the LORD told me: “Unfaithful Israel has proved herself to have been more righteous than treacherous Judah has been. ¹² Go and announce these Words towards the north and say: ‘Come back, unfaithful Israel!’ declares the LORD. ‘I shall not look on you in anger. For I am merciful,’ declares the LORD. ‘I shall not be angry for ever. ¹³ Only acknowledge your guilt! For you have been rebelling against the LORD, your God. You have been conducting yourself freely with strangers under every spreading tree and have been disobeying My voice,’” declares the LORD.

God's offer to forgive the ten tribes of Israel

¹⁴ “Turn back, unfaithful children,” declares the LORD. “For I have married you. I shall take you, one from a city, and two from a clan, and bring you to Zion. ¹⁵ I shall give you shepherds after My own heart, and they will pasture you with knowledge and insight. ¹⁶ When you have become numerous and fruitful in the land, in those days,” declares the LORD, “people will not say any longer, ‘The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.’ **It will not come to mind**, be remembered or missed, and no other one will be made. ¹⁷ At that time people will call Jerusalem ‘the throne of the LORD.’ All nations will assemble at Jerusalem, to honour the name of the LORD. They will not follow their own stubborn and evil hearts any longer. ¹⁸ In those days the family of Judah will join the family of Israel. They will come together from the land of the north to the land that I have given to your ancestors as their inheritance. ¹⁹ I Myself thought, ‘How I would like to treat you like children and give you a desirable land and the most beautiful inheritance among the nations!’ I thought, ‘You will call me, “My Father,” and you will not turn away from following Me.’ ²⁰ You have certainly been unfaithful to Me, like an unfaithful wife who leaves her husband, family of Israel,” declares the LORD.

²¹ Listen! The weeping and pleading of the children of Israel has been heard on the barren heights. For they have made their way crooked. They have forgotten the LORD, their God.

²² “Turn back, unfaithful children! I shall heal your unfaithfulness.”

Israel's response

“Yes, we have come to You. For You are the LORD, our God. ²³ Surely, what is from the hills, the turmoil on the mountains, has become an illusion. Surely, the salvation of Israel is in the LORD, our God. ²⁴ However, since we have been young, what is shameful has been devouring everything that our ancestors have acquired, their flocks, their herds, their sons and their daughters. ²⁵ Let us lie down in our shame, and let our disgrace cover us! For our fathers

and we have been sinning against the LORD, our God, ever since we were young until the present day. We have not been listening to the voice of the LORD, our God.”

4

An invitation to the people to come back to God

¹ “If you come back, Israel,” declares the LORD, “come back to Me! If you remove your detestable things out of My sight and do not wander away, ² and, if you swear, ‘As surely as the LORD lives...’ in a true, just and righteous way, then nations will be blessed by Him and boast in Him.”

A threat to Judah of destruction from the north

³ For this is what the LORD has said to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem: “Plough up your unploughed ground and do not sow among thorny bushes! ⁴ Be circumcised by the LORD! Remove the uncircumcision of your hearts, men of Judah, and you who live in Jerusalem, that My fury may not go out like fire and burn with no one to put it out, because of the evil that you are doing!

⁵ “Announce it in Judah and proclaim it in Jerusalem! Say: ‘Blow the trumpet throughout the land!’ Call out loudly and say, ‘Gather together! Let us go into the fortified cities!’ ⁶ Raise the standard to go to Zion! Bring everything into a safe place! Do not stand still!’ For I am bringing calamity and great destruction from the north. ⁷ A lion has gone up from his thicket. A destroyer of nations has set out. He has gone out from his place to turn your country into a wasteland. Your cities will lie in ruins, and no one will live in them.”

⁸ Because of this, put on sackcloth, wail and howl! For the burning anger of the LORD has not turned away from us.

⁹ “On that day,” declares the LORD, “the king and the other leaders will lose their courage. The priests will be appalled and the prophets will freeze with horror.”

¹⁰ Then I said: “Oh, Lord GOD, surely You have utterly deceived this people and Jerusalem by saying, ‘You will have peace,’ while a sword is being held at their throats.”

¹¹ “At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: ‘A searing wind from the barren heights in the desert is blowing toward the daughter of My people but not to winnow and not to sift out. ¹² It will be a stronger wind than these are. It will come for Me. Now even I Myself shall pronounce sentences against them.’”

¹³ Look! He will come up like clouds. His chariots will be like a windstorm. His horses will be faster than eagles. How terrible it will be for us! For we shall be devastated.

¹⁴ “Jerusalem, wash the evil from your heart, that you may be saved! How long will you allow wicked plans to linger inside you? ¹⁵ For a voice is making a report from Dan. It is bringing news of calamity from Mount Ephraim. ¹⁶ Report this to the nations! Yes, proclaim

it to Jerusalem, ‘Watchmen are coming from a distant land. They are shouting against the cities of Judah. ¹⁷ They will surround it like men who are guarding a field.’ For it has rebelled against Me,” declares the LORD.

¹⁸ Your own ways and your own actions are bringing this on you. This is your own calamity. It is certainly bitter. It has certainly reached your own heart.

Jeremiah's response to the impending destruction

¹⁹ My inner being! My inner being! I am writhing! The walls of my heart! My heart is pounding. I cannot keep silent. For I myself have been hearing the sound of the trumpet, the alarm for war. ²⁰ One crash happens after another. For the whole land has been devastated. My own tents have been suddenly devastated. My tent-curtains are destroyed in a moment. ²¹ How much longer must I see the standard and listen to the sound of the trumpet?

God's reason for the coming destruction

²² “For My people are foolish. They do not know Me.”

They are senseless children and have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil but do not know how to do good. ²³ I looked at the earth and saw that it was formless and empty. I looked at the heavens, and their light was not there. ²⁴ When I looked at the mountains, I saw that they were quaking and that all the hills were being jolted back and forth. ²⁵ When I looked, I saw that there was no human being and that every bird in the sky had fled. ²⁶ When I looked, I saw that the orchard had become a desert and that all its cities had been torn down before the LORD, before His burning anger.

²⁷ For this is what the LORD has said: “The whole country will be a sinister desolation, and yet I shall not destroy it completely. ²⁸ The earth will mourn over this, and the skies above will grow dark. For I have spoken. I have planned it. I shall not relent or turn back from it.”

²⁹ Because of the noise of horsemen and archers, every city is taking to flight. People have gone into thickets. They have climbed up among rocks. Every city has been deserted, and no one is living in them.

³⁰ When you are ruined, what are you going to do? Although you dress in crimson, although you decorate yourself with golden jewellery, although you use paint to make your eyes appear larger, you are adorning yourself in vain. Your lovers have rejected you. They want to take your life. ³¹ For I have heard a cry like that of a woman in labour, anguish like that of one bearing her first child, the cry of the daughter of Zion gasping for breath, stretching out her hands: “O how terrible it is for me! For my life has become exhausted because of the murderers.”

5

Judah's rejection of God

¹ “Roam about through the streets of Jerusalem!

Please look and find out! Search its city-squares to see if you can find anyone who is acting justly and looking for the truth, that I may pardon it. ² Even if they are saying, ‘As the LORD lives,’ the oath they are making is still a lie.”

³ LORD, do not Your eyes look for truth? Although You have struck them down, they have felt no pain. Although You have consumed them, they have refused to accept correction. They have made their faces harder than rock. They have refused to turn back.

⁴ Then I myself thought: “These are only insignificant people. They have become foolish. For they do not know the conduct required by the LORD and the just Requirements of their God. ⁵ Let me go to the important people and speak to them! For they know the Way of the LORD, the just demands of their God.” Even they had all alike broken the yoke. They had torn the chains apart. ⁶ Therefore, a lion from the thicket will strike them down. A wolf from the desert will devastate them. A leopard will be lying in wait beside their cities. Everyone who goes outside them will be torn to pieces. For they have often been acting rebelliously, and their unfaithful deeds are numerous.

⁷ “Why should I forgive you for this? Your children have been forsaking Me and have been making oaths by those who are not gods. When I satisfied their needs, they committed adultery and gashed themselves in the houses of prostitutes. ⁸ They have been well-fed, lustful stallions. Each one has been neighing for his neighbour’s wife. ⁹ Shall I not call them to account for these things?” asks the LORD. “Shall I not get My revenge on a nation that is like this? ¹⁰ Go up through its vine-terraces and destroy them without finishing them off completely! Strip away its vine-branches! For they do not belong to the LORD. ¹¹ For the family of Israel and the family of Judah have been treating Me very treacherously,” declares the LORD.

¹² They have been telling lies about the LORD, saying, “He will do nothing. No calamity will happen to us. We shall not experience sword or famine.”

¹³ The prophets will prove to be only wind. The Word is not in them. Let what they say be done to them!

¹⁴ Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of hosts, has said: “Because you people have said this, look! I am making My Words become **a fire in your mouths** and am making these people pieces of wood, and the fire will **consume** them. ¹⁵ Look, family of Israel! I am bringing a nation against you from far away,” declares the LORD. “It is a long-established nation. It is an ancient nation. You do not know its language or understand what they say. ¹⁶ Their quiver is like an open grave. They are all mighty warriors. ¹⁷ They will devour your harvest and your food. They will devour your sons and your daughters. They will devour your flocks and your herds. They will smash down your vines and your fig trees. They will use their swords to destroy your fortified cities, in which you trust.

18 “However, even in those days,” declares the LORD, “I shall not destroy you completely.”

19 “When your people ask, ‘Why has the LORD, our God, done all these things to us?’ you shall tell them, ‘As you have been forsaking Me and serving foreign gods in your own country, so you will serve foreigners in a country that is not your own.’

20 “Announce this in the family of Jacob! Proclaim it in Judah: 21 ‘Please listen to this, foolish and senseless people, **who have eyes but do not see, who have ears but do not hear!** 22 Do you not fear Me?’ asks the LORD. ‘Do you not tremble before Me? For I have made the sand as the boundary for the sea, a perpetual limit that it cannot go across. Although its waves rise and fall loudly, they cannot prevail. Although they roar, they cannot go across it.’

23 “However, this people has had stubborn and rebellious hearts. They have turned aside and gone away.

24 They do not say to themselves: ‘Let us fear the LORD, our God, who sends rain at the right time, the Autumn-rain and the Spring-rain! He preserves for us the weeks that are set for the harvest.’ 25 Your wrongdoings have been turning these things away. Your sins have been keeping good things away from you. 26 For wicked men have been found among My people. They are crouching down in wait like bird-catchers. They have set up snares. They are catching people. 27 Like a cage full of birds, their houses are full of deceit. That is why they have become great and rich. 28 They have grown fat and sleek. They have passed all bounds in committing evil deeds. They have not been pleading the legal claims of orphans that they may be successful. They have not been defending the rights of needy people. 29 Shall I not call them to account for these things?” asks the LORD “Shall I not get My revenge on a nation that is like this?

30 “An atrocious and horrible thing has been happening in the land: 31 The prophets have been prophesying lies, and the priests are ruling by their own authority. My people love to have it like this. Nevertheless, what will you do when the end of it comes?”

6

A warning that an invasion is imminent because of Judah's rejection of God

1 “Flee for safety out of Jerusalem, people of Benjamin! Blow the trumpet in Tekoa! Raise a fire-signal on Beth-Hakkerem! For calamity and great destruction have begun to threaten from the north. 2 I shall destroy the daughter of Zion, although she is lovely and delicate. 3 Shepherds will come against her with their flocks and pitch their tents all around her, and each of them will drive his sheep to pasture in his own place.”

4 “Prepare for holy war against her! Arise and let us attack at noon!”

How terrible it will be for us! For the day has declined! For the evening shadows are getting longer!

5 “Rise up and let us attack by night and destroy her fortified palaces!”

6 For this is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Cut down the trees! Build up assault-ramps against Jerusalem! This is the city that must be punished. There is nothing but oppression inside it. 7 As a well keeps its water cool, so it has been keeping its evil fresh. Violence and destruction are heard in it. Suffering and wounds are constantly before Me. 8 Be warned, Jerusalem, or I shall turn away from you in disgust and make you a wasteland, a land where no one lives!”

9 This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “They will thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel like a grapevine. Like someone picking grapes, pass your hand over its branches again!”

10 To whom shall I speak and give a warning, that they may hear? Look! Their ears are uncircumcised. They cannot pay attention. Look! The Word of the LORD has become an object of scorn to them. They take no delight in it. 11 I am full of the wrath of the LORD. I have become tired of holding it in. Pour it out on the children in the street and on the groups of young men! For husbands, as well as wives, old men and very old people will be trapped at the same time.

12 “Their houses, fields and wives will be turned over to others at the same time. For I shall stretch out My hand against those who are living in the land,” declares the LORD. 13 “For all of them, from the least to the greatest of them, are greedy for dishonest profit. All of them, prophets and priests alike, act deceitfully.

14 They have not been serious in healing the wounds of My people. They have been saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace. 15 Were they ashamed when they committed disgusting things? No, they were not ashamed at all. They did not know how to blush. That is why they will fall among those who fall. They will be thrown down at the time when I call them to account,” the LORD has said.

16 This is what the LORD has said: “I told them, ‘Stand beside the roads and look! Ask for the paths of long ago, where the road is that leads to good things. Walk on it and **find a resting-place for yourselves!**’ However, they have been saying, ‘We will not walk on it!’ 17 I appointed watchmen over you and said, ‘Pay attention to the sound of the trumpet!’ However, they said, ‘We will not pay attention!’ 18 Therefore, listen, you nations! You in this community should realise what will happen to them! 19 Listen, earth! Look! I am bringing a calamity on this people, the result of their own schemes. For they have not been paying attention to My Words. As for My Teaching, they have rejected it. 20 What use to Me is frankincense that comes from Sheba or sweet cane from a distant land? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, and your other sacrifices do not please Me.”

21 Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am going to lay obstacles in front of this people.

Parents and children alike will stumble over them. Neighbours and their friends will perish.”

²² This is what the LORD has said: “Look! A people is coming from the country in the north. A great nation is being woken up in the distant places of the earth. ²³ They take hold of bows and spears. They are cruel and have no compassion. They sound like the roaring sea. They ride on horses. They are lined up in battle formation against you, daughter of Zion!”

²⁴ We have heard the report about it. Our hands have been hanging limp. Anguish has taken hold of us, pain like that of a woman giving birth to a child. ²⁵ Do not go out into the open country or walk on the road! For the enemy has a sword. Terror is all around. ²⁶ Daughter of my people, put on sackcloth and roll about in ashes! Mourn as if for an only son! Wail bitterly! For the destroyer will come on us suddenly.

A Message from God to Jeremiah

²⁷ “I have made you one who tests metal ore among My people, that you may get to know their ways and test them. ²⁸ They are all sullen rebels. They go around slandering. They are bronze and iron. All of them behave corruptly. ²⁹ Although the bellows have been puffing, the lead has remained unaffected by the fire. The thorough refining has been going on in vain. The wicked people have not been purged out. ³⁰ People will call them, ‘Rejected silver.’”
For the LORD has rejected them.”

7

A prediction that the Temple will be like Shiloh because Judah trusts in the wrong things

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD. It said: ² “Stand at the gate of the house of the LORD and proclaim this Message from there! Say: ‘Listen to the Word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who are entering through these gates to worship the LORD! ³ This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Amend your ways and your deeds, that I may let you live in this place! ⁴ Do not trust in these deceptive words, ‘This is the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD!’ ⁵ For, if you thoroughly amend your ways and your deeds, if you really deal justly with one another, ⁶ if you do not oppress the resident-foreigner, the orphan and the widow or murder innocent people in this place and, if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, ⁷ then I shall let you live in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers long ago for ever. ⁸ Look! You are trusting in deceptive words, which cannot help you. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear false oaths, burn offerings to Baal and follow other gods, which you have not known, ¹⁰ and then come in and stand before Me in this house, which has been called by My name, and say, ‘We have been rescued!’ only to keep on doing all these disgusting things? ¹¹ Has this **house**, which has been called by My name, become a **den of robbers** in your sight?

Look! I Myself have also seen this,’” declares the LORD.

¹² “However, please go to My place that was at Shiloh, where I first caused My name to dwell, and see what I have done to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. ¹³ Now therefore, because you have been doing all these things,” declares the LORD, “and because, when I spoke to you most persistently, you were not listening, and, because, when I called you, you were not answering, ¹⁴ I shall do to this house, which has been called by My name, the house in which you are trusting, the place that I had given to you and to your fathers, what I have done to Shiloh. ¹⁵ I shall throw you out of My sight as I threw out all your relatives, all of Ephraim’s descendants.”

A warning of God’s anger because of disobedience

¹⁶ “As for you, do not pray for this people! Do not offer any cry of lament or prayer for them! Do not plead with Me! For I shall not listen to you. ¹⁷ Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁸ The children collect wood, the fathers light the fire and the women knead dough, to make sacrificial cakes for the queen of heaven. They pour out drink-offerings to other gods, so that they provoke Me to anger.

¹⁹ “Is it I whom they are provoking?” asks the LORD. “Is it not themselves, so that their own faces are filled with shame?”

²⁰ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! My anger and My wrath will be poured out on this place, on human beings and on animals, on the trees in the field and the produce of the ground. My anger will burn and will not go out.”

An admonition to the people to obey God

²¹ This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat! ²² For, on the day when I brought your fathers out of Egypt, I did not speak to them or give them Commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²³ However, I gave them this Command: ‘Obey My voice, and **I shall be your God**, and you **will be My people!** Walk in all the Ways that I command you, that it may be well with you.’

²⁴ However, they did not listen or pay attention but followed their own plans and their own stubborn and evil hearts. They went backward and not forward. ²⁵ Since the day when your fathers came out of Egypt until now I have been persistently sending all My servants the prophets to you, day after day. ²⁶ Yet they have not listened to Me or paid attention. Rather, they have become obstinate. They have been doing more evil than their fathers had done.”

²⁷ “You shall speak all these Words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. ²⁸ You shall tell them, ‘This is the nation that has not listened to the voice of the LORD, their God, and has not accepted discipline. Truth has perished. It has been eliminated from their

lips.”

A prediction that all happiness will disappear because of the worship of idols

²⁹ Cut off the hair of your sacred vow and throw it away! Raise a lamentation on the barren heights! For the LORD has rejected and forsaken this generation, with which He is angry.

³⁰ “For the people of Judah have been doing what I consider evil,” declares the LORD. “They have set up their detestable idols in the house that has been called by My name, so that they have defiled it. ³¹ They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire. I had not commanded this. It had not entered My mind. ³² Look! That is why the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when it will not be called ‘Topheth’ any longer or ‘The Valley of the Son of Hinnom,’ but ‘the Valley of Slaughter.’ They will bury people in Topheth, because there will be no room anywhere else. ³³ The dead bodies of these people will be eaten by the birds in the sky and by the animals on the ground, and there will be no one to frighten them away. ³⁴ I shall silence the sounds of joy and jubilation in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem and **the voices of the bridegroom and the bride**. For the land will become a site of ruins.”

8

¹ “At that time,” declares the LORD, “people will take out of their graves the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of its officials, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ² They will expose them before the sun, the moon and the entire host of heavenly bodies, which they have loved, which they have been serving, which they have been following, to which they have been appealing and which they have been worshipping. They will not be gathered or buried. They will become manure on the surface of the ground. ³ Then all the remnant of those who survive out of this wicked clan, who remain in all the places where I have driven them, will prefer to die rather than live,” declares the LORD of hosts.

A judgment on Judah’s false worship

⁴ “You shall also tell them: ‘This is what the LORD has asked: “Do people fall and not get back up? Does someone turn away and not come back? ⁵ Why has this people, Jerusalem, been seduced? Why is it constantly in apostasy? They have been clinging to deceitfulness. They have refused to return. ⁶ I have been paying attention and listening, but they are not saying what is right. No one regrets his wickedness and asks, ‘What have I done?’ Everyone turns to his own way of running like a horse plunging headlong into battle. ⁷ Even a stork in the sky knows its appointed seasons. A turtledove, a swallow and a crane observe when it is time to migrate, but My people do not know what the LORD prescribes.”

⁸ “How can you say, ‘We are wise, and the Law of the LORD is with us’? Look! The lying pen of the scribes has actually turned it into a lie. ⁹ The wise men will be ashamed. They will be dismayed and trapped. Look! They have rejected the Word of the LORD. So, what kind of wisdom do they have? ¹⁰ Therefore, I shall give their wives to other men and their fields to new owners. For everyone from the least to the greatest is greedy for dishonest gain. Everyone, both prophet and priest, is acting deceitfully. ¹¹ They have not been serious in healing the wounds of the daughter of My people. They have been saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace. ¹² Were they ashamed when they committed disgusting things? No, they were not even ashamed at all. They did not know how to blush. That is why they will fall among those who fall. They will be thrown down at the time when I call them to account,” the LORD has said. ¹³ “I shall bring their vintage to an end,” declares the LORD. “There will be no grapes on the vine, and no figs on the fig tree. Even the leaves will have withered, and the things that I have given to them will be taken away from them.”

A complaint of the people that their God is destroying them

¹⁴ “Why are we sitting still? Gather together! Let us go into the fortified cities and perish there! For the LORD, our God, has doomed us to perish. He has given us poisonous water to drink, because we have been sinning against the LORD. ¹⁵ We were waiting for peace, but no good has come, for a time of healing but we have seen only terror.”

God’s threat that He will destroy the land

¹⁶ “The snorting of their horses will be heard from Dan. The whole land will quake because of the sound of their neighing stallions. They will come and devour the land and everything in it, the city and those who live in it. ¹⁷ For look! I am sending snakes among you, vipers that cannot be charmed, and they will bite you,” declares the LORD.

Jeremiah’s grief over his people’s punishment

¹⁸ O my Source of comfort above sorrow, my faint heart is a burden to me. ¹⁹ Listen to the voice, the cry for help, of the daughter of my people from a distant land: “Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King not there?”

“Why have they provoked Me to rage with their images, with the worthless idols of a foreign land?”

²⁰ The harvest has past, the summer has ended, and we have not been saved! ²¹ I have been crushed because the daughter of my people has been crushed. I have been wearing mourning clothes. Horror has been taking hold of me. ²² Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no one there who is skilled in healing? Why, then, has the healing of the daughter of my people not progressed?

9

¹ I wish that my head were water and that my eyes were a fountain of tears, so that I could weep day and

night for those of the daughter of my people who have been killed! ² I wish that I had in the wilderness a place where travellers spend the night, that I might leave my people and go away from them! For they are all adulterers, a gathering of treacherous people.

God's complaint that there is no honesty in the land

³ "They have been bending their tongues to shoot falsehood as they bend their bows. They have not championed the truth in the land. For they have been proceeding from one evil act to another and do not know Me," declares the LORD. ⁴ "Everyone should beware of his neighbour, and no one should trust any brother. For every brother will certainly be deceptive, and every neighbour will go around slandering. ⁵ Everyone will cheat his neighbour, and no one will tell the truth. They have been training their tongues to tell lies. They have been wearing themselves out doing wrong. ⁶ You are living in the middle of deceit. In their deceit they have refused to know Me," declares the LORD.

⁷ Therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts has said: "Look! I shall refine them and test them. For what else can I do, because of the daughter of My people?

⁸ Their tongues have been murderous arrows. They have been speaking deceitfully. With his mouth each one will speak to his neighbour in a friendly way but in his inner being he will set up an ambush for him. ⁹ Shall I not call them to account for these things?" declares the LORD, "and shall I not take My own revenge on a nation that is like this?"

Jeremiah's prediction that Jerusalem will be a heap of ruins

¹⁰ I shall begin to weep and wail for the mountains and begin a lamentation for the pastures in the wilderness. For they will be burnt, so that no one will be able to go across them. The lowing of cattle will not be heard. Both the birds in the sky and the animals will flee and go away.

¹¹ "I shall turn Jerusalem into heaps of rubble, a lair of jackals. I shall make the cities of Judah desolate, so that no one lives there."

Jeremiah's question why God will do this to Judah

¹² Who is the man who is wise enough to understand this? To whom has the mouth of the LORD spoken, that he may predict it? Why will the land be ruined and made desolate like a wilderness, so that no one goes across it?

God's reply to Jeremiah

¹³ The LORD answered: "Because they have been forsaking My Law, which I had put before them, and have not been listening to My voice or walking according to it. ¹⁴ They have been following their own stubborn hearts and have been following the Baals, as their fathers have taught them."

¹⁵ Therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "Look! I shall feed these people with wormwood and give them poisonous water to drink. ¹⁶ I shall scatter them among the nations, which neither they nor their fathers have known. I shall send

the sword after them, until I wipe them out."

A call for a lament over the destruction of the people

¹⁷ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: "Behave intelligently!"

Call for the wailing women, that they may come! Send for the women who are most skilful, that they may come! ¹⁸ They should quickly begin a lamentation over us, that our eyes may let tears flow down and our eyelids may be soaked with weeping! ¹⁹ For a sound of wailing has been heard from Zion: "How we have been ruined! We have become very ashamed, because we have left the land, and they have thrown down our dwellings."

²⁰ For listen to the Word of the LORD, women! Let your ears understand the Word from His mouth! Teach a lament to your daughters! Teach one another a dirge! ²¹ For death has climbed up into our windows. It has entered our fortified palaces. It has cut off the children from the streets and the young men from the squares. ²² Say, "This is what the LORD declares: 'The dead bodies of human beings will fall like manure on the surface of a field, like fallen stalks of grain behind a reaper when there is no one to glean them.'"

An assertion that the Lord is the only true God

²³ This is what the LORD has said: "Let the wise person not boast about his wisdom, and let the strong person not boast about his strength! Let the rich person not boast about his wealth! ²⁴ **Rather let the person who boasts boast** about this: that he has insight and knows Me, that I am **the LORD** and that I act with mercy, justice and righteousness on the earth! For I take pleasure in these things," declares the LORD.

A warning about uncircumcised hearts

²⁵ "Look! The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I shall call to account all those who are circumcised and are not really circumcised. ²⁶ I shall call to account Egypt, Judah, Edom, the Ammonites, Moab and all who live in the desert with their hair trimmed at the temples. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and the whole family of Israel have **uncircumcised hearts.**"

10

A contrast between God and idols

¹ Listen to the Word that the LORD has spoken to you, family of Israel! ² This is what the LORD has said: "Do not learn the ways of the nations and do not be dismayed by the signs in the sky!"

For the nations are dismayed at them. ³ For the customs of the other peoples are worthless. For someone has cut down a tree from the forest. A carpenter's hands use a woodworking tool to prepare it. ⁴ They decorate it with silver and gold. They use nails and hammers to make it firm so that it will not wobble.

⁵ Their idols are like a scarecrow in a cucumber patch and cannot speak. They certainly must be carried, because they cannot stride about. Do not be afraid of

them! For they cannot do any harm or do any good, either.

⁶ There is no one like You, LORD. You are great, and Your name has great power. ⁷ **Who will not fear You, O King of the nations?** For this is appropriate for You. For there is no one like You among all the wise people in the nations and in all their kingdoms. ⁸ They are senseless and foolish at one and the same time. The instruction that idols give is nothing but wood. ⁹ Thinly-hammered silver is brought from Tarsish and gold from Uphaz. A craftsman and the hands of a goldsmith prepare them. They are dressed in wool dyed purple and maroon. Skilled workers make them all. ¹⁰ However, the LORD is the true God. He is the living God and the everlasting King. His anger causes the earth to quake, and the nations cannot endure His fury. ¹¹ You people must speak to them like this: “The gods who have not made the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under heaven.”

¹² He used His power to make the earth. He used His wisdom to set up the world. He used His understanding to spread out the heavens. ¹³ When He thunders, there is a roar of water in the sky. He makes mists rise from the ends of the earth. He makes flashes of lightning when it rains. He brings wind out of His storehouses. ¹⁴ Every human being has turned out to be senseless and without knowledge. Every goldsmith is ashamed of an idol. For his metal images are false, and there is no breath in them. ¹⁵ They are worthless and are works that deserve mockery. At the time when they are called to account they will perish. ¹⁶ What Jacob has for his Portion is not like these. For He is the One who has formed everything, and Israel is the tribe that He has inherited. His name is “the LORD of hosts.”

A prediction that the people will be taken from their land

¹⁷ Gather your bundle up from the ground, you who are living under siege! ¹⁸ For this is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am going to sling out those who are living in the land at this time and shall cause trouble for them, so that they will feel it.”

¹⁹ How terrible for me because of my injury! My wound is incurable. However, I thought, “Truly this is an affliction, and I must endure it.”

²⁰ My tent has been destroyed, and all my tent-ropes have been torn apart. My children have left me and are no more. There is no one to spread my tent out again and put up my tent-curtains. ²¹ For the shepherds have been senseless. They have not been looking to the LORD for help. That is why they have had no success, and all the flock that they pasture has been scattered. ²² Listen to the news! Look! It is coming. A loud roar is coming from the land in the north to make the cities of Judah desolate, a lair of jackals. ²³ LORD, I know that a human being does not control

his own condition. A man who walks does not have the ability to direct his own steps. ²⁴ Correct me, LORD but do it justly, not when You are angry, that You may not reduce me to nothing! ²⁵ **Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You** and on the clans that have not been calling on Your name! For they have been devouring Jacob. They have been devouring him, destroying him and laying waste his dwelling.

11

God's requirement for Judah to obey the terms of His Covenant

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² “Listen to the Words of this Covenant and speak them to the people of Judah and those who are living in Jerusalem! ³ You shall tell them, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: “Cursed be the man who does not listen to the Words of this Covenant! ⁴ I commanded it to your fathers when I brought them out of Egypt, that iron-furnace. I said, ‘Listen to My voice and put them into practice exactly as I command you. Then **you will be My people, and I shall be your God,** ⁵ that I may fulfil the oath that I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is today.’””

Then I answered, “Certainly, LORD!”

⁶ The LORD told me: “Proclaim all these Words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: ‘Listen to the Words of this Covenant and put them into practice! ⁷ For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of Egypt. I have been warning them persistently, even until today, saying, “Listen to My voice!” ⁸ Nevertheless, they have not been listening or paying attention. Rather, everyone has been following his own stubborn, evil heart. Therefore, I have applied to them all the Words of this Covenant, which I commanded them to keep, and which they have not kept.””

⁹ Then the LORD told me: “A conspiracy has been uncovered among the people of Judah and those who are living in Jerusalem. ¹⁰ They have returned to the sins of their forefathers, who refused to listen to My Words. They themselves have been following other gods and serving them. The family of Israel and the family of Judah have been breaking My Covenant, which I made with their fathers.”

¹¹ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am bringing calamity on them, which they will not be able to escape. Although they will cry out to Me, I shall not listen to them. ¹² Then the cities of Judah and those who are living in Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they are burning offerings, but these will certainly not save them when their calamity comes. ¹³ For you, Judah, have had as many gods as you have cities. You have set up as many altars to that shameful idol, altars to burn offerings to Baal, as there are streets in Jerusalem.”

¹⁴ “Therefore, do not pray for this people! Do not of-

fer any plea or prayer for them! For I shall not listen when they call to Me for help because of their calamity. ¹⁵ What right has My darling to be in My house when she is instigating these many wicked plans? Holy sacrificial flesh will not benefit you. When you engage in your wickedness, then you rejoice.”

¹⁶ The LORD once named you “A Leafy Olive Tree With Lovely-Looking Fruit.” However, He will set fire to it with the roar of a severe storm, and its leafy branches will be ruined. ¹⁷ The LORD of hosts, who has planted you, has pronounced calamity against you, because of the evil that the family of Israel and the family of Judah have been committing. They have been provoking Me to anger by burning offerings to Baal.”

A plot against Jeremiah's life

¹⁸ Because the LORD revealed this to me, I became aware of it. Then You showed me what they were doing. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, I had been like a trusting lamb being led to the slaughter. I did not know that they had been plotting against me, saying: “Let us destroy the tree with its fruit! Let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may not be remembered any longer!” ²⁰ However, O LORD of hosts, You judge righteously. You **test the inner being** and the heart. Let me see Your retribution on them! For I have made my case known to You.

²¹ “Therefore, this is what the LORD has said about the men of Anathoth, who are trying to kill you and saying, ‘You shall not prophesy in the name of the LORD or we ourselves shall kill you!’ —

²² Therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts has said: ‘Look! I am going to call them to account. The young men will die by the sword. Their sons and their daughters will die by famine. ²³ They will not even have a remnant left. For I shall bring calamity on the men of Anathoth. It will be the year when they are punished.’”

12

Jeremiah's question about God's justice because wicked people seem to be successful

¹ You are in the right, LORD, when I argue a case to You. Even so, I shall speak to You about points of justice. Why is the conduct of wicked people successful? Why do all who act treacherously live calmly?

² You have planted them, and they have become firmly rooted. They have grown and produced fruit. You are near in their mouths but far from their most secret parts. ³ However, LORD, You Yourself know me. You see me and test my disposition toward You. Drag the wicked people off like sheep for the slaughter! Set them apart **for the day of slaughter!** ⁴ How long will the land dry up and the green plants in every field wither? Because of the wickedness of the people who are living in it, the animals and the birds have dwindled away. For people have been saying: “He will not see what will happen to us.”

God's reply that He will be justified in forsaking His inheritance

⁵ “If you have raced against others on foot, and they have tired you out, how, then, will you compete against horses? If you are confident in peaceful country, what will you manage in the thicket beside the Jordan? ⁶ For even your brothers and your father's family, even they have been treating you treacherously. They themselves have been shouting loudly behind you. Do not trust them, although they speak friendly words to you!”

⁷ “I have **forsaken** My own **house**. I have abandoned My own inheritance. I have given the one whom I dearly love into the hands of her enemies. ⁸ My inheritance has become to Me like a lion in the forest. She has been roaring against Me. That is why I hate her. ⁹ My inheritance is like a speckled carrion-bird to Me. Other carrion-birds are attacking it all around. Go! Gather all the wild animals! Bring them to devour it! ¹⁰ Many shepherds have been destroying My vineyard. They have been trampling down my plot of land. They have been turning My pleasant plot into a desolate wilderness. ¹¹ They have made it a wasteland. It is desolated and has been mourning in My presence. The whole land has been made desolate, but no one has cared about this.”

¹² Destroyers have come onto all the barren heights in the wilderness. For the sword of the LORD is devouring from one end of the land to the other. No human being has any peace. ¹³ People have been sowing wheat and have been reaping thorns. Although they have become tired out they are not gaining anything. They will be ashamed of their yields because of the burning anger of the LORD.

¹⁴ This is what the LORD has said: “As for all My evil neighbours, who are striking the inheritance that I have given to My people Israel to inherit, look! I shall uproot them from their lands and uproot the family of Judah from among them. ¹⁵ After I have uprooted them I shall have compassion on them again. I shall bring them back, everyone to his own inheritance and everyone to his own land. ¹⁶ If they carefully learn the ways of My people, so that they swear by My own name, ‘As the LORD lives,’ as they had been teaching My people to swear by Baal, then they will be built up on among My people. ¹⁷ However, if that nation does not listen, I shall completely uproot it and destroy it,” declares the LORD.

13

The hiding of Jeremiah's linen belt beside the Euphrates

¹ This is what the LORD told me: “Go and buy a linen loincloth and put it around your waist but do not put it in water!”

² So, I bought the loincloth as the LORD had told me and put it around my waist. ³ Then the Word of the LORD came to me a second time: ⁴ “Take the loincloth that you have bought, which is around your waist! Go at once to the Euphrates and hide it there in a crack in the rocks!”

⁵ So, I went and hid it at the Euphrates, as the LORD had commanded me. ⁶ After a long time the LORD told me, “Go now to the Euphrates and get the loincloth from where I commanded you to hide it!”

⁷ So, I went to the Euphrates, dug up the loincloth and took it from the place where I had hidden it. I saw that the loincloth had been spoilt. It was completely useless. ⁸ Then the Word of the LORD came to me: ⁹ “This is what the LORD has said: ‘I shall spoil the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem like that. ¹⁰ These wicked people, who refuse to listen to My Words, who stubbornly follow their own hearts and have been going after other gods, to serve them and worship them, will be like this loincloth, which is completely useless. ¹¹ For, as a loincloth clings to a man’s waist, so I had made the whole family of Israel and the whole family of Judah cling to Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘that they might be My people and a name, praise and honour for Me. However, they would not listen.’”

A lesson from broken wine-jars

¹² “You shall speak this Message to them: ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: “Every leather bottle should be filled with wine.”’ They will ask you, ‘Do we not know already that every leather bottle should be filled with wine?’ ¹³ Then you shall tell them, ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am going to fill all those who are living in this land with drunkenness: the kings who sit on David’s throne, the priests, the prophets and all those who are living in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ I shall smash them against one another. I shall smash fathers and sons together,”’” declares the LORD. “I shall not allow pity, mercy or compassion, to keep Me from destroying them.”

A threat of exile

¹⁵ Listen and pay attention! Do not be haughty! For the LORD has spoken. ¹⁶ Give glory to the LORD, your God, before He brings darkness, before your feet stumble on the mountains in the twilight! Then, while you were looking for daylight, He would turn it into deep gloom and change it into thick darkness. ¹⁷ However, if you will not listen, I shall personally weep in secret places over your arrogance. My eyes will weep bitterly and flow with tears, because the flock of the LORD has been led into captivity. ¹⁸ Tell the king and the queen-mother: “Sit in a more humble place! For your beautiful crowns will come down from your heads.”

¹⁹ The cities of the Negev will be shut up, and there will be no one to reopen them. All of Judah will be led away captive, taken completely into exile. ²⁰ Lift up your eyes and see those who are coming from the north! Where is the flock that had been given to you, your magnificent flock? ²¹ What will you say when He appoints those whom you yourself have trained to be your close friends as rulers over you? Will not labour-pains take hold of you like those of a woman who is giving birth? ²² If you ask yourself, “Why have

these things happened to me?” it is because of your many sins that your pubic region has been exposed and your personal parts have suffered violence. ²³ Can an Ethiopian change his skin or a leopard his spots? Neither can you do good when you have been trained to do evil.

²⁴ “I shall scatter them like chaff over which a desert-wind is passing. ²⁵ This is your lot, the portion that I have measured out to you,” declares the LORD, “because you have forgotten Me and have been trusting in lies. ²⁶ I Myself also shall pull your skirts up over your face, that your shame may be seen. ²⁷ I have seen your acts of adultery, your neighing, your wicked fornication on the hills and in the open country and your repulsive idols. How terrible for you, Jerusalem! For how long will you still remain unclean?”

14

The grief of Judah over a drought that God has sent

¹ This is the Word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah about the drought: ² “Judah has been mourning, and her city-gates have been pining away. People have been grieving on the ground, and Jerusalem has been sending up a distressed cry. ³ Their prominent people have been sending their servants for water. When they have gone to the cisterns, they have not found any water. They have been returning with their empty containers. They are ashamed, in despair and have been covering their heads. ⁴ Because the ground is cracked, because rain has not come on the land, the ploughmen have been ashamed and have covered their heads. ⁵ Indeed, even the doe that has given birth in the field has forsaken her fawn because there has been no green grass. ⁶ The wild donkeys have been standing on the barren heights. They have been gasping for air like jackals. Their eyesight has failed because there are no green plants.”

⁷ Although our wrongs have been testifying against us, LORD, act, for the sake of Your name! Indeed, we have often fallen away. We have been sinning against You. ⁸ O Hope of Israel, its Saviour in time of trouble, why should You be like a stranger in the land, like a traveller putting up a tent to stay for a night? ⁹ Why should You be like a man who is confused, like a strong man who is powerless to save? Yet You, LORD, are among us, and Your name has been placed on us. Do not abandon us!

¹⁰ This is what the LORD has said to this people: “That is how they have loved to wander. They have not been keeping their feet in check.”

The LORD has not been well disposed towards them. Now He will remember their wrongdoing and will call their sins to account.

¹¹ Then the LORD told me: “Do not pray for a good outcome for these people! ¹² Although they fast, I shall not listen to their cry. Although they offer burnt offerings and grain-offerings, I shall not be favourable to them. Rather, **I shall consume them by the sword,**

by famine and by the plague.”

¹³ Then I said: “Alas, Lord GOD! Look! The prophets are telling them, ‘You will not see the sword. You will not suffer a famine, but “I shall give you genuine peace in this place.””

¹⁴ Then the LORD told me: “The **prophets** are **prophesying** lies in My name. I have not sent them. I have not commanded them or spoken to them. They are prophesying to you deceptive visions, divinations, idolatries and the deceitfulness that their own minds have devised. ¹⁵ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said about the prophets who are prophesying in My name, although I Myself have not sent them and who are saying, ‘Sword and famine will not afflict this land’: Those prophets will perish by sword and famine. ¹⁶ The people to whom they are prophesying will be thrown out on the streets of Jerusalem as victims of famine and sword. There will be no one to bury them, either them, their wives, their sons or their daughters. I shall pour their calamity out on them. ¹⁷ You shall tell them this Message: ‘Let My eyes flow with tears night and day without ceasing! For My virgin daughter, My people, has been shattered in a massive destruction, by a very serious blow. ¹⁸ If I go out into the field, I see those who have been pierced by the sword. If I enter the city, I see the pains caused by famine! For both prophets and priests will travel to a land about which they had never known.”

A plea to God for mercy

¹⁹ Have You completely rejected Judah? Do You Yourself detest Zion? Why have You struck us down so that there is no healing for us? We are eagerly waiting for peace, but there is nothing good, for a time of healing, but there is only terror. ²⁰ We acknowledge our wickedness, LORD, and the guilt of our fathers. We have indeed been sinning against You. ²¹ Do not reject us, for Your name’s sake! Do not treat Your glorious throne with contempt! Remember Your Covenant with us! Do not break it! ²² Are there any among the worthless gods of the nations that can cause rain? Or do the skies alone give showers? Are You not the One, the LORD, our God? We have set our hope on You, because You have been doing all these things.

15

A threat of destruction in war

¹ Then the LORD told me: “Even if Moses and Samuel were standing before Me, I Myself would not feel sorry for this people. Send them away from My presence! Let them go away! ² When they ask you, ‘Where shall we go?’ you shall tell them, ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Those who are marked down for death will meet death. **Those who are for the sword will meet the sword.** Those who are for famine will meet famine, and **those who are for captivity** will meet captivity.”’ ³ I shall muster against them four kinds of calamity,” declares the LORD:

“the sword to kill, the dogs to drag away, the birds in the sky and the animals on the ground, to devour and destroy. ⁴ I shall make them a terrifying sight to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, has done in Jerusalem. ⁵ Indeed, who will have pity on you, Jerusalem, or who will be sympathetic to you? Who will go out of his way to ask how you are? ⁶ You have rejected Me,” declares the LORD. “You keep turning your backs to Me. Therefore, I shall stretch out My hand against you and destroy you. I am tired of relenting. ⁷ I shall winnow them with a pitchfork at the city-gates of the land. I shall make them childless. I shall destroy My own people. They have not turned back from their ways. ⁸ I shall make their widows more numerous than the sand in the seas. I shall bring a destroyer in the middle of the day against the mothers of young men. I shall make anguish and terror fall on them suddenly. ⁹ A mother who has given birth to seven sons will become feeble. She will breathe her last. Her sun will set while it is still daylight. She will be ashamed and disgraced. I shall deliver the rest of them to the sword before their enemies,” declares the LORD.

A bitter complaint by Jeremiah because of his disappointment

¹⁰ How terrible for me, my mother! For you have given me birth to be a man who argues and quarrels with the whole land. Although I have neither lent nor borrowed anything, all of them are cursing me.

¹¹ The LORD said: “I shall certainly let you loose for a good purpose. I shall certainly intercede with the enemy for you in the time of calamity and in the time of distress. ¹² Can anyone break iron, iron from the north or bronze?”

¹³ “I shall give away the wealth of you people and your treasures as plunder, without cost, because of all your sins, throughout all your territory. ¹⁴ I shall make you serve your enemies in a land that you had not known. For a fire is flaring up because of My anger and is being kindled against you.”

¹⁵ LORD, You understand. Remember me and take care of me! Take revenge on my behalf against those who are persecuting me! Because You are slow to become angry, do not take me away! Realise that I am suffering insults because of You! ¹⁶ Your Words were found, and I devoured them. Your Words have become my joy and the delight of my heart. For Your name has been called over me, O LORD, God of hosts. ¹⁷ I have not been sitting in the company of revellers. I have not been expressing delight. I have been sitting alone, because Your hand has been on me. For You have filled me with indignation. ¹⁸ Why has my pain been endless and my wound been incurable, refusing to be healed? Will You really be like an intermittent stream to me, like water that is unreliable?

¹⁹ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: “If you

return, I shall take you back, and you will stand before Me. If you separate what is precious from what is worthless, you will be My spokesman. Those people should come back to you, but you yourself shall not go back to them! ²⁰ I shall make you a fortified wall of bronze to this people. They will fight against you but will not defeat you. For I am with you to save you and rescue you,” declares the LORD. ²¹ “I shall rescue you from the hands of wicked people and redeem you from the grasp of ruthless people.”

16

A command to Jeremiah not to get married

¹ Then the Word of the LORD came to me: ² “You shall not marry a wife or have sons or daughters in this place. ³ For this is what the LORD has said about the sons and daughters who are born in this place and about their mothers, who give birth to them, and about their fathers, who beget them in this land: ⁴ ‘They will die in excruciating ways. No one will mourn for them, and they will not be buried. They will be like dung on the surface of the ground. They will perish by the sword and by famine. Their dead bodies will become food for the birds in the sky and for the animals on the land.’”

⁵ For this is what the LORD has said: “Do not enter a house where there is a funeral-meal! Do not go to mourn or express condolence to them! For I have taken My peace, My steadfast love and mercy away from this people,” declares the LORD. ⁶ “Both great and small will die in this land. They will not be buried, and no one will mourn for them. No one will make incisions on himself or have his head shaved for them.

⁷ No one will offer food to them because of a period of mourning, to comfort them because of a dead person. No one will give them a cup to drink to console them about their fathers or their mothers. ⁸ You shall not go into a house where there is a banquet, to sit with them and eat and drink! ⁹ For this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Look! I am going to banish **from this place** the sounds of joy and happiness and **the voices of bridegrooms and brides**. This will happen during your lifetimes and while you are watching.’

¹⁰ “When you predict all these things to these people, they will ask you, ‘Why has the LORD pronounced this whole great calamity against us? What wrong have we done? What is the sin that we have committed against the LORD, our God?’ ¹¹ Then you shall tell them: ‘It is because your fathers have forsaken Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘and have been following other gods and have been serving and worshipping them. They have forsaken Me and have not kept My Law. ¹² You yourselves have been behaving worse than your fathers have. For look! Each one of you is following his own stubborn, evil heart, so that you do not listen to Me. ¹³ I shall throw you far out of this land into a land that neither you nor your fathers have

known. There you will serve other gods day and night. For I shall not show you any compassion.’

God’s promise to bring the people of Judah back

¹⁴ “Therefore, look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when it will no longer be said, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt,’ ¹⁵ but ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of the land of the north and out of all the other countries where He had driven them.’ I shall bring them back to their own land, which I had given to their fathers. ¹⁶ Look! I am sending for many fishermen,” declares the LORD, “and they will fish them out. After that I shall send for many hunters, and they will hunt for them from every mountain and every hill and from the cracks in the rocks. ¹⁷ For My eyes are on all their ways. They have not hidden themselves from Me. Their sin has not been concealed from My eyes. ¹⁸ However, I shall first doubly repay their wickedness and their sin, because they have polluted My land. They have filled My inheritance with the lifeless forms of their detestable idols and with their other abominations.”

¹⁹ O LORD, my Strength and my Fortress, my Refuge in the day of trouble, **the nations will come** to You from the ends of the earth and say: “Our fathers have inherited nothing but lies, worthless things, and none among them can bring any benefit. ²⁰ Can a human being make gods for himself? Those things are not gods!”

²¹ “Therefore, look! I shall teach them. This time I shall teach them My power and My might, and they will know that My name is the LORD.”

17

The consequences of Judah’s serious sin

¹ “The sin of Judah has been written with an iron stylus. It has been engraved with a point of a diamond on the tablets of their hearts and on the horns of their altars. ² Even their children remember their altars and their Asherah-poles beside the leafy trees and on the high hills. ³ I shall give away My mountain in the open country, your wealth and all your treasures, as plunder. I shall give your high places as the price for sin throughout all your territory. ⁴ Through your own fault you will lose possession of your inheritance, which I have given to you. I shall make you serve your enemies in a land that you have not known. For you have made My anger burn like a fire, and it will remain kindled for ever.”

⁵ This is what the LORD has said: “Cursed is the man who trusts in a human being, who makes flesh his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD!

⁶ He will be like a shrub in the desert and will not see when anything good comes. He will live in the parched places in the wilderness, in a salty land where no one lives. ⁷ Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD! The LORD will be his confidence. ⁸ He will be like a tree planted beside water, which spreads out

its roots beside a stream. He will not be afraid when the hot season comes, but his leaves will be green. He will not be anxious in a year of drought or stop producing fruit.”

⁹ The heart is more deceitful than anything else is. It is incurable. Who can understand it?

¹⁰ “I am the LORD and I **search the heart** and examine the **inmost parts, to repay each person** what is appropriate to his conduct, **according to the results of his actions.**”

¹¹ A person who gains riches unjustly is like the partridge, which has hatched a brood that she had not laid. His riches will desert him in the middle of his life. At his end he will be a fool. ¹² The place of our sanctuary is a glorious, lofty throne from of old.

¹³ LORD, the Hope of Israel, all who forsake You will be ashamed.

“Those who are rejected by Me will be signed over to the dust.”

Indeed, they have forsaken the LORD, the Fountain of living water.

A prayer of Jeremiah for healing

¹⁴ Heal me, LORD, and I shall be healed! Save me, and I shall be saved! For You are the One whom I praise. ¹⁵ Look! People are asking me, “Where is the Word of the LORD? Let it be fulfilled!” ¹⁶ I myself have not run away from being Your Shepherd but I have not longed for the day of calamity. You Yourself know what has been coming out of my lips. It has been right before Your face. ¹⁷ Do not cause terror for me! You are my Refuge in the day of calamity. ¹⁸ Let those who are persecuting me be ashamed! However, let me myself not be ashamed! Let them be dismayed but let me myself not be dismayed! Bring on them the day of calamity! Destroy them twice over!

A message about observing the Sabbath as a holy day

¹⁹ This is what the LORD told me: “Go and stand at the People’s Gate, through which the kings of Judah go in and out and at all the city-gates of Jerusalem!

²⁰ Tell them: ‘Listen to the Word of the LORD, kings of Judah, all Judah and all who are living in Jerusalem, who come in through these gates! ²¹ This is what the LORD has said: “If you value your lives, be careful that you do not carry any load on the Sabbath day and that you do not bring in any load through the gates of Jerusalem! ²² You shall also not carry any load out of your houses on the Sabbath day or do any other work but shall keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your fathers.”’”

²³ Nevertheless, they did not listen or pay attention. Rather, they stiffened their necks, so that they would not listen and would not accept discipline.

²⁴ “However, if you really do listen to Me,” declares the LORD, “so that you do not bring any load in through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it, ²⁵ then kings and princes who sit on the throne of David will enter through the gates of this city, riding

in chariots and on horses. They, their officials, the people of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem will enter through them. This city will always have people living in it. ²⁶ People will come from the cities of Judah and the places around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, the lowlands, the hill-country and from the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain-offerings and frankincense and bringing sacrifices of thanksgiving to the Temple of the LORD. ²⁷ However, if you do not listen to Me so that you keep the Sabbath day holy and, if you do not refrain from carrying a load and from coming in through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I shall set its gates on fire. The fire will consume the fortified palaces of Jerusalem and will not be put out.”

18

A comparison between a potter’s clay and the people of Israel

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD. He said, ² “Get up and go down to the potter’s house! There I shall cause you to hear My Words.”

³ I went down to the potter’s house and saw him working at his potter’s wheel. ⁴ When the vessel that the potter was making with the clay was spoilt in his hands, he used to rework it into another vessel, as the potter decided what the right thing to make was.

⁵ Then the Word of the LORD came to me, ⁶ “Family of Israel, can I not do to you as this **potter** has done?” declares the LORD. “Look, family of Israel! In My hand you are like the **clay** in the hand **of the potter.**

⁷ At one moment, I may threaten about a nation or a kingdom that I shall root it up, tear it down and destroy it. ⁸ However, if that nation, which I had threatened, turns back from its evil, then I shall relent about the calamity that I had intended to bring on it. ⁹ At another time, I may promise about a nation or a kingdom that I shall build and plant it. ¹⁰ However, if it does what I regard as evil, so that it does not obey Me, then I shall change My mind about the good things that I had promised to do to it. ¹¹ Now therefore, please tell the men of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Please, turn back, each one of you, from his evil way and amend your ways and your actions!”’

A complaint about Israel’s stubborn idolatry

¹² “However, they will reply, ‘That is in vain! Rather, we shall conduct ourselves as we think we should. Each of us will act according to his own stubborn and evil heart.’

¹³ “Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: ‘Please ask among the nations, “Who has heard anything like this?” The virgin Israel has done a very horrible thing.

¹⁴ Does the snow in Lebanon leave the rocky slopes? Do the foreign waters, the cool flowing streams, disappear? ¹⁵ However, My people have forgotten Me. They are burning offerings to worthless idols, which have made them stumble in their ways — on the an-

cient roads — so that they are walking on side-roads, on a road that is not a highway. ¹⁶ Consequently, they have made their country a wasteland, something to be hissed at for ever. Everyone who goes past it will be horrified and shake his head. ¹⁷ I shall scatter them before the enemy like the east wind. I shall show them My back and not My face on the day of their calamity.”

A plot against Jeremiah

¹⁸ Then certain people said: “Come! Let us make plots against Jeremiah! For a priest will not lose the Law, a wise man will not lose his advice and a prophet will not lose the Word. Come! Let us denounce him and let us pay no attention to anything that he says!”

¹⁹ Pay attention to me, LORD, and listen to what my opponents are saying! ²⁰ Should what is evil be rewarded instead of what is good? Yet they have been digging a pit to take my life. Remember that I stood before You to speak what is good on their behalf, to turn Your wrath away from them! ²¹ Therefore, hand their children over to famine! Deliver them to the violence of the sword! Let their wives lose their children and become widows! Let their husbands be put to death and let their young men be struck down by the sword in battle! ²² Let a cry for help be heard from their houses when You suddenly bring a band of raiders against them! For they have been digging a pit to catch me and have been secretly fixing snares for my feet. ²³ Yet, LORD, You Yourself know their whole plan to assassinate me. Do not provide atonement for their wickedness and do not blot out their sin from Your sight! Let them be overthrown before You! Deal aggressively with them when You are angry!

19

A prediction that Israel will be smashed like a clay jar

¹ This is what the LORD said: “Go and buy a potter’s earthenware jar! Take along some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests! ² Go out to the Valley of the Son of Hinnom at the entrance of the Potsherd Gate! Proclaim there the Words that I shall tell you! ³ You shall say, ‘Listen to the Word of the LORD, kings of Judah, and you who live in Jerusalem! This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Look! I am going to bring such a calamity on this place that the ears of everyone who hears about it will ring. ⁴ It is because they have forsaken Me and have defaced this place. They have been burning offerings in it to other gods, which they, their fathers and the kings of Judah had not known. They have also filled this place with the blood of innocent people. ⁵ They have also built the high places of Baal to burn their children in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal. I had not commanded or mentioned that, and it had not entered My mind.”’

⁶ “Therefore, look! Days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when this place will not be called ‘Topheth’ any longer or ‘The Valley of the Son of Hinnom,’ but

‘The Valley of Slaughter.’ ⁷ I shall ruin the plans of Judah and Jerusalem in this place. I shall cause their people to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hands of those who want to kill them. I shall give their dead bodies for food to the birds of the sky and to the animals on the ground. ⁸ I shall turn this city into a wasteland and something to hiss at. Everyone who goes past it will be horrified and will hiss because of all its plagues. ⁹ I shall make them eat the flesh of their sons and their daughters. They will eat one another’s flesh in the siege and in the hardship with which their enemies, those who want to kill them, will harass them.”

¹⁰ “Then you shall smash the jar while the men who go with you are watching. ¹¹ You shall also tell them, ‘This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “I shall smash this people and this city, as someone smashes a potter’s jar, so that it cannot be repaired any longer. People will also be buried in Topheth because there will be no room for burials anywhere else. ¹² This is what I shall do to this place,” declares the LORD, “and to those who live in it, so that I make this city like Topheth. ¹³ The houses in Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be defiled like this place, Topheth. This refers to all the houses where people have been burning offerings on their flat roofs to all **the starry host of heaven** and where they have been pouring out drink-offerings to other gods.”’”

¹⁴ Then Jeremiah came back from Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy. He stood in the court of the Temple of the LORD and told all the people: ¹⁵ “This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Look! I am bringing on this city and on all its towns the whole calamity with which I have been threatening them. For they have stiffened their necks, so that they do not listen to My Words.’”

20

The imprisonment of Jeremiah by Pashhur

¹ The priest Pashhur, the son of Immer, who was also the chief overseer in the Temple of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. ² Pashhur gave the prophet Jeremiah a beating and put him in the stocks at the Upper Gate of Benjamin in the Temple of the LORD. ³ On the next day, when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, Jeremiah told him, “The LORD has not named you ‘Pashhur,’ but ‘Magor-Missabib.’”¹³⁶ ⁴ For this is what the LORD has said: ‘Look! I shall make you an object of horror to yourself and to all your friends. They will fall by the sword of their enemies while you are watching. I shall deliver all Judah into the hands of the king of Babylon. He will deport the people to Babylon or strike them down with the sword. ⁵ Moreover, I shall give all the wealth of this city, all that it produces, all its valuable things and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the

¹³⁶ Magor-Missabib means “Horror on every side.”

hands of their enemies, who will plunder them, seize them and take them to Babylon. ⁶ You, Pashhur and all who are living at your house, will go into captivity. You will go to Babylon, die there and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom you have been prophesying falsely.”

A confession of Jeremiah and a denunciation of his persecutors

⁷ LORD, You have deceived me, and I have let myself be deceived. You have overpowered me and have prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long. Everyone mocks me. ⁸ Each time I speak, I cry out and proclaim, “Violence and devastation!” The Word of the LORD has brought me disgrace and derision all day long. ⁹ However, when I think, “I shall not mention Him or speak in His name any longer,” then His Word is like a burning fire in my heart, shut up in my bones. I wear myself out trying to hold it in but cannot do it. ¹⁰ For I have heard many people reporting: “Terror is all around you. Denounce him! Let us denounce him!” All my closest friends are watching to see me stumble, saying: “Perhaps he will be deceived. Then we shall overpower him and take our revenge on him.”

¹¹ Nevertheless, the LORD is with me like a powerful warrior. Therefore, those who are persecuting me will stumble and will not win. They will be greatly ashamed that they have not been successful. Their eternal disgrace will not be forgotten. ¹² However, LORD of hosts, You test the righteous man. You see his inmost being and thoughts. Let me see Your revenge against them! For I have disclosed my case to You. ¹³ Sing to the LORD! Praise the LORD! For He has rescued the life of a needy man from the hands of evildoers.

¹⁴ Cursed be the day when I was born! Let the day when my mother gave birth to me not be blessed!

¹⁵ Cursed be the man who told my father the good news, “A baby boy has been born to you,” and made him very glad! ¹⁶ Let that man be like the cities that the LORD overthrew without pity! Let him hear a cry for help in the morning and an alarm for war at noon, ¹⁷ because he did not kill me in the womb! Then my mother would have been my grave, and her womb would always have been pregnant. ¹⁸ Why did I come out from the womb to see trouble and agony, so that my days have ended in shame?

21

A prediction that Jerusalem will be captured by the Babylonians

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, when King Zedekiah sent Pashhur, the son of Malchiah, and the priest Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, to him. They had said: ² “Please consult the LORD for us! For Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, is making war against us. Perhaps the LORD, who has done all His other miraculous acts, will treat us similarly and make him withdraw from us.”

³ Then Jeremiah answered them: “This is what you

shall tell Zedekiah: ⁴ ‘This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: “Look! I shall turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands and that you are using to fight against the king of Babylon and against the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the wall. I shall gather them into the middle of this city. ⁵ I myself shall fight against you with an outstretched hand and a strong arm, in anger, fury and great wrath. ⁶ I shall strike down those who are living in this city, both the human beings and the animals. They will die from a severe plague. ⁷ After that,” declares the LORD, “I shall give Zedekiah, the king of Judah, his officials and the people in this city who survive the plague, the sword and the famine into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, into the hands of their enemies and into the hands of those who want to kill them. He will strike them down with the edge of the sword. He will not pity them, spare them or have compassion.”’”

⁸ “You shall tell this people: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am setting before you the way leading to life and the way leading to death. ⁹ He who stays in this city will die by the sword, by famine and by the plague. However, he who goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you will stay alive and retain his life as a prize of war. ¹⁰ For I have set My face against this city, to harm it and not to do good to it,” declares the LORD. “It will be handed over to the king of Babylon, and he will burn it down.”’”

A message for the family of David

¹¹ “You shall tell the family of the king of Judah, ‘Listen to the Word of the LORD: ¹² “Family of David, this is what the LORD has said: ‘Judge justly every morning! Rescue the one who has been robbed from the person who is oppressing him! Otherwise My wrath will flare out like fire and will burn without anyone to put it out, because of your evil deeds.’”’”

¹³ “Look! I am against you, you who are living in the valley and on the rocky plateau,” declares the LORD. “You are asking, ‘Who will come down against us, and who will enter our places of refuge?’ ¹⁴ I shall punish you, as your evil deeds deserve,” declares the LORD. “I shall light a fire in its forest, and it will burn up everything that is around it.”

22

Warnings to the wicked kings to repent

¹ This is what the LORD has said: “Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and speak this Message there: ² ‘Listen to the Word of the LORD, King of Judah, you, who are sitting on the throne of David, your officials and your people, who come in through these gates! ³ This is what the LORD has said: “Do what is right and just! Rescue the one who has been robbed from the hands of the oppressor! Do not mistreat the foreigner, the orphan and the widow or treat them violently! Do not kill innocent people in this

place! ⁴ For, if you carefully put this into practice, then kings who sit on the throne of David will come in through the gates of this palace, riding in chariots and on horses, together with their officials and their people. ⁵ However, if you will not listen to these Words, I have sworn by Myself,” declares the LORD, “that this palace will become a ruin.”

⁶ “For this is what the LORD has said about the palace of the king of Judah: ‘You are like Gilead to Me, like the summit of Lebanon. Yet I shall certainly turn you into a desert, into cities in which no one lives. ⁷ I shall consecrate destroyers against you, each one with his own weapons. They will cut down your choicest cedars and cast them down into the fire. ⁸ Many nations will go past this city and all will ask one another, ‘Why has the LORD done such a thing to this great city?’” ⁹ They will answer, “Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the LORD, their God, and have been worshipping other gods and serving them.””

A Message about Shallum, the King of Judah

¹⁰ Do not weep for one who is dead or mourn for him! Rather, weep bitterly for the one who is going away. For he will not come back again to see his native land.

¹¹ For this is what the LORD has said about Shallum, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, who has succeeded his father Josiah as king and who has left this place: “He will not come back here again. ¹² Rather, he will die at the place where they have taken him as a captive. He will not see this land again.”

A Message about Jehoiakim, the King of Judah

¹³ “How terrible for the one who builds his palace dishonestly and his upper rooms unjustly, who keeps his neighbour in his service without compensation and does not pay him his wages! ¹⁴ He says, ‘I shall build myself a large house with spacious upper rooms.’ He cuts out windows for it, panelling the rooms with cedar and painting them red. ¹⁵ Are you a king because you try to surpass others in cedar? Did your father not eat, drink and do what is just and right? Then he was successful. ¹⁶ He defended the cause of poor and needy people. Then he was successful. Is not this what it means to know Me?” asks the LORD. ¹⁷ “However, your eyes and your mind are fixed only on your dishonest gain, on killing innocent people and on practising oppression and extortion.”

¹⁸ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said about Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah: “People will not mourn for him, saying, ‘How horrible it is for my brother!’ or ‘How horrible it is for my loved one!’ People will not mourn for him, saying, ‘How horrible it is for my master!’ and ‘How horrible it is for his splendour!’ ¹⁹ He will have the burial of a donkey. He will be dragged away and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem.”

A message for the people of Jerusalem

²⁰ “Go up to Lebanon and cry out! Raise your voice in Bashan! Cry out from Abarim! For all your lovers have been shattered. ²¹ I spoke to you in the times

when you were secure, but you said, ‘I shall not listen.’ This has been your way since you were young. Indeed, you have not been listening to My voice. ²² The wind will carry off all your shepherds, and your lovers will go away into captivity. Then you will surely be ashamed and disgraced because of all your evil. ²³ You who are living in Lebanon and have your nest among the cedars, how you will groan when labour-pains come on you, pain like that of a woman giving birth!”

A message about Jehoiachin (also called Coniah), the king of Judah

²⁴ “As I live,” declares the LORD, “even if you, Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, were a signet ring on My right hand, I would certainly pull you off. ²⁵ I shall hand you over to those who want to kill you, to those of whom you are afraid, to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and to the Chaldeans. ²⁶ I shall hurl you and your mother, who gave birth to you, into another country, where neither of you were born, and you will die there. ²⁷ They will not come back to the land to which they long to return.”

²⁸ Is this man Coniah a despised and shattered pot, a vessel in which no one takes any delight? Why will he and his descendants be hurled down and thrown away into a land that they had not known? ²⁹ O land, land, land, listen to the Word of the LORD! ³⁰ This is what the LORD has said: “Write this man down as childless, a man who will not be successful in his lifetime! For none of his offspring will be successful. They will not sit on the throne of David and rule over Judah any longer.”

23

A promise of restoration after exile

¹ “How horrible it will be for the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the LORD.

² Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said about the shepherds who are looking after my people: “You have scattered My flock, driven them away and have not taken care of them. Look! I am punishing you for the evil that you have done,” declares the LORD. ³ “However, I Myself shall gather the remnant of My flock from all the countries where I have driven them and bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful and increase in number. ⁴ I shall appoint shepherds over them who will look after them. Then they will no longer be afraid or terrified, and none of them will be missing,” declares the LORD.

A prophecy about the coming righteous Branch

⁵ “Look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch, who will reign wisely as King. He will establish justice and righteousness on the earth. ⁶ In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. This will be His name, which people will call Him, ‘The

LORD Our Righteousness.*¹³⁷

⁷ “Therefore, look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when people will no longer say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought the Israelites up out of the land of Egypt.’ ⁸ Rather, they will say, ‘As surely as the LORD lives, who brought up and led the offspring of the family of Israel out of the North-Country and out of all the other countries where He had driven them.’ Then they will live in their own land.”

Warnings against false prophets

⁹ This is about the prophets: My heart has been broken inside me. All my bones have been shaking. I have become like a drunken man, like a man who has been overcome by wine, because of the LORD and because of His holy Words. ¹⁰ For the land is full of adulterers. The land has been mourning because of a curse, and the pastures in the wilderness have dried up. Their course of life has become evil, and they are using their strength wrongly.

¹¹ “For both prophet and priest have become godless. I have found their wickedness even in My Temple,” declares the LORD. ¹² “Therefore, their way will be like slippery surfaces in the darkness for them. They will be sent crashing down and will fall on them. For I shall bring calamity on them in the year when I call them to account,” declares the LORD. ¹³ “I had seen something offensive in the prophets of Samaria. They had been prophesying by Baal and had been leading My people Israel astray. ¹⁴ I have also seen something horrible in the prophets of Jerusalem. They commit adultery and live deceitfully. They encourage those who do evil, so that no one turns from his wickedness. All of them have become like Sodom to Me. Those who are living in Jerusalem have become like Gomorrah.”

¹⁵ Therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts has said about the prophets: “Look! I shall feed them with wormwood and give them poisoned water to drink. For ungodliness has spread from the prophets of Jerusalem to the whole land.”

¹⁶ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you! They are deluding you. They are speaking visions of their own hearts, not from the mouth of the LORD. ¹⁷ They keep saying to those who despise Me, ‘The LORD has said, “You will have peace.”’”

They have been telling everyone who follows his own stubborn heart, “No calamity will happen to you people!” ¹⁸ For who has been standing in the confidential circle of the LORD, that he could see and hear His Word? Who has been paying attention to His Word and listening to it? ¹⁹ Look! The high wind of the LORD! His wrath has burst out. A windstorm is swirl-

ing. It will whirl down on the heads of wicked people. ²⁰ The anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has performed and fulfilled what His mind has planned. In the last days you will understand it clearly.

²¹ “I have not sent these prophets. Yet they have been running. I have not been speaking to them. Yet they have been prophesying. ²² If they had been standing in My confidential circle, they would have been making My people hear My Words. Then they would have turned them back from their evil ways and from the evil that they have been doing.

²³ “Am I a God who is only near,” asks the LORD, “and not a God who is far away? ²⁴ Can anyone hide in secret places, so that I cannot see him?” asks the LORD. “Do I not fill heaven and earth?” asks the LORD. ²⁵ “I have heard what the prophets have been saying, who are prophesying lies in My name. They are saying, ‘I have had a dream! I have had a dream!’

²⁶ How long will this continue in the hearts of the prophets, who are prophesying lies and who are prophesying the deceitfulness of their own hearts?

²⁷ They intend to make My people forget My name by their dreams, which they tell one another, just as their fathers forgot My name because of Baal. ²⁸ The prophet who has a dream should tell a dream, but the one who has My Word should speak My Word faithfully. What does threshed grain have to do with straw?” asks the LORD. ²⁹ “Is not My Word like fire?” asks the LORD, “and like a hammer that shatters a rock?”

³⁰ “Therefore, look! I am against the prophets,” declares the LORD, “who steal My Words from one another. ³¹ Look! I am against the prophets,” declares the LORD, “who use their tongues and declare, ‘He declares.’” ³² Look! I am against those who prophesy lying dreams,” declares the LORD, “and who have been telling them and have been using their lies and their insolent talk to lead My people astray. I have not sent them or given them any Command. They do not benefit this people at all,” declares the LORD.

³³ “When anyone of this people, either a prophet or a priest, asks you, ‘What is the burden from the LORD?’ you shall ask them, ‘What burden?’ I shall abandon you,” declares the LORD.

³⁴ “When a prophet, a priest or one of the people says, ‘The burden of the LORD,’ I shall punish that man and his family.

³⁵ “This is what your neighbours and brothers should ask one another: ‘What has the LORD answered?’ or ‘What has the LORD said?’” ³⁶ However, you should no longer mention ‘the burden of the LORD!’ For the burden is every man’s own word, and you are twisting the Words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God. ³⁷ This is what you should ask the prophet, ‘What has the LORD answered you?’ or ‘What has the LORD said?’

¹³⁷ The name of the king of Judah, Zedekiah, meant “the Lord our righteousness.” He did not live up to his name. The promised Messiah will be righteous and bring about a verdict of righteousness for those who believe in Him.

³⁸ “However, if you say, ‘The burden of the LORD,’ this is what the LORD has said: ‘Because you have used this expression, “The burden of the LORD,” although I had sent to you, saying, “You shall not say, ‘The burden of the LORD,’” ³⁹ therefore look! I shall certainly ‘forget’*¹³⁸ you like a burden. I shall ‘forget’ you and the city that I have given to you and to your fathers. I shall cast you away from My presence. ⁴⁰ I shall bring everlasting disgrace and everlasting insult on you, which will not be forgotten.””

24

The vision of two baskets of good and bad figs

¹ After King Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had taken into exile Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, the princes of Judah, the craftsmen and the metal-workers, from Jerusalem and had brought them to Babylon, the LORD showed me two baskets of figs placed in front of the Temple of the LORD. ² One basket had very good figs, just like figs that ripen first, but the other basket had very bad figs, so bad that they were uneatable. ³ Then the LORD asked me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?”

I answered, “Figs. The good figs are very good and the bad ones are very bad, so bad that they are uneatable.”

⁴ Then the Word of the LORD came to me. ⁵ This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, said: “As with these good figs, so I shall consider as good the captives of Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. ⁶ I shall set My eye on them for their good and bring them back to this land. I shall build them up and not tear them down. I shall plant them and not uproot them. ⁷ I shall give them a heart to know Me, that I am the LORD. **They will be My people, and I shall be their God.** For they will wholeheartedly return to Me.

⁸ “However, like the bad figs that are so bad that they are uneatable,” the LORD has said, “I shall surely discard Zedekiah, the king of Judah, his leading men, the remnant of Jerusalem who are staying behind in this land and those who are living in Egypt. ⁹ I shall turn them into an abhorrent calamity for all the kingdoms of the earth to see. They will be a disgrace, a proverb, an object of ridicule and a formula to use in cursing in all the places where I shall drive them. ¹⁰ I shall send the sword, famine and the plague against them, until they are completely removed from the land that I have given to them and to their fathers.”

25

A prediction that Nebuchadnezzar will destroy Judah

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah about all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah. It was in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. ² The

prophet Jeremiah spoke it to all the people of Judah and all those who were living in Jerusalem. He said: ³ “For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah, the son of Amon, the king of Judah, until today, the Word of the LORD has been coming to me, and I have been warning you most persistently. However, you have not been listening. ⁴ Although the LORD has been most persistently sending you all His servants, the prophets, you have not been listening or inclining your ears to hear. ⁵ They have kept saying, ‘Please turn back, each one of you, from your evil ways and your evil deeds and live on the land that the LORD has given to you and to your fathers from ancient times and for ever! ⁶ Stop following other gods, so that you serve and worship them! You shall not provoke Me to anger with what your own hands have made! Then I shall not harm you.’ ⁷ Nevertheless, you have not been listening to Me,” declares the LORD, “so that you have provoked Me to anger with what your own hands have made and have brought harm on yourselves. ⁸ Therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts has said: ‘Because you have not been listening to My Words, ⁹ look! I shall summon all the clans of the north,’ declares the LORD, ‘and summon My servant, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. I shall bring them against this land, against those who are living in it and against all these surrounding nations. I shall devote them to destruction and make them a horrible sight, an object of whistling and a permanent ruin. ¹⁰ I shall banish from them the sounds of joy and happiness, **the voices of the bridegroom and the bride**, the sound of a pair of millstones and **the light of a lamp.** ¹¹ This whole land will become a ruin and a wasteland. These nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. ¹² When seventy years are completed, I shall punish the king of Babylon and that nation,’ declares the LORD, ‘the land of the Chaldeans, for their wickedness. I shall turn the land into a permanent wasteland. ¹³ I shall bring on that land all My threats, which I have been making against it, everything that is written in this Book and that Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. ¹⁴ For they themselves will become slaves among many nations and to great kings, and I shall pay them back according to their deeds and actions.”

Judgments against other nations

¹⁵ For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, told me: “Take **this cup of the wine of wrath** from My hand and make **all the nations** to whom I am sending you **drink it!** ¹⁶ They will drink it, vomit loudly and go insane, because of the sword that I am sending among them.”

¹⁷ I took the cup from the hand of the LORD and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it: ¹⁸ Jerusalem, the other cities of Judah, its kings and leading men, to make them a ruin, something shuddered over, something whistled at and a

¹³⁸ The Hebrew word for “forget” here sounds like the Hebrew word for “burden.”

curse, as they still are today, ¹⁹ Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, his officers, his officials, all his people, ²⁰ all the mixed races among them, all the kings of the land of Uz, all the kings of the land of the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron and the people who were left in Ashdod), ²¹ Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, ²² all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, the kings of the coastland across the sea, ²³ Dedan, Tema, Buz, all who trim their hair at the temples, ²⁴ all the kings of Arabia, all the kings of the mixed races who live in the desert, ²⁵ all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, all the kings of the Medes, ²⁶ all the kings of the north, far and near, one after another, and all the other kingdoms of the world that are on the surface of the earth. After them the king of Sheshak^{*139} will drink.

²⁷ “Then you shall tell them, ‘This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Drink, become drunk, vomit, fall and do not get up again, because of the sword that I am sending among you!”’ ²⁸ If they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, you shall tell them, “This is what the LORD of hosts has said: ‘You must certainly drink it! ²⁹ For look! I am beginning to bring calamity on the city that is called by My name, and will you certainly remain unpunished? You will not remain unpunished. For I am calling for a sword to come against all who are living on the earth,’ declares the LORD of hosts.”’

³⁰ “You yourself shall prophesy all these things to them and tell them, ‘The LORD will roar from on high. He will utter His voice from His holy dwelling place. He will roar loudly against His settlement. Like those who are treading grapes He will give a loud cheer against all who are living on the earth. ³¹ The uproar is resounding to the ends of the earth, because the LORD has a lawsuit against the nations. He is going to court against all human beings. He will put wicked people to the sword,’ declares the LORD.”

³² This is what the LORD of hosts said: “Look! Calamity is spreading from one nation to another, and a mighty storm is stirring from the most distant parts of the earth.”

³³ Those whom the LORD has killed on that day will stretch from one end of the earth to the other. No one will mourn for them. They will not be gathered up or buried. They will be manure on the surface of the ground. ³⁴ Howl, shepherds, and cry out! Roll about in mourning, leaders of the flock! For the days for you to be slaughtered and scattered have arrived, and you will fall like a precious vase. ³⁵ No refuge will remain for the shepherds. There will be no escape for the leaders of the flock. ³⁶ Listen! The shepherds are crying out, and the leaders of the flock are howling. For the LORD is spoiling their pasture. ³⁷ The blazing anger of the LORD is spoiling the peaceful pastures.

³⁸ He has left His den like a lion. For their country has become a wasteland because of the hot fury of the Oppressor and because of His burning anger.

26

Jeremiah's prophecies in the Temple and his arrest

¹ In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, this Word came from the LORD: ² This is what the LORD said: “Stand in the court of the Temple of the LORD and speak to all the cities of Judah, who come to worship in the Temple of the LORD, all the Words that I have commanded you to speak to them! Do not omit a Word! ³ Perhaps they will listen, and everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may change My mind about the calamity that I intend, because of the evil that they have been doing.

⁴ You shall tell them: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “If you do not listen to Me and, if you do not follow My Law, which I have set before you, ⁵ and, if you do not heed the Words of My servants, the prophets, whom I have been sending to you most persistently, although you have not been listening, ⁶ then I shall make this Temple like Shiloh. I shall make this city a formula that all the nations of the earth will use in cursing.”’”

⁷ The priests, the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these things in the Temple of the LORD. ⁸ When Jeremiah had finished speaking everything that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, the priests, the prophets and all the people took hold of him and said, “You will certainly die! ⁹ Why have you been prophesying in the name of the LORD, saying, ‘This Temple will be like Shiloh, and this city will be desolate, with no one living in it’?”

Then all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the Temple of the LORD. ¹⁰ When the officials of Judah heard about these things, they came up from the king's palace to the Temple of the LORD and sat down at the entrance of the New Gate of the Temple of the LORD. ¹¹ Then the priests and the prophets told the officials and all the people, “This man should be condemned to death because he has been prophesying against this city, as you have heard!”

¹² Then Jeremiah told all the officials and all the people: “The LORD has sent me to prophesy against this Temple and against this city all the Words that you have heard. ¹³ Now therefore, reform your ways and your deeds and listen to the voice of the LORD, your God, that the LORD may relent about the calamity that He has pronounced against you! ¹⁴ However, as for me, look! I am in your hands. Do to me what you think is good and right! ¹⁵ Only you should know for certain that, if you put me to death, you will certainly make yourselves, this city and those who live in it responsible for killing an innocent person. For in truth the LORD has sent me to you to speak all these Words in your hearing.”

¹³⁹ Sheshak is another name for Babylon.

¹⁶ Then the officials and all the people told the priests and the prophets: “This man does not deserve to be condemned to death. For he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD, our God.”

¹⁷ Some of the elders of the land stood up and told the whole assembly of the people, ¹⁸ “Micah from Moresheth prophesied at the time of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, and told all the people of Judah: ‘This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Zion will be ploughed like a field. Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble and the mountain of the Temple will become a wooded hilltop.”’ ¹⁹ Did Hezekiah, the king of Judah, and all Judah, put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and plead for the favour of the LORD? The LORD changed His plan about the calamity that He had threatened against them. However, we are about to bring a great calamity on ourselves. ²⁰ There was another man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah, the son of Shemaiah, from Kiriath-Jearim. He prophesied against this city and against this land in Words like the ones that Jeremiah has used. ²¹ When King Jehoiakim with his whole body-guard and all the officials heard his Words, the king wanted to put him to death. However, when Uriah heard about that, he fled in fear and went to Egypt. ²² Then King Jehoiakim sent some men to Egypt. He sent Elnathan, the son of Achbor, and others with him to Egypt. ²³ They took Uriah from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim. The king struck him down with the sword and threw his body into the burial ground for the common people.”

²⁴ Indeed, Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, supported Jeremiah and prevented him from being handed over to the people and put to death.

27

A prediction that Babylon will subjugate Judah

¹ In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, this Word came to Jeremiah from the LORD. ² This is what the LORD said to me: “Make yourself straps and the cross-bars of a yoke and put them on your neck! ³ Send them to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre and the king of Sidon by means of messengers who have come to Zedekiah, the king of Judah, at Jerusalem! ⁴ Give them this order for their rulers: ‘This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “This is what you shall tell your masters: ⁵ ‘I Myself have made the earth, the human beings and the animals that are on the earth by My great power and My outstretched arm. I give it to anyone whom I regard as the right one. ⁶ Now therefore, I Myself have handed all these lands over to My servant, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. I have given even the wild animals to him, to serve him. ⁷ All the nations will serve him, his son and his grandson, until the time also comes for his own land. Then many nations and great kings will serve him.’ ⁸ However, if

any nation or kingdom does not serve Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and does not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I shall punish that nation with the sword, with famine and with the plague,” declares the LORD, “until I have used him to put an end to it.””

⁹ “You yourselves should not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your fortune-tellers or your sorcerers, who are telling you, ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon!’ ¹⁰ For they are prophesying lies to you, with the result that they will remove you far away from your land. I shall drive you out, and you will perish. ¹¹ However, if any nation puts its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serves him, I shall leave it on its own land,” declares the LORD, “and it will farm the land and live in it.”

¹² I spoke to Zedekiah, the king of Judah in exactly the same way: “Put your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, serve him and his people and stay alive! ¹³ Why should you and your people die by the sword, by famine and by the plague? The LORD has threatened such things against any nation that will not serve the king of Babylon. ¹⁴ Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are telling you, ‘You shall not serve the king of Babylon!’ For they are prophesying lies to you. ¹⁵ ‘For I have not sent them,’ declares the LORD, ‘but **they are prophesying lies in My name**, with the result that I shall drive you people out. You will perish, both you and the prophets who are prophesying to you.”

¹⁶ Then I spoke to the priests and to this whole people. I said: “This is what the LORD has said: ‘Do not listen to the words of your prophets! They are prophesying to you, saying, “Look! Very soon now the vessels of the Temple of the LORD will be brought back from Babylon!” For they are prophesying lies to you.’

¹⁷ “Do not listen to them! Serve the king of Babylon and stay alive! Why should this city be turned into a ruin? ¹⁸ If they were prophets and, if they had the Word of the LORD, they would need to be interceding with the LORD of hosts, to prevent the articles that are left in the Temple of the LORD, in the palace of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem from being taken to Babylon. ¹⁹ For this is what the LORD of hosts has said about the pillars, the pool, the stands and the rest of the articles that are left in this city, ²⁰ — which Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, did not take away when he took Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem away into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon, ²¹ — This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said about the articles that are left in the Temple of the LORD, in the palace of the king of Judah and in Jerusalem: ²² ‘They will be taken to Babylon and remain there until the day when I come to take care of them,’ declares the LORD. ‘Then I shall bring them back and restore them to this place.’”

28

Hananiah's false prophecy and his death

¹ In the fifth month of the same year, the fourth year, early in the reign of Zedekiah, the king of Judah, the prophet Hananiah, the son of Azzur, who was from Gibeon, spoke to me in the Temple of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and all the people. He said: ² "This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: 'I shall break the yoke of the king of Babylon. ³ Within two years I shall restore to this place all the articles of the Temple of the LORD that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, has taken away from this place and taken to Babylon. ⁴ I shall also bring back to this place Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, and all the exiles of Judah who have gone to Babylon,' declares the Lord. 'For I shall break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'"

⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the Temple of the LORD. ⁶ The prophet Jeremiah said: "Amen! May the LORD do this! May the LORD make your words, which you have prophesied, come true and restore the articles of the Temple of the LORD and all the exiles from Babylon to this place! ⁷ Nevertheless, please listen to this Message, which I am speaking directly to you and to all the people! ⁸ 'From ancient times the prophets who preceded you and me prophesied war, calamity and the plague against many countries and great kingdoms. ⁹ The prophet who prophesies peace is recognised as the prophet whom the LORD has sent when the Message of the prophet comes true.'"

¹⁰ Then the prophet Hananiah took the crossbars of the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and broke them. ¹¹ Hananiah said in the presence of all the people, "This is what the LORD has said: 'In this way I shall break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, from the necks of all the nations within two years.'"

Then the prophet Jeremiah went on his way. ¹² After the prophet Hananiah had broken the crossbars of the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ¹³ "Go and tell Hananiah, 'This is what the LORD has said: "You have broken wooden crossbars but will prepare crossbars of iron instead of them. ¹⁴ For this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: 'I have put an iron yoke on the necks of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. They will serve him. I shall give even the wild animals to him.'"

¹⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah told the prophet Hananiah: "Please listen, Hananiah! Although the LORD has not sent you, you have caused these people to trust in a lie. ¹⁶ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: 'Look! I shall remove you from the surface of the earth. This year you will die. For you have taught re-

bellion against the LORD.'"

¹⁷ The prophet Hananiah died in the seventh month of that year.

29

The letter of Jeremiah to the exiles in Babylon

¹ These are the Words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remainder of the elders who were in exile, to the priests, the prophets and all the other people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem into exile in Babylon. ² This was after King Jeconiah, the queen-mother, the high officials, the leading men of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen and the metal-workers had left Jerusalem. ³ He sent the letter with Elasah, the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah, the son of Hilkiyah, whom Zedekiah, the king of Judah sent to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, in Babylon. The letter said: ⁴ "This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said to all the exiles, whom I have taken from Jerusalem into exile in Babylon: ⁵ 'Build houses and live in them! Plant gardens and eat what they produce! ⁶ Get married and have sons and daughters! Find wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may have sons and daughters! Grow in number there! Do not decrease! ⁷ Be intent on the welfare of the city where I have taken you into exile and pray to the LORD for it! For, when it prospers, you will also prosper.'

⁸ "For this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: 'Your prophets, who are among you, and your diviners should not deceive you! Do not listen to your own dreams, which you elicit from them! ⁹ For they are prophesying deceitfully to you in My name. I have not sent them,' declares the LORD. ¹⁰ 'For this is what the LORD has said: 'As soon as Babylon's seventy years are over, I shall come to take care of you. I shall fulfil My good promise about you and bring you back to this place.'"

¹¹ "For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD. "They are plans for peace and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² You will call on Me. You will come and pray to Me, and I shall hear you. ¹³ When you search for Me, you will find Me. When you wholeheartedly search for Me, ¹⁴ I shall be found by you," declares the LORD. "I shall bring you back from your captivity. I shall gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and I shall bring you back to the place from which I have taken you into exile. ¹⁵ For you have been saying, 'The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon.'"

¹⁶ "This is what the LORD has said about the king who is sitting on the throne of David and about all the people who are living in this city, your relatives who have not gone away with you into exile — ¹⁷ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: 'Look! I am send-

ing the sword, famine and the plague on them. I shall make them like rotten figs, which are too bad to be eaten. ¹⁸ I shall pursue them with the sword, with famine and with the plague. I shall make them a terrifying sight for all the kingdoms of the earth, a curse, an appalling sight and something to be whistled at and scorned among all the nations where I shall have driven them. ¹⁹ The reason is that they have not been paying attention to My Words,' declares the LORD. 'I have been most persistently sending them with My servants, the prophets, but you would not listen,' declares the LORD."

²⁰ "You yourselves, listen to the Word of the LORD, all you exiles, whom I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon: ²¹ This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said about Ahab, the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah, the son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying deceitfully to you in My name: 'Look! I shall hand them over to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. He will strike them down while you are watching. ²² Because of them all the captives from Judah who are in Babylon will take up this curse: "May the LORD make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in fire!" ²³ The reason is that they have been committing deliberate sins in Israel. They have been committing adultery with their neighbours' wives. They have been speaking lying words in My name. I had not commanded them to do that. I am the One who know and I am a witness,' declares the LORD."

The objection of Shemaiah in Babylon to Jeremiah's letter

²⁴ "You shall also tell Shemaiah from Nehelam: ²⁵ 'This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "You yourself have sent letters in your own name to all the people who are in Jerusalem and to Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, the priest and to all the other priests. These letters said: ²⁶ 'The LORD has made you priest instead of the priest Jehoiada, that there may be supervisors over the Temple of the LORD and that you may put every madman who acts like a prophet into the stocks and neck-irons. ²⁷ Now therefore, why have you failed to rebuke Jeremiah from Anathoth, who is posing as a prophet in the presence of you all? ²⁸ The reason is that he has sent this Message to us in Babylon: "This will take a long time. Build houses and live in them! Plant gardens and eat what they produce!"'"

²⁹ Zephaniah, the priest, read this letter in the hearing of the prophet Jeremiah. ³⁰ Then the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ³¹ "Send a Message to all the exiles, 'This is what the LORD has said about Shemaiah from Nehelam: "Because Shemaiah has been prophesying to you, although I Myself had not sent him and has been making you trust in a lie, ³² therefore this is what the LORD has said: 'Look! I shall punish Shemaiah from Nehelam and his descendants. He will not have anyone living among this people. He will not see the good things that I shall do

to My people,' declares the LORD. For he has been teaching rebellion against the LORD."'"

30

A prediction that the captives in Babylon will be freed and that Israel will have a glorious future

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: 'Write down for yourself on a scroll all the Words that I have spoken to you. ³ For look! The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I shall bring My people, Israel and Judah, back from captivity,' the LORD has said. 'I shall restore them to the land that I had given to their fathers, and they will take possession of it.'"

⁴ These are the Words that the LORD has spoken about Israel and Judah: ⁵ Indeed, this is what the LORD has said: "We have heard a cry of fear, of terror and nothing about peace. ⁶ Please ask and see! Can a male give birth to a child? Why then have I seen every man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labour? Why has every face turned pale? ⁷ How terrible! For that day will be so great that there will be no other like it. It will be a time of distress for Jacob. Nevertheless, he will be saved from it. ⁸ On that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "I shall break his yoke from your necks and tear your chains apart. Foreigners will not enslave Jacob any longer. ⁹ Instead, they will serve the LORD, their God, and David, their King, whom I shall raise up for them.

¹⁰ "As for you, do not be afraid, My servant Jacob!" declares the LORD. "Do not be dismayed, Israel! For look! I shall save you from far away. I shall save your descendants from the land where they are captives. Jacob will return, be at peace and be free from anxiety. No one will frighten him. ¹¹ For I am with you," declares the LORD, "to save you. For I shall completely destroy all the nations among whom I have scattered you. Nevertheless, I shall not completely destroy you. I shall be just when I discipline you. I shall certainly not declare you free from blame."

¹² For this is what the LORD has said: "Your fracture is incurable. Your affliction is beyond healing.

¹³ There is no one to plead your cause. There is no medication for your ulcer. There is no healing for you.

¹⁴ All your lovers have forgotten you. They do not look for you. For I have struck you as an enemy would and disciplined you cruelly, because your guilt is great and your sins have been numerous. ¹⁵ Why are you crying out over your fracture? Your anguish is incurable. I have done these things to you because your guilt is great and your sins are numerous. ¹⁶ That is why all who are devouring you will be devoured, and all your enemies, each one of them, will go into captivity. Those who are looting you will be looted, and I shall give up to plunder all who are plundering you. ¹⁷ For I shall restore health to you and make your wounds heal," declares the LORD. "For people have

been calling you ‘The Scattered One,’ ‘This Zion About Which No One Cares.’”

God’s declaration about His people

¹⁸ This is what the LORD has said: “Look! I shall bring the exiles back to the tents of Jacob and have compassion on his dwellings. The city will be rebuilt on its mound of rubble, and the fortified palace will stand on its proper place. ¹⁹ Songs of thanksgiving and the sounds of those who are merry will come out of them. I shall make them numerous, and they will not be few. I shall make them honoured, and they will not be unimportant. ²⁰ Their children will be as they were long ago. Their congregation will be permanent in My presence, and I shall punish all who oppress them. ²¹ Their Prince will be One of their own. Their Ruler will come from among them. I shall make Him approach, and He will come near Me. For who is this who would stake his own heart to approach Me?” asks the LORD. ²² “Then you **will be My people, and I Myself shall be your God.**”

²³ Look at the windstorm of the LORD! Wrath will come forth like a tempest that stays on like a resident-foreigner. It will swirl down on the heads of wicked people. ²⁴ The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back until He has carried out and fulfilled what His mind has planned. In the last days you will understand this clearly.

31

Promises that the exiles of Israel and Judah will be rescued

¹ “At that time,” declares the LORD, “**I shall be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be My people.**”

² This is what the LORD has said: “The people who have survived the sword have found favour in the wilderness. Israel is journeying to find his rest.”

³ The LORD has come from far away to appear to me. He has said: “I have loved you with an everlasting love. That is why I have been stretching My mercy full length. ⁴ I shall build you up again, and you will be rebuilt, O virgin Israel. You will adorn yourself again with your tambourines and go out in a circle-dance with merrymakers. ⁵ You will plant vineyards again on the hills of Samaria. After the planters have put them in, they will make use of them. ⁶ For there will be a day when watchmen will call out in the hill-country of Ephraim: ‘Arise and let us go up to the LORD, our God, in Zion!’”

⁷ For this is what the LORD has said: “Sing a joyous song for Jacob and rejoice for the foremost of the nations! Proclaim, give praise and say, ‘LORD, save Your people, the remnant of Israel!’” ⁸ Look! I shall bring them from the North-Country and gather them from the remotest parts of the earth. Blind people and lame people will be among them, together with pregnant women and the women in labour. A great company will return here. ⁹ They will be weeping as they come and, as they make pleas for mercy, I shall bring

them back. I shall lead them beside rivers of water, on a level path, on which they will not stumble. For I shall be the Father of Israel and Ephraim will be My first-born son.”

¹⁰ Listen to the Word of the LORD, nations! Tell it in the distant coastlands! Say: “He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over them as a shepherd watches over his flock. ¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and redeemed them from the hands of those who are stronger than they are. ¹² They will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion. For they will be radiant with joy because of the good things of the LORD, the fresh grain, the new wine, the olive-oil and the young of the flock and of the herd. Their lives will be like a well-watered garden and they will never waste away again. ¹³ Then the virgin will rejoice in the dance, along with the young men and the old men. “I shall turn their mourning into joy. I shall comfort them and give them joy instead of their sorrow. ¹⁴ I shall satisfy the desires of the priests with rich food and My people will be satisfied with My good things,” declares the LORD.

¹⁵ This is what the LORD has said: “**A sound is heard in Ramah, lamenting and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.**”

¹⁶ This is what the LORD has said: “Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears! For there will be wages for your labour,” declares the LORD. “They will come back from the land of the enemy. ¹⁷ There is hope for your future,” declares the LORD. “Your children will come back to their own territory.”

¹⁸ “I have certainly heard Ephraim pitying himself: ‘You have disciplined me and I have been disciplined, like a bull-calf that has not been broken in. Bring me back, that I may return! For You are the LORD, my God. ¹⁹ For, after I returned, I repented. After I began to understand, I slapped myself on the hip. I was ashamed, yes, even humiliated, because I bore the disgrace of my youth.’” ²⁰ Is Ephraim My precious son? Is he My child, in whom a father delights? Yes, because whenever I speak against him, I certainly still remember him. That is why My inner being yearns for him. I shall certainly have compassion on him,” declares the LORD.

²¹ “Set up road markers for yourself! Make yourself signposts! Keep in mind the highway, the road on which you have gone away. Come back, virgin Israel! Come back to these cities of yours! ²² How long will you wander back and forth, unfaithful daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing on the earth: a woman who moves protectively around a man.”

²³ This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Once again people will use these words in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring them

back from exile: ‘May the LORD bless you, you righteous settlement, you holy hill!’²⁴ Judah and all its cities will live there together. Farmers and those who travel with their herds will live there.²⁵ For I shall give copious drink to the weary person. I shall fill every languishing throat.”

²⁶ At this I woke up and looked around, My sleep had been pleasant to me.

²⁷ “Look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I shall sow the family of Israel and the family of Judah with the seed of men and the seed of cattle.

²⁸ As I have been watching over them, to uproot them and tear them down, to demolish, ruin and hurt them, so I shall be watchful over them to build them up and plant them,” declares the LORD.

²⁹ “In those days people will no longer say, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes and their children’s teeth feel numb.’

³⁰ Rather, each person will die for his own sin. Every human being who eats sour grapes will have his own teeth feeling numb.”

A promise of a New Covenant

³¹ “Look! **The days are coming,**” declares the LORD, “**when I shall make a new Covenant with the family of Israel and with the family of Judah.**

³² **It will not be like the Covenant that I made with their fathers when I took them by their hands to bring them out of the land of Egypt. They broke My Covenant, although I was a husband to them,**” declares the LORD.

³³ **“However, this is the Covenant that I shall make with the family of Israel after those days,”** declares the LORD: **“I shall put My teaching inside them and write it on their hearts. I shall be their God, and they will be My people!”**³⁴ **Each one will no longer teach his neighbour or his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD!’ For they will all know Me, from the least among them to the greatest among them,”** declares the LORD. **“For I shall forgive their wickedness and not remember their sin any longer.”**

³⁵ This is what the LORD has said, He who gives the sun for light by day, the prescribed order for the moon and the stars for light by night, He who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is His name: ³⁶ “If these prescribed orders were to withdraw from My presence,” declares the LORD, “then the descendants of Israel would also permanently cease to be a nation in My presence.”

³⁷ This is what the LORD has said: “If the heavens above could be measured and, if the foundations of the earth below could be explored, then I would reject all the descendants of Israel because of all that they have been doing,” declares the LORD.

A promise that Jerusalem will be rebuilt and enlarged

³⁸ “Look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the city will be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.³⁹ The measuring-line will go out from immediately in front of it to the Hill of Gareb and then turn towards Goah.⁴⁰ The

whole valley where the dead bodies and the ashes are put and all the terraces as far as the Kidron Brook, to the corner of the Horse-Gate towards the east, will be holy to the LORD. It will never be uprooted or demolished again.”

32

Jeremiah’s purchase of a field during the siege

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah, the king of Judah. It was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

² The army of the king of Babylon was at that time besieging Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah was being kept as a prisoner in the courtyard of the guard, which was in the palace of the king of Judah.

³ For Zedekiah, the king of Judah, had imprisoned him there. He had asked him: “Why are you prophesying, saying: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am handing this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.”

⁴ Zedekiah, the king of Judah, will not escape from the Chaldeans. Rather, he will certainly be handed over to the king of Babylon, who will speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye.

⁵ He will take Zedekiah to Babylon, and he will remain there until I come to take care of him,” declares the LORD. “Although you people fight against the Chaldeans, you will not be successful”?”

⁶ Jeremiah said: “The Word of the LORD came to me, saying: ⁷ ‘Look! Hanamel, the son of your uncle Shalum, is coming to you to say, “Buy my field, which is at Anathoth! For you own the right of redemption to buy it.”’

⁸ “As the LORD had said, my uncle’s son Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard. He asked me: ‘Please, buy my field, which is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin! For you have the right to own it. You have the right to redeem it. Buy it for yourself!’

Then I knew that this was the Word of the LORD.

⁹ So, I bought the field at Anathoth from my uncle’s son Hanamel and I weighed out the money for him, two hundred grams of silver.

¹⁰ I wrote the bill of sale, sealed it, had people witness it and weighed the silver on the scales.

¹¹ Then I took the deed of purchase, the one that was sealed, containing the terms and conditions, as well as the unsealed copy.

¹² I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch, the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my uncle’s son Hanamel, the witnesses who had signed the deed and all the other Jews who were sitting in the courtyard of the guard.

¹³ Then I gave Baruch these instructions in their presence: ¹⁴ “This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Take these deeds, this deed of purchase, which is sealed and this deed, which is unsealed and put them in an earthenware jar, that they may last for a long time.’

¹⁵ For this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Houses, fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.’”

Jeremiah's prayer for understanding

¹⁶ After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch, the son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD: ¹⁷ "Ah, Lord GOD! Look! You Yourself have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm. Nothing is too difficult for You. ¹⁸ You show faithful love to thousands but repay the guilt of fathers into the laps of their children after them. O great and mighty God, Your name is the LORD of hosts. ¹⁹ You give great advice and do mighty things. Your eyes are open to all the conduct of the descendants of Adam. You reward each one according to his conduct and as his deeds deserve. ²⁰ You have been performing miraculous signs and wonders in Egypt and until today, both in Israel and among other human beings. You made Yourself famous, as You still are today. ²¹ You brought Your people Israel out of Egypt with miraculous signs and wonders, with a strong hand, an outstretched arm and with great terror. ²² You have given them this land, which You had sworn to give to their fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey. ²³ They came in and took possession of it. However, they did not listen to Your voice and did not live according to Your Law. They did not do at all what You had commanded them to do. That is why You have caused this whole calamity to happen to them. ²⁴ Look! The assault-ramps have been built up against the city that it may be captured. Because of the sword, famine and the plague, the city will be handed over to the Chaldeans, who are fighting against it. The threat that You had made has happened. Look! You see it. ²⁵ Nevertheless, You, Lord GOD, have told me, 'Use money to buy the field and confirm it with witnesses!' although the city will be handed over to the Chaldeans."

God's assurance that the people will return

²⁶ Then the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ²⁷ "Look! I am the LORD, the God of all human beings. Nothing is too difficult for Me, is it? ²⁸ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: 'Look! I am handing this city over to the Chaldeans and to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and he will capture it. ²⁹ The Chaldeans, who are fighting against this city, will come in, set this city on fire and burn it down, with the houses where people have been burning offerings to Baal on the roofs and pouring out drink-offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked Me to anger. ³⁰ For the people of Israel and of Judah have been doing nothing but what I regard as evil ever since they have been young. The Israelites have been doing nothing but provoking Me to anger by what their hands have been doing,' declares the LORD. ³¹ 'The reason for My anger and My wrath is that this city has been causing anger and wrath for Me from the time when people built it until today, so that I shall remove it from My presence. ³² It is because of all the evil that the people of Israel and of Judah have been doing to provoke Me to anger, the people, their

kings, their officials, their priests, their prophets, the Jews and those who are living in Jerusalem. ³³ They have been turning their backs to Me instead of their faces. Although I have been teaching them most persistently, they have not been listening, to accept discipline. ³⁴ Rather, they have been setting up their detestable idols in the Temple, which is called by My name, and have defiled it. ³⁵ They have been building the high places of Baal in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molech. I had not commanded them to do that, and it had not entered My mind that they should do this detestable thing and mislead Judah into sin in this way.'

³⁶ "Now therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said about this city, about which you are saying, 'It will be handed over to the king of Babylon by the sword, by famine and by the plague.' ³⁷ Look! I shall gather them from all the countries to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath and in great fury. I shall bring them back to this place and cause them to live in security. ³⁸ **They will be My people, and I shall be their God.** ³⁹ I shall give them one heart and one path, that they may fear Me for ever, for their own welfare and for the welfare of their children after them. ⁴⁰ I shall make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I shall not turn away from doing good to them. I shall put the fear of Me in their hearts, that they may not turn away from Me. ⁴¹ I shall rejoice in doing good to them. I shall faithfully plant them in this land, with all My heart and all My soul.

⁴² "For this is what the LORD has said: 'As I have brought this whole great calamity on this people, so I shall bring on them all the good that I am promising them. ⁴³ People will buy fields in this land, about which you are saying: "It is a desolate waste, without human beings or animals. It has been handed over to the Chaldeans." ⁴⁴ People will pay money to buy fields, sign deeds and seal and witness them in the land of Benjamin, in the vicinity of Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the hill-country, in the cities of the lowlands and in the cities of the Negev. For I shall bring them back from their captivity,' declares the LORD."

33

A promise of restoration and healing for Judah

¹ The Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still detained in the courtyard of the guard: ² This is what the LORD, who has made the earth, the LORD, who has formed it, to make it stand firm, whose name is the LORD, has said: ³ "Call to Me, and I shall answer you. I shall predict great and inaccessible things to you that you have not known."

⁴ For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said about the houses of this city and the palaces of the kings of Judah that were pulled down to be used

against the siege ramps and against the sword: ⁵ “People are coming in to fight against the Chaldeans and to fill these houses with the corpses of the men whom I shall strike down in My anger and My wrath. For I have hidden My face from this city, because of all their wickedness. ⁶ Look! I shall bring health and healing to this city. I shall heal them and reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth. ⁷ I shall bring back the captives of Judah and Israel and rebuild these houses as they had been previously. ⁸ I shall pronounce them clean from all the guilt of their sins against Me. I shall forgive all the guilt of their sins against Me and their rebellious acts against Me. ⁹ This city will bring Me a joyful reputation, praise and glory before all the nations of the earth. They will hear about all the good things that I shall do to them. They will be afraid and tremble because of all the good things and all the prosperity that I shall provide for Jerusalem.”

¹⁰ This is what the LORD has said: “In this place, about which you are saying, ‘It is a desolate waste, where there are no human beings or animals,’ in the cities of Judah and the desolate streets of Jerusalem, where there are no human beings, inhabitants or animals, there will again be heard ¹¹ the sounds of joy and gladness, **the voices of the bridegroom and the bride**, the voices of those who say: ‘Give thanks to the LORD of hosts! For the LORD is good. For His mercy endures for ever’ while they are bringing thank-offerings to the Temple of the LORD. For I shall bring the captives back to the land as they had been previously,” the LORD has said.

¹² This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “In this place, which is a wasteland, without human beings or animals and in all of its cities, there will again be pastures where shepherds allow their flocks to lie down.

¹³ In the cities of the hill-country, in the cities of the lowlands and in the cities of the Negev, in the land of Benjamin, in the vicinity of Jerusalem and in the cities of Judah flocks will again go past under the hands of the one who is counting them,” the LORD has said.

¹⁴ “Look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I shall fulfil the gracious promise that I have made to the family of Israel and to the family of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time I shall cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and He will put justice and righteousness into effect in the land.

¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which the city will be called: ‘The LORD Is Our Righteousness.’”

¹⁷ For this is what the LORD has said: “David will never fail to have a man to sit on the throne of the family of Israel. ¹⁸ The Levitical priests will never at any time fail to have a man in My presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain-offerings and to make sacrifices.”

¹⁹ The Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ²⁰ This

is what the LORD has said: “If you could break My Covenant with the day and My Covenant with the night, so that day and night would cease to come at their appointed times, ²¹ then My Covenant with My servant David could also be broken, so that he would not have a descendant to reign on his throne. Then My Covenant with the Levitical priests, My ministers, could also be broken. ²² As the starry host of heaven cannot be counted and as the sand of the sea cannot be measured, so I shall multiply the descendants of My servant David and the Levitical priests, who minister to Me.”

²³ The Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: ²⁴ “Have you not noticed what these people are saying, ‘The LORD has rejected the two clans that He had chosen’? They are despising My people and no longer regard them as a nation.”

²⁵ This is what the LORD has said: “If I had not established My Covenant with day and night and the regulations for the heavens and the earth, ²⁶ then I would also reject the descendants of Jacob and My servant David. I would not have selected any of his descendants to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I shall bring their captives back and have compassion on them.”

34

The untrustworthiness of King Zedekiah and the people

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD while Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, all his army, all the kingdoms of the earth and all the peoples that were under his dominion were fighting against Jerusalem and all of its cities: ² This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: “Go and speak to Zedekiah, the king of Judah and tell him: ‘This is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am handing this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will burn it down. ³ You yourself will not escape from his power but will certainly be captured and handed over to him. You will see the king of Babylon eye to eye and speak with him face to face. Then you will go to Babylon.’”

⁴ “Nevertheless, listen to the Word of the LORD, Zedekiah, king of Judah! This is what the LORD has said about you: ‘You will not die by the sword. ⁵ You will die in peace. As people burnt spices for your fathers, the earlier kings, who were before you, so people will burn spices for you and lament for you. They will say, “Alas, master,” as they mourn for you. For I Myself have made this promise,’ declares the LORD.”

⁶ The prophet Jeremiah told all these things to Zedekiah, the king of Judah, in Jerusalem. ⁷ He did this while the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that were left, Lachish and Azekah. For these were the only fortified cities among the cities of Judah that survived.

Zedekiah's agreement that Hebrew slaves should be released

⁸ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the

LORD, after King Zedekiah had made an agreement with all the people in Jerusalem to proclaim release for them. ⁹ Everyone had been obliged to set free his male and female Hebrew slaves. No one among them was to serve a fellow-Jew as a slave. ¹⁰ All the officials and all the people who had accepted the agreement that everyone should set free his male or female slave and that no one should be a slave among them any longer, had complied with it. They had observed the conditions and had released them. ¹¹ However, after this, they changed their minds and took back the male and female slaves whom they had set free. They subjugated them as their male and female slaves.

¹² The Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ¹³ This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: "I Myself had made a Covenant with your fathers when I brought them out of slave-quarters in Egypt. I said, ¹⁴ 'After seven years each of you shall set free his fellow Hebrew who has been sold to you and who has been serving you for six years. You shall set him free and let him leave you.' However, your fathers did not listen to Me and paid no attention to Me. ¹⁵ You recently changed your conduct and did what I regard as right. Each of you proclaimed release for his countryman. You made an agreement in My presence at the Temple that has been called by My name. ¹⁶ However, you changed your minds and profaned My name when each of you took back his male and female slaves, whom you had set free as they wished. You forced them to be your male and female slaves again.

¹⁷ "Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: 'You did not listen to Me. None of you proclaimed release to his relative and his neighbour. Look! I am proclaiming freedom in your case,' declares the LORD, 'to the sword, to the plague and to famine. I shall make you abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the world. ¹⁸ I shall cause the men who have violated My Covenant and have not kept the terms of the covenant that they had made in My presence to be like the calf, when they cut it in two and walked through between its pieces. ¹⁹ They are the officials of Judah, the officials of Jerusalem, the court-officials, the priests and all the people of the land who walked through between the pieces of the calf. ²⁰ I shall hand them over to their enemies and to those who want to kill them. Their dead bodies will become food for the birds in the sky and the animals on the land. ²¹ I shall hand Zedekiah, the king of Judah and his officials over to their enemies, to those who want to kill them, to the army of the king of Babylon, which is now withdrawing from you. ²² Look! I shall give a Command,' declares the LORD, 'and I shall bring them back to this city. They will fight against it, capture it and burn it down. I shall make the cities of Judah a desolation, so that no one lives in them.'"

A commendation of the obedient example of the family of Rechab

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD during the time of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah: ² "Go to the family of the Rechabites and speak with them. Take them into one of the rooms at the Temple of the LORD. Then give them wine to drink."

³ I brought Jaazaniah, the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, his brothers and all his sons, the whole family of the Rechabites. ⁴ I took them into the room of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, the man of God at the Temple of the LORD. It was near the room of the officials, above the room of Maaseiah, the son of Shallum, who was the doorkeeper. ⁵ Then I set bowls full of wine and cups before the family of the Rechabites. I told them, "Drink some wine!"

⁶ However, they answered: "We shall not drink any wine. For Jonadab, the son of our ancestor Rechab, commanded us, 'You and your sons shall never drink any wine! ⁷ You shall not build any houses! You shall not sow seed! You shall not plant or own any vineyards! Rather, you shall always live in tents, that you may live for a long time on the land where you are staying as foreigners!' ⁸ We ourselves, as well as our wives, our sons and our daughters, have been obedient to everything that Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our ancestor, commanded us, so that we never drink any wine. ⁹ We do not build any houses to live in. We do not own any vineyards, fields or cultivated land. ¹⁰ We have been living in tents and have been obediently doing everything that our ancestor Jonadab commanded us to do. ¹¹ However, when Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon invaded the land, we said, 'Come and let us go to Jerusalem to escape from the Chaldean and Aramean armies!' So, we have been living in Jerusalem."

¹² Then the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ¹³ This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "Go and ask the people of Judah and those who are living in Jerusalem, 'Will you not receive Instruction and listen to My Words?' declares the LORD. ¹⁴ 'The orders that Jonadab, the son of Rechab, gave to his descendants not to drink any wine have been carried out. They have not drunk any to this day. For they have obeyed their ancestor's command. Although I Myself have been speaking to you persistently, you have not been listening to Me. ¹⁵ I have been persistently sending you all My servants the prophets to say, 'Each one of you, please turn from your evil way! Do what is right and stop following other gods and serving them! Then you will live in the land that I have given to you and your fathers.'" However, you have not been paying attention or listening to Me. ¹⁶ Indeed, the descendants of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, have been carrying out a command that their father gave them, but this people has not been obeying Me. ¹⁷ Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of

hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Look! I am bringing on Judah and all who are living in Jerusalem the whole calamity with which I have threatened them. For I have been speaking to them, but they have not been listening. I have been calling to them but they have not answered.””

¹⁸ Then Jeremiah told the family of the Rechabites: “This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Because you have obeyed the command of your ancestor Jonadab, kept all his instructions and done exactly as he commanded you, ¹⁹ therefore this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Jonadab, the son of Rechab, will never fail to have a man to stand before Me.””

36

The reading of Jeremiah's scroll in the Temple

¹ In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, this Word came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² “Take a scroll and write on it all the Words that I have been speaking to you about Israel, Judah and all the other nations, from the time when I began speaking to you during the time of Josiah until today! ³ Perhaps the family of Judah will listen to the whole calamity that I intend to bring on them, so that everyone will turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their wickedness and their sin.”

⁴ Then Jeremiah called Baruch, the son of Neriah. While Jeremiah was dictating, Baruch wrote on a scroll all the Words that the LORD had spoken to Jeremiah. ⁵ Jeremiah ordered Baruch: “I am under restriction and cannot go to the Temple of the LORD. ⁶ So, you yourself must go! On a day of fasting, while all the people are listening, you shall read the Words of the LORD at the Temple of the LORD from the scroll that you have written while I was dictating! You shall also read them in the hearing of all the people of Judah who come in from their cities! ⁷ Perhaps their plea for mercy will reach the presence of the LORD and everyone will turn from his evil way. For the anger and the rage that the LORD has been pronouncing against this people are great.”

⁸ Baruch, the son of Neriah, did exactly as the prophet Jeremiah had ordered him. He read the Words of the LORD from the scroll at the Temple of the LORD.

⁹ In the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who were coming in from the cities of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the LORD. ¹⁰ Baruch read the Words of Jeremiah from the scroll at the Temple of the LORD, while all the people were listening. He read them in the room of the scribe Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, which was in the upper courtyard, at the entrance of the New Gate of the Temple of the LORD. ¹¹ When Micaiah, the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard all the Words of the LORD from the scroll, ¹² he went down to the scribe's room at the king's palace and

saw that all the officials were sitting there. Elishama the scribe, Delaiah, the son of Shemaiah, Elnathan, the son of Achbor, Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, Zedekiah, the son of Hananiah and all the other officials were there. ¹³ Micaiah reported to them all the Words that he had heard when Baruch had been reading from the scroll while the people were listening. ¹⁴ Then all the officials sent Jehudi, the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, to tell Baruch, “Bring in your hand the scroll that you have been reading while the people were listening and come!”

Baruch, the son of Neriah, took the scroll in his hand and came to them. ¹⁵ They told him, “Please sit down and read it while we listen!”

Baruch read it while they were listening. ¹⁶ When they had heard all the Words, they looked at each other in trepidation and told Baruch, “We must certainly report all these Words to the king.”

¹⁷ They asked Baruch, “Please tell us, how did you write all these Words? Did he dictate them?”

¹⁸ Baruch answered them, “He dictated all these Words to me while I wrote them on the scroll with ink.”

¹⁹ Then the officials told Baruch, “Go and hide, you and Jeremiah! No one must find out where you are.”

The destruction of Jeremiah's scroll

²⁰ After they deposited the scroll in the room of the scribe Elishama, they went to the king at the court and reported all the Words while the king listened.

²¹ Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he brought it from the room of the scribe Elishama. Jehudi read it in the hearing of the king and all the officials, who were standing beside the king. ²² It was the ninth month and the king was sitting in the winter house with a fire burning in the fire-pot in front of him. ²³ When Jehudi had read three or four columns, the king kept cutting them off with a scribe's knife and throwing them into the fire in the fire-pot. He did this until the entire scroll had been burnt in the fire in the fire pot. ²⁴ Nevertheless, the king and all his attendants were not alarmed when they heard all these Words and did not tear their clothes. ²⁵ Even when Elnathan, Delaiah and Gemariah urged the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them. ²⁶ Although the king commanded Jerahmeel, the king's son, Seraiah, the son of Azriel and Shelemiah, the son of Abdeel, to arrest the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah, the LORD kept them hidden.

Jeremiah's dictation of another scroll

²⁷ After the king had burnt the scroll containing the Words that Baruch had written while Jeremiah was dictating, the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: ²⁸ “Take another scroll and write on it all the former Words, which were on the first scroll, which Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, has burnt! ²⁹ You shall say, about Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, ‘This is what the LORD has said: “You have burnt this scroll and asked, ‘Why have you written in it that the king of

Babylon will certainly come, destroy this land and cause human beings and animals to disappear from it?"

³⁰ "Therefore, this is what the LORD has said about Jehoiakim, the king of Judah: 'He will not have anyone to sit on the throne of David and his corpse will be thrown out and exposed to the heat by day and the frost by night. ³¹ I shall punish him, his descendants and his attendants for their wickedness. I shall bring on them, on those who are living in Jerusalem and on the people of Judah the whole calamity with which I have threatened them, because they have refused to listen.'"

³² Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch, the son of Neriah. He wrote on it, while Jeremiah was dictating, all the Words that had been on the scroll that Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, had burnt in the fire. Many more similar Messages were added to them.

37

The advice given to Zedekiah by Jeremiah — 2 Kings 24:17, 2 Chronicles 36:10

¹ King Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, installed as king in the land of Judah, succeeded Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim. ² However, neither he nor his attendants nor the people of the land listened to the Words that the LORD spoke through the prophet Jeremiah. ³ Nevertheless, King Zedekiah sent Jehucal, the son of Shelemiah and the priest Zephaniah, the son of Maaseiah, to the prophet Jeremiah, to ask him, "Please pray for us to the LORD, our God!"

⁴ Jeremiah was freely associating with the people. For he had not yet been put in prison. ⁵ The army of Pharaoh had come out of Egypt. When the Chaldeans, who were besieging Jerusalem, heard the news about them, they withdrew from Jerusalem. ⁶ Then the Word of the LORD came to the prophet Jeremiah: ⁷ This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said: "This is what you people shall tell the king of Judah, who is sending you to Me to ask Me for advice: 'Look! Pharaoh's army, which has come to bring help, is about to return to Egypt, to its own land. ⁸ The Chaldeans will come back and fight against this city. They will capture it and burn it down.'"

⁹ This is what the LORD has said: "Do not deceive yourselves by thinking, 'The Chaldeans will certainly leave us!' For they will not leave. ¹⁰ For even if you were to defeat the whole army of Chaldeans, who are fighting against you and only badly wounded men among them were to remain singly in their tents, they would get up and burn this city down."

The imprisonment of Jeremiah

¹¹ When the Chaldean army had withdrawn from Jerusalem because Pharaoh's army was coming, ¹² Jeremiah set out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin to participate in a division of property there

among the relationship. ¹³ When he was at the Benjamin Gate, a sentry on duty there, who was named Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah, arrested the prophet Jeremiah. He said, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans!"

¹⁴ Jeremiah said, "That is not so. I am not deserting to the Chaldeans."

However, Irijah would not listen to him, arrested Jeremiah and took him to the officials. ¹⁵ The officials were angry with Jeremiah, beat him and imprisoned him in the house of the scribe Jonathan. For it had been turned into a prison. ¹⁶ Indeed, Jeremiah was put into a vaulted cell in a dungeon and stayed there for a long time. ¹⁷ Then King Zedekiah sent men to fetch him. The king asked him privately in his palace: "Is there any Word from the LORD?"

Jeremiah said, "There is." Then he said, "You will be handed over to the king of Babylon."

¹⁸ Then Jeremiah asked King Zedekiah: "What wrong have I done to you, your attendants or this people, that you have put me in prison? ¹⁹ Where are the prophets of you people, who prophesied to you, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you or this land'? ²⁰ Now therefore, please listen, my master, the king! Please let my plea for mercy come before you! Do not send me back to the house of the scribe Jonathan, that I may not die there!"

²¹ King Zedekiah gave an order, and they handed Jeremiah over into custody at the court of the guard. A loaf of bread was given to him each day from the bakers' lane, until all the bread of the city had been used up. So, Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard.

38

The cruel imprisonment suffered by Jeremiah in a dungeon

¹ Shephatiah, the son of Mattan, Gedaliah, the son of Pashhur, Jucal, the son of Shelemiah and Pashhur, the son of Malchiah, heard the Words that Jeremiah was speaking to all the people: ² This is what the LORD said: "He who stays in this city will die by the sword, by famine or by the plague. However, he who goes out to the Chaldeans will live. He will have his life like plunder taken in war and will live." ³ This is what the LORD said: "This city will certainly be handed over to the army of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it."

⁴ Then the officials told the king: "Please, this man should be put to death. For he is weakening the morale of the soldiers who are left in this city and of all the people by speaking to them in this way. For this man is not intent on the welfare of this people but on their harm."

⁵ King Zedekiah answered, "Here he is. He is in your hands. For the king cannot do anything to stop you."

⁶ So, they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the courtyard of the guard. They used ropes to lower Jer-

emiah. There was no water in the cistern, only mud and Jeremiah sank down in the mud. ⁷ However, Ebed-Melech, a Cushite and an official at the king's palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the cistern. While the king was sitting at the Benjamin Gate, ⁸ Ebed-Melech left the king's palace and told the king, ⁹ "My master, Your Majesty, everything that these men have done to the prophet Jeremiah is wrong. They have thrown him into the cistern, and he will starve to death in that very place. For there is no more bread in the city."

¹⁰ Then the king commanded Ebed-Melech, the Cushite, "Take thirty men with you from here and pull the prophet Jeremiah up out of the cistern before he dies!"

¹¹ So, Ebed-Melech took the men who were with him, went to a place under the storehouse at the royal palace and got some old rags and worn-out clothes from there. Then he used ropes to lower them to Jeremiah in the cistern. ¹² Ebed-Melech, the Cushite, told Jeremiah: "Please put the rags and worn-out clothes under your armpits to pad the ropes!"

Jeremiah did that. ¹³ Then they pulled Jeremiah up with the ropes and lifted him out of the cistern. Then Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard.

Zedekiah's second consultation with Jeremiah and an offer to save Zedekiah

¹⁴ King Zedekiah sent some men to fetch the prophet Jeremiah to him at the third entrance of the Temple of the LORD. The king told Jeremiah: "I shall ask you a question. Do not hide anything from me!"

¹⁵ Jeremiah asked Zedekiah: "If I tell you, will you not certainly put me to death? Even if I were to give you advice, you would not listen to me."

¹⁶ Then King Zedekiah secretly made an oath to Jeremiah: "As surely as the LORD lives, who has made these lives of ours, I shall not put you to death and not hand you over to these men, who want to take your life."

¹⁷ Then Jeremiah told Zedekiah: "This is what the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: 'If you actually do surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then your life will be spared, this city will not be burnt down, and you and your family will live. ¹⁸ However, if you do not surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city will be handed over to the Chaldeans, they will burn it down, and you will not escape from them.'"

¹⁹ King Zedekiah answered Jeremiah: "I am afraid of the Jews who have deserted to the Chaldeans. I fear that they will hand me over to them and that they will treat me cruelly."

²⁰ Jeremiah said: "You will not be handed over to them. Please listen to the voice of the LORD about what I am telling you, that it may be well with you and that your soul may live! ²¹ However, if you refuse to surrender, this is what the LORD has revealed to me: ²² 'Look! All the women who are left in the palace of the king of Judah will be handed over to the

officials of the king of Babylon. Look! They will say: "Your trusted friends have deceived you and had their way with you. Now that your feet have been sunk in the mud, they have turned away from you." ²³ All your wives and your sons will be led out to the Chaldeans. You yourself will not escape from them but will be caught by the king of Babylon, and this city will be burnt down.'"

An agreement between Jeremiah and Zedekiah

²⁴ Then Zedekiah told Jeremiah: "No one must learn about these Words. Otherwise, you will die! ²⁵ If the officials hear that I have spoken with you and come to you and ask you, 'Please tell us what you told the king and what the king said to you! Do not hide it from us! Otherwise we shall kill you,' ²⁶ you shall tell them, 'I was presenting my plea to the king not to send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.'"

²⁷ When all the officials came to Jeremiah and asked him, he told them everything that the king had instructed him to say. Therefore, they stopped questioning him. For the conversation had not been overheard.

²⁸ Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard until the day when Jerusalem was captured. He was still there when Jerusalem was captured.

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The capture of Jerusalem — 2 Kings 25:1-12, 2 Chronicles 36:19-2, Jeremiah 52:4-16

¹ In the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah, the king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and his whole army advanced against Jerusalem and besieged it. ² On the ninth day of the fourth month, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the city wall was broken through. ³ Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came and held a session at the Middle Gate: Nergal-Sar-Ezer, Samgar-Nebu, Sar-Sekim, a chief officer, Nergal-Sar-Ezer, a general and all the rest of the officers of the king of Babylon. ⁴ When Zedekiah, the king of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled. They left the city at night by way of the king's garden through a gate between the two walls and went towards the desert region. ⁵ However, the army of the Chaldeans pursued them and caught up with Zedekiah in the desert regions of Jericho. When they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him. ⁶ The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah while he was watching. The king of Babylon also slaughtered all the nobles of Judah. ⁷ Then he blinded Zedekiah and tied him up with bronze chains to take him to Babylon. ⁸ The Chaldeans burned down the king's palace and the houses of the people and pulled down the walls of Jerusalem. ⁹ Then Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took away into exile at Babylon the rest of the people who were left in the city, the deserters who had defected to him and the people who remained. ¹⁰ Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, left

behind in the land of Judah some of the poor people who owned nothing at all. At that time he also gave them vineyards and fields.

The release of Jeremiah

¹¹ Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had issued a command about Jeremiah through Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard: ¹² “Take him! Look after him! Do not do him any harm but do for him whatever he asks!”

¹³ Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, Nebushazban, the chief high official, Nergal-Sar-Ezer, the general and all the other chief officers of the king of Babylon ¹⁴ sent some men who brought Jeremiah out of the courtyard of the guard. They handed him over to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, to take him home. Therefore, he remained among the people.

The reward to Ebed-Melech

¹⁵ The Word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah while he was confined in the courtyard of the guard: ¹⁶ “Go and tell Ebed-Melech, the Cushite, ‘This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Look! I shall fulfil My Words against this city for harm and not for good, and they will be fulfilled before +++ +on that day. ¹⁷ However, I shall deliver you on that day,” declares the LORD, “and you will not be handed over to the men whom you fear. ¹⁸ For I shall certainly rescue you. You will not fall by the sword but will salvage your life like plunder taken in war. For you have trusted Me,” declares the LORD.’”

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The release of Jeremiah from custody — 2 Kings 25:22-26

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD after Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had released him at Ramah after he had taken him, bound in chains, along with all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, who were being deported to Babylon. ² When the captain of the guard had taken charge of Jeremiah, he told him: “The LORD, your God, had pronounced this calamity against this place. ³ The LORD has brought it about and has carried out what He had said. This has happened to you people because you have been sinning against the LORD and have not been listening to His voice. ⁴ Now therefore, Look! I have released you today from your handcuffs. If you would like to come with me to Babylon, come, and I shall look after you. However, if you think it is wrong for you to come with me to Babylon, decline! Look! The whole land is open to you. Go wherever you think it is good and right to go!”

Jeremiah's stay with Governor Gedaliah — 2 Kings 25:22-24

⁵ While Jeremiah had still not yet gone back, he said: “Then go back to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has installed as the governor over the cities of Judah. Live among the people with him! Or go wherever you think it is right to go!”

The captain of the guard also gave him an allowance

of food and a gift and released him. ⁶ Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah and lived with him among the people who had been left in the land.

A warning to Gedaliah about a danger of assassination

⁷ All the captains of the forces in the open country and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, over the land and had put him in charge of some of the poorest men, women and children in the land, those who had not been deported to Babylon. ⁸ They went to Gedaliah at Mizpah. They were Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan, the sons of Kareah, Seraiah, the son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai, the Netophathite, Jezaniah, the son of a man from Maacah, together with their men. ⁹ Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, swore an oath to them and their men. He said: “Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans! Live in the land, serve the king of Babylon, and you will be successful! ¹⁰ Look! I myself shall live at Mizpah, to represent you before the Chaldeans who come to us. You yourselves should gather wine, summer fruit and olive-oil, store them in your containers and live in your cities, which you have occupied.”

¹¹ Similarly, all the Jews who were in Moab, among the Ammonites, in Edom and in all the other countries heard that the king of Babylon had left a few survivors from Judah and had put Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, in charge of them. ¹² Then all the Jews returned from all the places to which they had been driven and came to Gedaliah at Mizpah in the land of Judah. They gathered a large supply of wine and summer fruits. ¹³ Johanan, the son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. ¹⁴ They asked him: “Do you have certain knowledge that Baalis, the king of the Ammonites, has sent Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, to take your life?”

However, Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, did not believe them. ¹⁵ Then Johanan, the son of Kareah, secretly asked Gedaliah at Mizpah: “Please, let me go and strike down Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah! No one will find out. Why should he take your life, so that all the Jews who have gathered around you would be scattered and what is left of Judah would perish?”

¹⁶ However, Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, told Johanan, the son of Kareah: “You shall not do this! For what you are saying about Ishmael is not true.”

41

The assassination of Gedaliah by Ishmael — 2 Kings 25:25-26

¹ In the seventh month, Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, a member of the royal family and one of the chief officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. While they were eating food together there at Mizpah,

² Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah and the ten men with

him got up, struck down Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword and killed him. They killed the man whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the land. ³ Ishmael also struck down all the Jews who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, as well as the Chaldean soldiers who happened to be there. ⁴ On the day after the murder of Gedaliah, before anyone knew about it, ⁵ eighty men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria. Their beards had been shaved off, their clothes were torn, and they had made cuts on their bodies. They were bringing grain-offerings and frankincense to present at the house of the LORD. ⁶ Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, came out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he walked along. When he met them, he told them, "Come in to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam."

⁷ When they had come into the middle of the city, Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them and threw them inside the cistern. ⁸ However, there happened to be ten men among them who told Ishmael: "Do not put us to death! For we have hidden reserves of wheat, barley, olive-oil and honey in the open country."

So, he let them alone and did not kill them with their companions. ⁹ The cistern into which Ishmael had thrown all the bodies of the men whom he had struck down along with Gedaliah was the same cistern that King Asa had made as a defence against Baasha, the king of Israel. Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, filled it with the dead bodies. ¹⁰ Then Ishmael took captive all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the king's daughters and all the other people who were left at Mizpah, over whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had appointed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam. After Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, had taken them captive, he set out to go across to the Ammonites.

¹¹ However, when Johanan, the son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him heard about all the crimes that Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, had committed, ¹² they took all their men and went to fight against Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah. They caught up with him at the large pool at Gibeon. ¹³ When all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan, the son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him, they were glad. ¹⁴ Then all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and went back to Johanan, the son of Kareah.

¹⁵ However, Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, escaped from Johanan with eight men and went to the Ammonites. ¹⁶ Then Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the leaders of the forces with him took away from Mizpah all the rest of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, after Ishmael had struck down Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam. Johanan had brought back from Gibeon men, soldiers, women, children and court-officials. ¹⁷ Then they went and stayed at Geruth-Chimham, near Bethlehem, intend-

ing to go on to Egypt, ¹⁸ because of the Chaldeans. For they were afraid of them, because Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah, had struck down Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the land.

42

The warning from Jeremiah to the survivors against migrating to Egypt

¹ Then all the commanders of the forces, Johanan, the son of Kareah, Jezaniah, the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people, from the least to the greatest, approached

² the prophet Jeremiah and asked him: "Please grant our request! Pray to the LORD, your God, for us, for all who are left here! For only a few of us out of many people have been left, as you can see for yourself.

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

⁴ The prophet Jeremiah told them: "I have heard you. Look! I shall intercede to the LORD, your God, as you have requested, and tell you every word that the LORD replies to you. I shall not keep anything back from you."

⁵ Then they told Jeremiah: "May the LORD be a true and **faithful witness** against us if we do not do exactly as the LORD, your God, commissions you to tell us!

⁶ We ourselves shall listen to the voice of the LORD, our God, to whom we are sending you, whether it is good or bad, that we may be successful. We shall certainly listen to the voice of the LORD, our God."

⁷ After ten days the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah. ⁸ Then he summoned Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the commanders of the forces who were with him and all the people, from the least to the greatest. ⁹ Jeremiah told them: "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your plea before Him, has said: ¹⁰ 'If you really do remain in this land, I shall build you up and not demolish you. I shall plant you and not uproot you. For I regret the calamity that I have brought on you.

¹¹ Do not fear the king of Babylon, of whom you are now afraid! Do not fear him!' declares the LORD. 'For I am with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hands. ¹² I shall have compassion on you,

that he may have compassion on you and restore you to your own land. ¹³ However, if you say, "We shall not remain in this land," so that you do not listen to the voice of the LORD, your God, ¹⁴ and, if you say, "No! Rather, we shall go to Egypt, where we shall not see war, hear the sound of the trumpet or hunger for food and shall remain there," ¹⁵ then listen to the Word of the LORD, remnant of Judah! This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "If you are determined to enter Egypt and to go to live there as foreigners, ¹⁶ then the sword that you fear will catch up with you there in Egypt. The famine about which you are worried will follow you closely

to Egypt, and you will die there. ¹⁷ Then all the men

who have been determined to go to Egypt to live there as foreigners will die by the sword, by famine and by the plague. None of them will escape or survive from the calamity that I shall bring upon them.”¹⁸ For this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘As My anger and My wrath have been poured out on those who were living in Jerusalem, so My wrath will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You will become a curse and a horrific example. People will use your names in curse-formulas and insults. You will never see this place again.’

¹⁹ “The LORD has told you, remnant of Judah, ‘Do not go to Egypt!’ Know for certain that I have warned you today. ²⁰ For you imperilled your own lives when you yourselves sent me to the LORD, your God and said, ‘Pray to the LORD, our God, for us! Tell us exactly what the LORD, our God, says, and we shall do it!’ ²¹ I have told you today, but you have not been listening to the voice of the LORD, your God or to anything that He has been sending me to tell you. ²² Now therefore, know for certain that you will die by the sword, by famine and by the plague in the place where you desire to go to live as foreigners.”

43

The forced departure of Jeremiah to Egypt and his warning of judgment

¹ When Jeremiah had finished telling all the people all these Words of the LORD, their God, with which the LORD, their God, had sent him to them, ² Azariah, the son of Hoshaiiah, Johanan, the son of Kareah and all the insolent men kept telling Jeremiah: “You are telling a lie. The LORD, our God, did not send you to say, ‘You shall not go to Egypt to live there as foreigners!’” ³ Rather, Baruch, the son of Neriah is inciting you against us, that he may hand us over to the Chaldeans, that they may kill us or take us into exile in Babylon.”

⁴ So, Johanan, the son of Kareah, all the commanders of the forces and all the people did not listen to the voice of the LORD, which told them to remain in the land of Judah. ⁵ Instead, Johanan, the son of Kareah, and all the commanders of the forces took all who were left of Judah with them. These were all the people who had returned from all the nations to which they had been driven to live as dependants in the land of Judah. ⁶ They took the men, the women, the children, the princesses and every other person whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had left with Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan. They also took the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch, the son of Neriah. ⁷ They went into Egypt, because they had not listened to the voice of the LORD and arrived at Tahpanhes.

A prophecy that Nebuchadnezzar will invade Egypt

⁸ Then the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes: ⁹ “Take in your hands some large stones and bury them in the mortar in the quadrangle that is at the entrance of Pharaoh’s palace in Tahpanhes,

while the men of Judah are watching you! ¹⁰ Tell them, ‘This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: “Look! I shall send to get My servant Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. I shall set his throne on top of these stones, which I have buried, and he will spread his royal canopy over them. ¹¹ He will come and defeat Egypt. He will bring death to those who are going to die. He will capture those who are going to be captured. He will strike with the sword those who are going to be struck with the sword. ¹² I shall kindle a fire in the temples of the gods of Egypt. He will burn down the temples and take their gods away as captives. He will rid Egypt of vermin as a shepherd rids his coat of vermin and then leave from there unscathed. ¹³ He will smash to pieces the obelisks of Heliopolis in Egypt and burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt.”’”

44

A prediction that the Jews in Egypt will be punished for their persistent idolatry

¹ This is the Word that came to Jeremiah about all the Jews who were living in Egypt, at Migdol, at Tahpanhes, at Memphis and in the land of Pathros: ² This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, said: “You have seen the whole calamity that I have brought against Jerusalem and all the other cities of Judah. Look! Today they are ruins where no one lives. ³ The reason is the wickedness that they have committed. They provoked Me to anger by going to burn offerings in the service of other gods, which neither they, nor you, nor your fathers knew. ⁴ Yet I had been persistently sending to you all My servants, the prophets, to say: ‘Please do not do this detestable thing, which I hate!’ ⁵ Nevertheless, they would not listen or pay any attention. They would not turn away from their wickedness and stop burning offerings to other gods. ⁶ Therefore, My wrath and My anger have gushed out and blazed up in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. They have become the desolate ruin that they are today.”

⁷ “Now therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has asked: ‘Why are you causing a great calamity against yourselves, so that you are cutting off from yourselves men, women, infants and babies, out of Judah, so that you are not leaving yourselves any remnant? ⁸ Why are you provoking Me to anger with what your own hands are doing, burning offerings to other gods in Egypt, where you are coming to live as foreigners, that you may prepare yourselves for extermination and become words used in cursing and a method of casting insults among all the nations of the earth? ⁹ Have you forgotten the wicked deeds of your fathers, the wicked deeds of the kings of Judah, the wicked deeds of their wives, your own wicked deeds and the wicked deeds of your own wives, which they have been committing in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁰ They have

not been contrite even to this day. They have had no fear and have not been putting into practice My Law and My statutes, which I have set before you and your fathers.’

¹¹ “Therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘Look! I am determined to bring calamity against you and to exterminate all of Judah. ¹² I shall take away the rest of the Jews, who have been determined to come to Egypt to live as foreigners here. They will all meet their end. They will fall in Egypt by the sword. They will come to an end through famine. From the least to the greatest they will die by the sword and by famine. They will become an object of cursing, something horrifying, an expression used to curse and a formula to cast an insult. ¹³ I shall punish those who are living in Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, famine and the plague. ¹⁴ None of the remnant of Judah who are coming here to live as foreigners in Egypt will have any survivor or escapee. They will not return to the land of Judah, where they are longing to go back to live. For they will not return, except for a few fugitives.”

¹⁵ Then all the men who knew that their wives were burning offerings to other gods and all the women who were standing there, a great assembly and all the people who were living at Pathros in Egypt, answered Jeremiah: ¹⁶ “As for the Word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we are not listening to you. ¹⁷ Rather, we shall do everything that we ourselves have said we shall do. We shall burn offerings to the queen of heaven and pour out drink-offerings to her, as we have been doing, we, our fathers, our kings and our officials, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. We had plenty of food then, we were well off and did not see any calamity. ¹⁸ However, since we ceased burning offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink-offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been destroyed by the sword and by famine.”

¹⁹ Indeed, the women said: “When we were burning offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink-offerings to her, was it without the consent of our husbands that we were making cakes for her with her image on them and pouring out drink-offerings to her?”

²⁰ Then Jeremiah asked all the people, the men, the women and all the other people who were giving him this reply: ²¹ “Has the LORD not remembered the sacrificial smoke that you sent up in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you, your fathers, your kings, your officials and the people of the land? Has it not come into His mind? ²² The LORD could no longer endure your wicked deeds and the detestable practices that that you had been committing. That is why your land has become a ruin, a horrific sight and something people mention when they curse, with

no one living there, as is so today. ²³ It is because you have been burning such offerings and because you have been sinning against the LORD, have not been listening to the voice of the LORD and have not been living according to His Law, His statutes and His Testimonies that this calamity has happened to you, as is so today.”

²⁴ Then Jeremiah told all the people, including all the women: “Listen to the Word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who are in Egypt! ²⁵ This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: ‘You and your wives have declared it with your own mouths and have substantiated it by your own actions, when you say: “We shall certainly carry out our vows, which we have made, to burn offerings to the queen of heaven and to pour out drink-offerings to her.” You will certainly confirm your vows and perform your vows!”’

²⁶ “Therefore, listen to the Word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who are living in Egypt! ‘Look! I have sworn by My great name,’ the LORD has said, ‘that no one from Judah who lives anywhere in Egypt will ever again use his mouth to call on My name to take the oath, “As surely as the Lord GOD lives.”’

²⁷ Look! I am going to keep watch over them for calamity and not for good. All the people of Judah who are in Egypt will be destroyed by the sword and by famine, until they are all gone. ²⁸ Those who escape the sword and return from Egypt to Judah will be very few. All the survivors of Judah, who have come to Egypt to live here as foreigners, will know whose word will stand, Mine or theirs. ²⁹ This will be the sign to you,’ declares the LORD, ‘that I shall punish you in this place, that you may know that My threats to bring calamity against you will certainly come true.’ ³⁰ This is what the LORD has said: ‘Look! I shall hand Pharaoh Hophra, the king of Egypt over to his enemies and to those who want to kill him, as I have handed Zedekiah, the king of Judah, over to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, who was his enemy and who wanted to kill him.”’

45

A message of comfort from God to the scribe Baruch

¹ This is the Word that the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch, the son of Neriah, when he had written these Words on a scroll while Jeremiah was dictating, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah: ² “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, has said about you, Baruch: ³ ‘You have been saying: “How terrible for me! For the LORD has added sorrow to my pain. I have become weary because of my groaning. I have not found any rest.” ⁴ This is what you must tell him: “This is what the LORD has said: ‘Look! I am demolishing what I have built. I am uprooting what I have planted, that is, the whole land. ⁵ Are you yourself looking for great things for yourself? Do not look for them! For look! I am bringing

calamity upon all human beings,' declares the LORD. 'However, I shall grant you your life like plunder taken in war wherever you go.'”

46

A prophecy against Egypt

¹ This is the Word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah about the nations. ² This is about Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh-Neco, the king of Egypt, which was beside the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah: ³ “Prepare the small shields and the large shields and advance into the battle! ⁴ Harness the horses! Mount, horsemen! Take your positions with your helmets on! Polish your lances! Put on your coats of mail! ⁵ Why have I seen it? They will be filled with terror and will turn back. Their warriors will be scattered and flee in haste. They will not turn around. There will be terror on every side,' declares the LORD. ⁶ 'Let the speedy man not get away! Let the warrior not escape! In the north, beside the river Euphrates, they will stumble and fall.' ⁷ “Who is this who is rising like the Nile, like streams with their water surging? ⁸ Egypt is rising like the Nile, like streams with water that is surging. He has said, 'Let me rise! Let me cover the earth! Let me destroy cities and those who are living in them!' ⁹ Rear up, horses, and drive madly, chariots! Let the warriors go out, the men of Cush and Put, who handle shields and the men of Lud, who are skilled in handling and bending bows! ¹⁰ However, that day will belong to the Lord GOD of hosts. It will be a day of vengeance, when He takes revenge on His enemies. The sword will devour until it is satisfied and has drunk its fill of their blood.'

“For the Lord GOD of hosts will conduct a sacrifice in the North-Country beside the Euphrates River. ¹¹ Go up to Gilead and get balsam, virgin daughter, Egypt! You have been using many medicines without results. There is no healing for you. ¹² The nations will hear about your shame and the earth will be full of your cry of distress. For one warrior will stumble against another. They will both fall together.”

A prediction that Babylon will strike Egypt

¹³ This is the Word that the LORD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, to defeat Egypt: ¹⁴ “Declare this in Egypt! Proclaim this in Migdol! Proclaim this in Memphis and Tahpanhes! Say, 'Take your position and be prepared! For the sword will devour around you.'

¹⁵ “Why will your powerful men be laid low? They will not remain standing because the LORD will thrust them away. ¹⁶ He will make many men stumble, and they will also fall. They will tell one another, 'Get up! Let us go back to our own people and to the land where we were born, to get away from the vio-

lent swords!' ¹⁷ People will exclaim there: 'Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, is only a loud noise. He has missed his opportune time.'

¹⁸ “As surely as I live,” declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts, “someone who is like Tabor among the mountains and who is like Carmel beside the sea will come. ¹⁹ Prepare your baggage for exile, resident daughter, Egypt! For Memphis will become a wasteland. It will be laid waste and no one will live there.

²⁰ “Egypt is a very handsome heifer, but a stinging fly is coming. It is coming from the north. ²¹ Even her mercenaries are like fattened steers in her ranks. Yes, even they will turn away and flee together. They will not take their stand. For the day of their calamity, the time for them to be punished, will come on them.

²² “She is making a sound like a snake moving away. For her enemies are coming with an army. They will come against her with axes like men who cut firewood. ²³ They will cut down her forest,” declares the LORD, “even though it is dense. For they are more numerous than locusts. They cannot be counted.

²⁴ Daughter Egypt will be ashamed. She will be handed over to a people from the north.

²⁵ “The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: 'Look! I shall punish Amon of Thebes. I shall also punish Pharaoh, Egypt, her gods and her kings, yes, Pharaoh and those who trust in him. ²⁶ I shall hand them over to those who want to kill them, to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon and his officers. However, after that it will be inhabited as it was in the days of old,' declares the LORD.

A promise that God will save Israel

²⁷ “However, you yourself should not be afraid, My servant Jacob! Do not be dismayed, Israel! For look! I shall save you from far away and your descendants from the land where they are exiles. Jacob will return, be at peace and be at ease and no one will make him afraid. ²⁸ You yourself should not be afraid, My servant, Jacob!” declares the LORD. “For I am with you. For I shall completely destroy all the nations to which I have driven you. Nevertheless, I shall not completely destroy you. I shall be just when I discipline you but shall certainly not declare you free from blame.”

47

A prophecy against Philistia

¹ This is the Word of the LORD, which came to the prophet Jeremiah about the Philistines, before Pharaoh had defeated Gaza. ² This is what the LORD said: “Look! Water is rising out of the north and will become an overflowing river. It will flow over the land and everything in it, the city and those who are living in it. Human beings will cry out and everyone who lives in the land will wail, ³ because of the stamping sound of the hoofs of their stallions, the rattling of their chariots and the clatter of their wheels. Fathers will not turn back to help their children, because their

hands will hang limp, ⁴ because of the day that is coming to lay waste all the Philistines and to exterminate every remaining ally from Tyre and Sidon. For the LORD is going to destroy the Philistines, the remnant of the island of Crete. ⁵ Gaza will shave its head in mourning. Ashkelon will be silenced. You people who are left on their flat land, how long will you gash yourselves? ⁶ You cry out: 'How horrible, you sword of the LORD! How long will you refuse to be quiet? Return to your scabbard! Rest there and be still!' ⁷ How can it be quiet when the LORD has given it a Command? He has summoned it against Ashkelon and against the seacoast."

48

A prophecy against Moab

¹ About Moab. This is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "How terrible for Nebo!" For it will be devastated! Kiriathaim will be ashamed. It will be captured. The stronghold will be put to shame and shattered. ² The glory of Moab will be no more. People will plan calamity against it in Heshbon: "Come! Let us exterminate it, that it may not be a nation any longer!" You also, Madmen, will be silenced. The sword will pursue you.

³ Listen! There is a cry from Horonaim, "Devastation and great destruction!" ⁴ Moab will be shattered. Its little ones make their screams heard. ⁵ For weeping people will go up the mountain path to Luhith. For people will hear anguished cries about the destruction on the road down to Horonaim. ⁶ Flee! Save your lives or you will be like a juniper-tree in the desert! ⁷ For, because you have been trusting in your own works and your own treasures, you also will be captured. Chemosh will go into exile together with his priests and his officials. ⁸ The destroyer will come into every city and no city will escape. The valley will be destroyed and the plain will be laid waste, as the LORD has predicted. ⁹ Give flowers to Moab! For it will fly away. Its cities will become a horrific sight, without anyone living in them.

¹⁰ Cursed is he who does the work of the LORD sluggishly! Cursed also is he who keeps his sword back from shedding blood!

¹¹ Moab has been at ease since it was young. It has settled calmly on its dregs. It has not been poured from one vessel to another. It has not gone into exile. That is why its taste has remained uniform and its aroma has not changed.

¹² "Therefore, look! The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I shall send cellar-men to it who will tilt it, empty out its vessels and smash its jars."

¹³ Then Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh, as the family of Israel was ashamed that they had been trusting in Bethel.

¹⁴ How can you say, "We are heroes and mighty warriors"? ¹⁵ "Moab will be devastated, the enemy will

attack its cities and its finest young men will go down to be slaughtered," declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts. ¹⁶ The catastrophe of Moab is imminent and its calamity is approaching very swiftly. ¹⁷ Mourn over it, all you who are its neighbours! All you who know its name should say, "How the strong sceptre, the glorious staff, has been broken!"

¹⁸ Daughter Dibon, come down from your place of honour and sit on the parched ground! For the destroyer of Moab will come up against you. He will destroy your fortifications. ¹⁹ You who live in Aroer, stand beside the road and watch! Ask the man who is fleeing and the woman who is running for safety, "What has happened?" ²⁰ Moab is in disgrace. For it is dismayed. Howl and cry! Tell the news beside the Arnon, that Moab has been laid waste! ²¹ Judgment has come to the plateau, to Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath, ²² Dibon, Nebo, Beth-Diblathaim, ²³ Kiriathaim, Beth-Gamul, Beth-Meon, ²⁴ Kerioth, Bozrah and all the other cities of Moab, far and near.

²⁵ "The horn of Moab will be cut off and its arm will be broken," declares the LORD. ²⁶ Make Moab drunk! For it has exalted itself against the LORD, so that Moab will wallow in its own vomit and become a laughingstock. ²⁷ Had you not treated Israel as a laughingstock? Had it been caught in the act among thieves, that whenever you spoke about it you shook your head?

²⁸ You people who are living in Moab, abandon the cities and live among the rocks! Be like the dove that makes its nest on the side of the mouth of a cave!

²⁹ We have heard about the pride of Moab. It is very proud. We have heard about its loftiness, its insolence, its arrogance and its haughtiness.

³⁰ "I Myself know its arrogance," declares the LORD, but there is no reason for its arrogance. It has not been doing as it has been boasting. ³¹ That is why I wail over Moab. I cry out for all Moab. There is moaning for the men of Kir-Hareseth. ³² I shall weep for you more than for Jazer, vine of Sibmah! Your branches spread to the sea. They have reached as far as the Sea of Jazer. The plunderers will strike your summer fruits and fall on your grape-harvest. ³³ Gladness and joy will vanish from the orchards and fields of Moab. "I shall stop the flow of wine from the winepresses." No one will tread them with joyful shouting. The shouting will not be joyful shouting. ³⁴ People will raise their voices from where they cry in distress at Heshbon as far as Elealeh and as far as Jahaz and from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath-Shelishiyah. Indeed, the water of Nimrim will also become a wasteland.

³⁵ "I shall bring an end," declares the LORD, "to anyone in Moab who presents a sacrifice on a high place and burns an offering to his god." ³⁶ That is why my heart moans for Moab like a flute. My heart moans like a flute for the men of Kir-Hareseth. That is why the wealth that they have gained has been lost. ³⁷ For

every head has a shaved patch and every beard has been trimmed. That is why there are incisions on all hands and there is sackcloth on their waists.

³⁸ “There will be mourning everywhere on all the flat roofs of Moab and in the public squares because I have shattered Moab like a jar that no one wants,” declares the LORD. ³⁹ They will wail, “How Moab has been shattered! How it has turned its back in disgrace!” Moab will become a laughingstock and an object of horror to all its neighbours.

⁴⁰ For this is what the LORD has said: “Look! Someone will swoop down like an eagle and spread out his wings against Moab.” ⁴¹ The cities will be captured and the strongholds will be conquered. On that day the hearts of Moab’s warriors will be like the heart of a woman in labour. ⁴² Moab will be destroyed and no longer be a people. For it has magnified itself against the LORD. ⁴³ “Terror, a trapping-pit and a trapping-net are awaiting you, you who live in Moab!” declares the LORD. ⁴⁴ He who flees from the terror will fall into the trapping-pit, and he who climbs out of the trapping-pit will be caught in the trapping-net. “For I shall bring on Moab the year when it will be punished,” declares the LORD.

⁴⁵ People who are fleeing will stand exhausted in the shadow of Heshbon. For a fire will come out of Heshbon and a flame from inside Sihon. It will devour the foreheads of the people of Moab and the skulls of those noisy people. ⁴⁶ How terrible for you, Moab! The people of Chemosh will be destroyed. For your sons will be taken into exile and your daughters into captivity.

⁴⁷ “Yet I shall bring back the captives of Moab in the last days,” declares the LORD.

The judgment against Moab ends here.

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A prophecy against the Ammonites — Obadiah 1-5

¹ About the Ammonites. This is what the LORD has asked: “Has Israel no sons? Has he no heirs?” Why, then, has Milcom dispossessed Gad? Why have his people settled in the cities of Gad? ² “Therefore, look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I shall sound the alarm of battle against Rabbah of the Ammonites.” It will become a desolate heap of rubble. Its villages will be burnt down. “Then Israel will dispossess those who had dispossessed it,” the LORD has said. ³ Wail, Heshbon, because Ai has been devastated! Cry out, daughters of Rabbah! Put on sackcloth and mourn! Run back and forth between the walls! For Milcom will be taken away into exile, together with his priests and his officials. ⁴ Why do you boast about your valleys, your overflowing valley, faithless daughter? She used to trust in her treasures. She asked, “Who will attack me?” ⁵ “Look! I shall bring terror against you,” declares the Lord GOD of hosts, “from all who are around you.” You people will be driven out, each one individually. No one will gather

those who are fleeing. ⁶ “However, after that I shall bring back the captives of the Ammonites,” declares the LORD.

A prophecy against Edom

⁷ Concerning Edom. This is what the LORD of hosts has asked: “Is there no longer any wisdom in Teman? Have prudent people lost their advice? Has their wisdom become rotten? ⁸ Flee, turn away and live in deep places, inhabitants of Dedan! For when I punish Esau I shall bring calamity on him. ⁹ If grape-pickers were to come to you, would they not leave some gleanings behind? If thieves came at night, they would pillage only what is enough for them. ¹⁰ However, I Myself shall strip Esau bare. I shall uncover their hiding places. They will not be able to hide. Their children, fellow-countrymen and neighbouring people will be destroyed and will not exist any longer. ¹¹ Abandon your orphans! I Myself shall keep them alive. Your widows should trust in Me!”

¹² For this is what the LORD has said: “Look! If those who have not been condemned to drink the cup must drink it, will you yourself remain quite blameless? You will not remain blameless. Rather, you shall certainly drink it! ¹³ For I have sworn by myself,” declares the LORD, “that Bozrah will become a horrible and disgraceful wasteland and an expression used to curse. All its cities will be permanent ruins.”

¹⁴ I have heard a report from the LORD. A messenger has been sent among the nations, to say: “Gather together and attack it! Prepare for battle! ¹⁵ For look! I shall make you insignificant among the other nations, despised among other human beings. ¹⁶ The horror that you inspire and your own proud heart have deceived you, although you are living in the crevices of the cliffs and are occupying the highest places on the hills. Although you make your nest as high up as the eagle’s, I shall bring you down from there,” declares the LORD.

¹⁷ Edom will become something horrible. Everyone who goes past it will be appalled and hiss because of all its plagues. ¹⁸ “As Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbouring towns were overthrown,” the LORD has said, “no one will live there.” No human being will live there as a foreigner. ¹⁹ “Look! As a lion comes up from the thicket beside the Jordan into a pastureland beside a permanent stream, I shall hurriedly chase Edom away from its place. I shall appoint whomever I choose over it. For who is like Me? Who can challenge Me? What shepherd is there who can take his stand against Me? ²⁰ Therefore, listen to the plan that the LORD has made against Edom and to His purposes, which He has formed against those who live in Teman! People will certainly drag away even the little ones of the flock. He will certainly make their pastureland desolate because of them. ²¹ The earth will quake at the sound of their downfall. The sound of their cry of distress will be heard at the Red Sea.

²² Look! Someone will mount up like an eagle, swoop down and spread out his wings against Bozrah. On that day the hearts of the warriors of Edom will be like the heart of a woman in labour.

A prophecy against Damascus

²³ About Damascus: Hamath and Arpad will become ashamed. For they will hear bad news. They will undulate back and forth in fear. There will be anxiety on the sea. It will be unable to become calm.

²⁴ Damascus will become feeble. It will turn to flee and terror will grip it. Anguish and pains will take hold of it, like a woman in labour.

²⁵ “How is it that the famous city, the town in which I delight, has not been abandoned?” ²⁶ That is why its young men will fall in its public squares and all its soldiers will be destroyed on that day,” declares the LORD of hosts.

²⁷ “I shall set fire to the walls of Damascus, and it will burn down the fortified palaces of Ben-Hadad.”

A prophecy against Kedar and Hazor

²⁸ About Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, will strike down. This is what the LORD has said: “Get ready! Attack Kedar!” Plunder the people of the east!

²⁹ Their tents and their flocks will be taken. Their tent-curtains, all their equipment and their camels will be taken away from them. People will shout to them: “Terror is all around!”

³⁰ “Flee! Go far away from home! Live in deep places, you who are living in Hazor!” declares the LORD. For Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, will make a decision against you. He will devise a plan against you. ³¹ Get ready! “Attack a nation that is at ease and is living in security!” declares the LORD. It has no gates or bars. It lives alone. ³² Their camels will be taken as plunder and their numerous herds as spoil. “I shall scatter to every wind those who clip their hair at the temples. I shall bring their calamity on them from every direction,” declares the LORD. ³³ Hazor will become a place where only jackals live, a permanent wasteland. No one will live there. No human being will live in it as a foreigner.

A prophecy against Elam

³⁴ This is the Word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah about Elam, at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, the king of Judah: ³⁵ This is what the LORD of hosts said: “Look! I shall break the bow of Elam, the mainstay of their might. ³⁶ I shall bring the **four winds** from the **four corners** of the sky against Elam. I shall scatter them in the direction of all these winds.” There will be no nation to which those who have been driven away from Elam will not go. ³⁷ “I shall shatter Elam before their enemies, before those who want to kill them. I shall bring calamity on them, My burning anger,” declares the LORD. “I shall send the sword after them, until I put an end to them. ³⁸ I shall set My throne in Elam and destroy from there the king and the officials,” declares the LORD. ³⁹ “However, in the last days I shall bring the

captives of Elam back,” declares the LORD.

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A prophecy against Babylon

¹ This is the Word that the LORD spoke about Babylon, about the land of the Chaldeans, through the prophet Jeremiah: ² “Announce this among the nations and proclaim it! Set up a banner and proclaim it! Do not conceal it! Say: ‘Babylon will be captured. Bel will be ashamed. Merodach will be filled with terror. Her images will be ashamed. Her idols will be shattered.’” ³ For a nation will attack her from the north. She will lay her land waste, so that no one will live in her. Both human beings and animals will flee away and be gone.’

⁴ “In those days and in that time,” declares the LORD, “the people of Israel together with the people of Judah will come. They will weep as they come and turn to the LORD, their God. ⁵ They will ask for the road to Zion and turn their faces in this direction. They will say, ‘Come!’ and then join themselves to the LORD in an everlasting Covenant, which will not be forgotten.”

⁶ My people have become lost sheep. Their shepherds have been misleading them. They have been leading them astray on the mountains. They have been going from mountain to hill. They have forgotten their resting-place. ⁷ All who have been finding them have been devouring them. Their enemies have been saying: “We are not to blame!” For they have been sinning against the LORD, their righteous Pasture, the LORD, the Hope of their fathers.

⁸ “Flee **out of Babylon!** Go out of the land of the Chaldeans! Be like the male goats, which lead the flock! ⁹ For look! I am going to stir up and bring an assembly of great nations against Babylon from the North-Country. They will take up their positions against her. Babylon will be captured from the north. Their arrows will be like those of a warrior who causes bereavement and who does not come back empty-handed. ¹⁰ Chaldea will be plundered. All who plunder her will get everything they want,” declares the LORD.

¹¹ “Although you are glad, although you are jubilant, you who plundered My inheritance, although you frisk about like a heifer that is threshing grain and neigh like stallions, ¹² your mother will be very ashamed. She who gave you birth will feel disgrace.”

Look! She will be the least important of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land and a desert. ¹³ Because of the anger of the LORD she will not be inhabited. She will be completely desolate. Everyone who goes past Babylon will be appalled and whistle because of all her plagues. ¹⁴ Take up your positions against Babylon on every side! All you who bend the bow, shoot at her! Do not save your arrows! For she has been sinning against the LORD. ¹⁵ Shout a war-cry against her on every side! She will surrender. Her towers will fall. Her walls will be demolished. For this is the venge-

ance of the LORD. Take revenge on her! Do to her what she has been doing to others! ¹⁶ Cut off from Babylon the one who sows seed and the one who handles the sickle at harvest time! Because of the sword of the oppressor, everyone will go back to his own people and flee to his own homeland.

¹⁷ Israel is a scattered sheep that lions have driven away. First the king of Assyria devoured it and most recently Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, has been gnawing its bones. ¹⁸ Therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "Look! I am going to punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I punished the king of Assyria. ¹⁹ I shall bring Israel back to its pastureland. It will graze on Carmel and in Bashan. It will satisfy its appetite on the hill-country of Ephraim and Gilead. ²⁰ In those days and in that time," declares the LORD, "people will look for Israel's guilt, but there will be none. They will look for the sin of Judah, but none will be found. For I shall pardon those whom I allow to survive."

²¹ "Attack the land of Merathaim and the people who live in Pekod! Put them to the sword and devote them to destruction!" declares the LORD. "Do exactly as I have commanded you! ²² The noise of battle and great destruction is in the land. ²³ How the hammer of the whole earth has been cut in pieces and broken! How Babylon has become a desolation among the nations! ²⁴ I shall set a trap for you, and you will also be caught, Babylon, although you will not notice it."

You will be discovered and also be caught, because you have been opposing the LORD. ²⁵ The LORD has opened his arsenal and brought out His weapons of wrath. For the Lord GOD of hosts has work to do in the land of the Chaldeans. ²⁶ Attack her from every quarter! Open her granaries! Pile her up like heaps of grain! Devote her to destruction! Let no remnant of her survive! ²⁷ Kill all her bulls! Let them go down to be slaughtered! How terrible for them! For their day has come. It is the time when they will be punished. ²⁸ Listen! Refugees and fugitives are coming from the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the retribution of the LORD, our God, the retribution for His Temple. ²⁹ Summon archers against Babylon, all those who bend the bow! Encamp against her on every side! Let there be no escape! **Pay her back for what she has done! Do to her exactly as she has done!** For she has proudly defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

³⁰ "That is why her young men will fall in her public-squares and all her soldiers will be silenced on that day," declares the LORD. ³¹ "Look! I am against you, arrogant city," declares the Lord GOD of hosts. "Indeed, your day has come. It is the time when I shall punish you. ³² The proud city will stumble and fall, and no one will help her to get up. I shall light a fire in her cities, and it will devour everything that is around her."

A proclamation that God is the Redeemer of Israel

³³ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: "The people of Israel have been oppressed and the people of Judah together with them."

All who have taken them captive have been holding them tightly and refusing to release them. ³⁴ Their Redeemer is **strong**. His name is **the LORD** of hosts. He will certainly plead their cause, that he may bring peace to the land but unrest to the people who are living in Babylon.

³⁵ "A sword will come against the Chaldeans," declares the LORD, "against those who are living in Babylon and against her officials and her wise men.

³⁶ A sword will come against the oracle-priests, and they will become foolish. A sword will come against her soldiers, and they will be shattered. ³⁷ A sword will come against her horses, against her chariots and against all the foreigners in her ranks. They will become women. A sword will come against all her treasures, and they will be plundered. ³⁸ A drought will come against her **water**, and it will **dry up**. For Babylonia is a land of images."

They will act like madmen because of the frightful images. ³⁹ Therefore, desert-animals will live there with jackals. Ostriches will live in her. People will never live there any longer. People will not settle there throughout all generations.

⁴⁰ "As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbouring towns," declares the LORD, "no one will live there. No human being will live in her as a foreigner."

⁴¹ Look! A people will come from the north. A great nation and many kings are being woken up from the farthest parts of the earth. ⁴² They will take hold of bows and spears. They will be cruel and show no compassion. They will sound like the sea when it roars. They will ride on horses. They will be in formation, as men ready for war against you, daughter of Babylon! ⁴³ When the king of Babylon hears the report about them, his hands will hang limp. Anguish will grip him and pain like that of a woman in labour.

⁴⁴ "Look! As a lion comes up from the thicket beside the Jordan into a pastureland beside a permanent stream, I shall hurriedly chase her away from her place. I shall appoint whomever I choose over her. For who is like Me? Who can challenge Me? What shepherd is there who can take his stand against Me?"

⁴⁵ Therefore, listen to the plan that the LORD has made against Babylon and the purposes that He has formed against the land of the Chaldeans! People will certainly drag away the little ones of the flock. He will certainly make their pastureland desolate because of them. ⁴⁶ The earth will tremble at the news that Babylon has been captured. Her cry will be heard among the nations.

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A prophecy of war against Babylon

¹ This is what the LORD has said: "Look! I shall stir

up the spirit of a destroyer against Babylon, against the inhabitants of Leb-Kamai. ² I shall send foreigners to Babylon, and they will scatter her and lay her land waste. For they will attack her from every side on the day of trouble. ³ Let the archer not bend his bow! Let him not stand up in his coat of mail! Do not spare her young men! Completely destroy her whole army!"

⁴ They will fall slain in the land of the Chaldeans and wounded in its streets. ⁵ For Israel and Judah have not been abandoned like a widow by their God, by the LORD of hosts, although their land is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel.

⁶ Flee out of Babylon! Let everyone save his life! Do not perish because of her guilt! For this is **the time** for the retribution **of the LORD**. It is the retaliation by which He is **paying her back**. ⁷ Babylon has been a **golden cup** in the hand of the LORD. She has been making **the whole world drunk**. **The nations have been drinking her wine**. That is why the nations have been acting like madmen. ⁸ **Babylon will** suddenly **fall** and be shattered. Wail for her! Get balsam for her pain! Perhaps she can be healed. ⁹ We would have healed Babylon, but she could not be healed. Abandon her! Let each of us go to his own country! For **her condemnation has reached up to heaven**. It rises as high as the clouds.

¹⁰ The LORD has revealed our righteousness. Come! Let us make known in Zion what the LORD, our God, has done! ¹¹ Sharpen the arrows! Fill the quivers! The LORD will stir up the minds of the kings of the Medes. For He has planned to destroy Babylon. For this is the retribution of the LORD, His retribution for His Temple. ¹² Raise the battle-flag against the walls of Babylon! Post a strong watch! Set up watchmen! Prepare the ambushes! For the LORD has both planned and will carry out what He has said about the people who live in Babylon. ¹³ **You who live beside plentiful water** and are rich in treasures, your end, the measuring-point at which you will be cut off, has arrived. ¹⁴ The LORD of hosts has sworn by Himself: "I shall certainly fill you with men, as many as locusts. They will raise a shout of victory over you."

¹⁵ It is He who has made the earth by His power, who has established the world by His wisdom and who has stretched out the heavens by His understanding.

¹⁶ When He thunders, the water roars in the sky. He has made the storm clouds rise from the end of the earth. He has made lightning for the rain and brings wind out of His storehouses. ¹⁷ Every human being is stupid and ignorant. Every goldsmith has been ashamed of his idol. For their images are false. There is no breath in them. ¹⁸ They are worthless works that are mocked. At the time when they are punished, they will be destroyed.^{*140} ¹⁹ The Portion of Jacob is not like these. For He is the One who has formed all

things and Israel is the tribe that He has inherited. His name is the LORD of hosts.

A statement that Babylon is God's weapon

²⁰ "You are My war club and weapon of war. I shall use you to smash nations. I shall use you to destroy kingdoms. ²¹ I shall use you to smash horses and their riders. I shall use you to smash chariots and their drivers. ²² I shall use you to smash men and women. I shall use you to smash old men and youths. I shall use you to smash young men and maidens. ²³ I shall use you to smash shepherds and their flocks. I shall use you to smash farm-workers and their teams. I shall use you to smash governors and officials.

An announcement of the destruction of Babylon

²⁴ "I shall repay Babylon and all those who live in Chaldea before your very eyes for all the wrong that they have done in Zion," declares the LORD.

²⁵ "Look! I am against you, destructive **mountain**," declares the LORD. "You have destroyed the whole earth. I shall stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the cliffs and make you a **burnt-out mountain**. ²⁶ People will not take any stone from you as a cornerstone or any stone for a foundation wall. Rather, you will be a permanent ruin," declares the LORD.

²⁷ Raise a battle-flag in the land! Blow the trumpet among the nations! Consecrate the nations to attack her! Summon the kingdoms against her, Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz! Appoint a commander against her. Bring up horses like bristling locusts! ²⁸ Consecrate nations to attack her, the kings of the Medes, their governors and all their officials and every land over which they rule! ²⁹ The earth will tremble and writhe in pain. For the purposes of the LORD against Babylon will be carried out, to make the land of Babylon a wasteland, so that no one will live there. ³⁰ The warriors of Babylon will stop fighting. They will remain in their strongholds. Their strength will be exhausted. They will become women. People will set her dwellings on fire. The bars on her gates will be broken. ³¹ One courier will run to meet another and one messenger to meet another, to inform the king of Babylon that his city has been captured from end to end. ³² The river crossings will be seized. The enemy will burn her marsh-reeds and her soldiers will be terrified. ³³ For this is what the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, has said: "The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor when it is trodden down. The time for her harvest will soon come."

Retribution on Babylon

³⁴ "Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, has devoured me. He has thrown me into confusion. He has made me an empty vessel. He has swallowed me like a dragon. He has filled his stomach with my delicious food. He has rinsed me out," ³⁵ the people who live in Zion are saying. Jerusalem is saying, "May the violence done to me and to my relatives be done to Babylon! May my blood be on those who live in Chaldea!"

¹⁴⁰ 51:15-18 — Compare 10:12-15

³⁶ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: “Look! I shall plead your cause and carry out retribution for you. I shall dry up her large river and make her fountain dry. ³⁷ Babylon will become piles of rubble, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and a place at which people hiss, without any inhabitants. ³⁸ Her people will roar together like lions. They will growl like lions’ cubs. ³⁹ When they become heated I shall arrange a banquet for them and make them drunk, that they may revel. Then they will fall into a permanent sleep and not wake up again,” declares the LORD. ⁴⁰ “I shall bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams and male goats.”

⁴¹ How Sheshak will be captured! How what is praised by the whole earth will be seized! How Babylon will become an object of horror among the nations! ⁴² The sea will rise over Babylon. She will be covered by its roaring waves. ⁴³ Her cities will become objects of horror, a land of drought and a desert, a land where no one lives and where no human being passes through.

⁴⁴ “I shall punish Bel in Babylon. I shall take out of his mouth what he has swallowed. The nations will not stream towards him any longer. Even the wall of Babylon will fall.”

⁴⁵ **Go out of her, my people!** Let each one of you save his life from the fierce anger of the LORD!

⁴⁶ Beware of being faint-hearted! Do not be afraid of the rumours that are heard in the land, when in one year one rumour comes and in another year another rumour follows, when there is violence in the land and one ruler opposes another!

⁴⁷ “Therefore, look! The days are coming when I shall punish the images of Babylon. Her whole land will be ashamed and all of her slain people will lie fallen inside her. ⁴⁸ Then **the heavens**, the earth and all that is in them will shout for **joy over Babylon**. For the destroyers from the north will attack her,” declares the LORD. ⁴⁹ “Babylon must fall because of the slain people of Israel, just as **the slain people of the whole earth have fallen because of Babylon.**”

⁵⁰ You who have escaped from the sword, go! Do not stand still! Remember the LORD from far away and let Jerusalem come to your mind! ⁵¹ We have become ashamed. For we have heard insults. Disgrace has covered our faces. For foreigners have gone into the holy rooms of the Temple of the LORD.

⁵² “Therefore, look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I shall punish her images and those who have been wounded will groan everywhere in her land. ⁵³ Even if Babylon were to go up to heaven and even if she were to fortify her lofty stronghold, destroyers would come against her from Me,” declares the LORD.

⁵⁴ Listen! There is a cry of distress from Babylon. There is the sound of a loud crash from the land of the Chaldeans. ⁵⁵ For the LORD will lay Babylon waste

and silence the loud noise from her. Their waves will roar like many waters. Their roaring noise will sound forth. ⁵⁶ For a destroyer will attack her, attack Babylon. Her warriors will be captured. Their bows will be shattered. For the LORD is a God who makes retribution. He will repay in full.

⁵⁷ “I shall make drunk her officials, her wise men, her governors, her officers and her soldiers. They will fall into a permanent sleep and not wake up again,” declares the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

⁵⁸ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “The broad wall of Babylon will be utterly demolished and her high gates will be burnt with fire, so that the peoples will have toiled for nothing and the nations will have worn themselves out for fire.”

⁵⁹ This is the Message with which the prophet Jeremiah commissioned Seraiah, the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah, the king of Judah, to Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign. Seraiah was the quartermaster. ⁶⁰ Jeremiah wrote on a single scroll the whole calamity that would happen to Babylon, all these things that have been written about Babylon. ⁶¹ Jeremiah told Seraiah: “When you arrive at Babylon, see that you read aloud all these Words.

⁶² Then you shall say, ‘LORD, You Yourself have said that You will destroy this place, so that nothing will live in her, neither human being nor animal and that she will be a permanent object of horror.’

⁶³ When you finish reading this scroll, you shall tie a **stone** to it and **throw it into** the middle of the Euphrates. ⁶⁴ **Then you shall say, ‘This is how Babylon will sink down and will not rise because of the calamity that I am bringing on her. They will become exhausted.’”**

This is where the Words of Jeremiah end.

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Historical information about the fall of Jerusalem — 2 Kings 24:18-25:26, 2 Chronicles 36:11-20, Jeremiah 39:1-10, 40:5-9, 41:1-3, 41:16-18

¹ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king and reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother’s name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. ² He did what the LORD regarded as evil, just as Jehoiakim had done. ³ Indeed, this happened to Jerusalem and Judah because the LORD was angry. Finally He cast them out of His sight.

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. ⁴ On the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came with his whole army against Jerusalem. They encamped against the city and built a siege-mound all around it. ⁵ The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ⁶ On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the citizens. ⁷ Then the city wall was broken through and all the soldiers fled. They left the city by night by the way of the city-gate between the two walls, which was beside the king’s

garden. Although the Chaldeans were attacking the city on all sides, they went along the road towards the dry country. ⁸ However, the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and caught up with Zedekiah on the waterless plains of Jericho and his whole company left him and was scattered from him. ⁹ When they had captured the king, they brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath and the king of Babylon passed sentence on him. ¹⁰ The king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah while Zedekiah was watching. He also killed all the officials of Judah at Riblah. ¹¹ He put out the eyes of Zedekiah and tied him up with bronze shackles. The king of Babylon took him to Babylon and put him in a prison until the day when he died.

¹² On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, a captain of the imperial guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ¹³ He burned the Temple of the LORD, the king's palace and all the houses in Jerusalem. He burned down every important building. ¹⁴ The whole army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the imperial guard, broke down all the walls around Jerusalem. ¹⁵ Nebuzaradan, the captain of the imperial guard, carried into exile some of the poorest people and the rest of the people who were left in the city, including those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the craftsmen. ¹⁶ However, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the imperial guard, left behind some of the poorest people of the land to work in the vineyards and fields. ¹⁷ The Chaldeans broke in pieces the bronze pillars that were in the Temple of the LORD, the wheeled stands and the bronze pool that were in the Temple of the LORD and transported all the bronze to Babylon. ¹⁸ They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, bowls used for pouring, basins, all the bronze utensils that were used in the Temple service. ¹⁹ The captain of the imperial guard took away the small bowls, the fire-pans, the bowls used for pouring, the pots, the lampstands, the dishes, the vessels for libations and everything else made of gold or silver. ²⁰ The bronze from the two pillars, the one pool, the twelve bronze bulls that were underneath and the wheeled stands, from all these articles, which King Solomon had made for the Temple of the LORD, was more than could be weighed. ²¹ As for

the pillars, each one was nine metres high and its circumference was six metres with a measuring-line. It was four fingers thick and was hollow. ²² There was a bronze capital on it. One capital was two and a half metres high. There were a lattice network and pomegranates, all of bronze, around the capital. The second pillar was the same, with pomegranates. ²³ There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides. The total number of pomegranates on the network all around was one hundred. ²⁴ The captain of the imperial guard took Seraiah, the Chief Priest and Zephaniah, the second priest and the three doorkeepers. ²⁵ He also took out of the city one officer who had been in command of the fighting men and seven men who had access to the king and who had been found inside the city. He also took the secretary of the commander of the army, who used to muster the soldiers of the land and sixty male citizens who had been found inside the city. ²⁶ Nebuzaradan, the captain of the imperial guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²⁷ The king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So, the people of Judah went into exile away from its own land.

²⁸ These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar took away as captives: in the seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three Jews. ²⁹ In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he took away from Jerusalem eight hundred and thirty-two persons as captives. ³⁰ In the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took away seven hundred and forty five of the Jews as captives. The total number of persons was four thousand, six hundred.

The release of King Jehoiachin from prison — 2 Kings 25:27-30

³¹ On the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month of the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, in the year when Evil-Merodach began to reign as the king of Babylon, he pardoned Jehoiachin, the king of Judah and released him from prison. ³² He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more honourable seat than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. ³³ Jehoiachin took off his prison garments and dined regularly in the king's presence for the rest of his life. ³⁴ As for his allowance, he was given a regular daily allowance from the king of Babylon for the rest of his life, until the day when he died.

LAMENTATIONS

1

The deserted appearance of Jerusalem

¹ How lonely sits the city that had been crowded with people! How she who had been great among the nations has become like a widow! She who had been a princess among the provinces has had to do forced labour.

² She weeps bitterly at night, with her tears on her cheeks. Out of all those who love her she has no one who comforts her. All her friends have been disloyal to her. They have become her enemies.

³ Judah has gone into exile after misery and much slavery. She has been dwelling among the nations and has been finding no rest. All those who were pursuing her have caught up with her in the middle of her hardships.

⁴ The roads to Zion are in mourning, because no one comes to an appointed feast. All her gates are deserted. Her priests are groaning. Her maidens are afflicted. She herself feels bitter.

⁵ Her adversaries have become her masters. Her enemies are at ease. For the LORD has been tormenting her because of her many rebellious acts. Her children have gone away into captivity in front of the enemy.

⁶ All the splendour of the daughter of Zion has gone from her. Her princes have become like deer that have not found pasture and that have been walking on weakly ahead of the one who chases them.

⁷ While Jerusalem is being afflicted and being homeless, she remembers all the precious things that had been hers from days of old. When her people fell into the hands of the enemy, and there was no one to help her, her enemies looked at her and laughed that she had come to an end.

⁸ Jerusalem has sinned greatly. That is why she has become unclean. All who used to honour her have begun to despise her. For they have seen her nakedness. She herself has been groaning and turning away.

⁹ Her uncleanness was on her skirts. She had not thought about her future. She has gone down in an astonishing way. She has no one to comfort her. "LORD, look at my misery! For the enemy has been boasting."

¹⁰ The enemy has spread out his hands over all her precious belongings. For she has seen the nations enter her sanctuary, although You had forbidden them to enter Your assembly.

¹¹ All her people are groaning while they search for bread. They have been trading their precious objects for food to refresh themselves. "Look, LORD, and see! For I have become despised."

Jerusalem's lament in her pain

¹² "Does this mean nothing to you, all you who are going past on the road? Look and see if there is any pain like my pain, which has been inflicted on me! The LORD used it to torment me when He was fierce-

ly angry."

¹³ "He has sent fire into my bones from on high. It has gone down deeply into them. He has spread a net for my feet. He has pushed me backwards. He has made me desolate, faint all the day long.

¹⁴ "The yoke of my wrongdoings has been tied on me. They are woven together by His hand. They have been placed on my neck. He has caused my strength to fail. The Lord has handed me over to those whom I cannot withstand.

¹⁵ "The Lord has rejected all my warriors who are with me. He has summoned an assembly against me to crush my young men. The Lord has trodden the virgin daughter of Judah in a **winepress**.

¹⁶ "I am weeping because of these things. My eyes, my eyes are overflowing with tears. For the One who can give comfort and restore my spirit is far away from me. My children are desolate. For the enemy has prevailed."

¹⁷ Zion has been stretching out her hands, but there is no one to comfort her. The LORD has issued this Command against Jacob, that his neighbours shall be his enemies. Jerusalem has become a filthy thing among them.

¹⁸ "The LORD is in the right. For I have rebelled against His Word. Please listen, all you peoples and see my pain! My maidens and my young men have gone into exile.

¹⁹ "I called to those who love me, but they betrayed me. My priests and my elders breathed their last in the city while they were looking for food to restore their lives.

²⁰ "See, O LORD, that I am in distress! My inner being has been burning in anguish. My heart has been turning over inside me. For I have been very rebellious. In the street the sword has been causing bereavement. Inside the house it is like death.

²¹ "People have been hearing that I am groaning, but there is no one to comfort me. All my enemies have been hearing about my calamity. They have been rejoicing that You Yourself have done it. You have brought the day that You had announced. Let them become like me!

²² Let all their wickedness come before You, and deal with them as you have dealt with me, because of all my wrongdoings! For my groans are many, and my heart is faint.

2

The prophet's lament that God has destroyed Zion

¹ How the Lord in His anger covers the daughter of Zion under a cloud! He has thrown the splendour of Israel down from heaven to earth. He has not remembered **His footstool** on the day of His anger.

² The Lord has swallowed up all the settlements of Jacob without pity. In His fury He has thrown down the fortified cities of the daughter of Judah. He has

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hurled them down to the ground. He has profaned the kingship and its rulers.

³ He has cut off every horn of Israel in hot anger. He has drawn back His right hand from them in the face of the enemy. He has blazed like a flaming fire against Jacob, which has consumed everything around it.

⁴ He has bent His bow like an enemy. He was keeping His right hand in position like an adversary. He has killed all who were pleasing to the eyes in the tent of the daughter of Zion. He has poured out His fury like fire.

⁵ The Lord has become like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel. He has swallowed up all its fortified palaces. He has laid its fortified cities in ruins. He has increased the mourning and lamentation in the daughter of Judah.

⁶ He has treated His enclosure ruthlessly as if it had been a garden. He has destroyed His meeting place. The LORD has caused Zion to forget times for festivals and Sabbaths and in His indignant anger has rejected king and priest.

⁷ The Lord has rejected His altar and repudiated His Holy Place. He has delivered the walls of her fortified palaces into the hands of the enemy. They raised a clamour in the Temple of the LORD as if it had been the day of a festival.

A description of the destruction of Jerusalem

⁸ The LORD had planned to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion. He had stretched out the measuring-line. He did not withdraw His hand from destroying it. He made rampart and wall mourn. They dwindled together.

⁹ Her gates have sunk down into the ground. He has ruined her bars and smashed them to pieces. Her king and her princes are among the nations. The Law is no more, and her prophets have not been obtaining any vision from the LORD.

¹⁰ The elders of the daughter of Zion are sitting on the ground in silence. They have put dust up on their heads and have put on sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem have been letting their heads hang down toward the ground.

¹¹ My eyes have failed because of my tears. My inner being has been burning in anguish. My heart has been poured out to the ground because of the collapse of the daughter of my people and because infants and babies are fainting in the public squares of the city.

¹² They are asking their mothers, "Where are grain and wine?" as they are feeling weak, like a wounded man, in the public squares of the city and as their lives are poured out on their mothers' laps.

The conclusion that God has destroyed the city

¹³ What evidence shall I bring forward in your favour? To what shall I compare you, daughter of Jerusalem? To what shall I liken you, that I may comfort you, virgin daughter of Zion? For your collapse is as vast as the sea. Who could heal you?

¹⁴ Your prophets have been seeing visions on your

behalf that are deception and whitewash. They have not been exposing your wrongdoing to bring back your captives. They have been seeing revelations on your behalf that are false and misleading.

¹⁵ All who go past on the road have been clapping their hands at you. They have been hissing and shaking their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem. "Is this the city that people used to call 'perfect in beauty, the joy of the whole world'?"

¹⁶ All your enemies have been opening their mouths wide against you. They have been hissing. They have been gnashing their teeth. They have been saying: "We have swallowed her! Surely, this is the day for which we had been waiting. We have reached it. We have experienced it!"

¹⁷ The LORD has done what He had planned. He has carried out His Word, which He had commanded in days long ago. He has demolished without pity. He has made the enemy rejoice over you. He has increased the strength of your adversaries.

¹⁸ Their hearts have been crying out to the Lord. "O Wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears stream down day and night like a torrent! Do not allow Your effort to slacken! Do not give the apple of Your eyes any rest!"

¹⁹ "Arise! Cry out during the night, at the beginning of the night watches! Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord! Lift your hands up to Him for the lives of your children, who are fainting from hunger at every street corner!"

²⁰ Look, O LORD, and consider! Whom have you ever treated like this? Should women eat their own children, the children for whom they care tenderly? Should priests and prophets be killed in the Holy Place of the Lord?

²¹ Young people and old people have been lying down on the ground in the streets. My virgins and my young men have fallen by the sword. You killed them when You were angry. You slaughtered them without pity.

²² You are summoning people who terrify me on every side as if it were to a festival. On the day of the anger of the LORD no one escaped or survived. My enemy has destroyed those whom I brought forth in good health and reared.

3

The despair of the prophet

¹ I am the man who has seen affliction under of the rod of His fury.

² I am the one whom He has driven away and whom He has made to walk in darkness without a light.

³ Surely, He was turning His hand against me repeatedly, all day long.

⁴ He has made my flesh and my skin waste away. He has broken my bones.

⁵ He has built siege-works against me and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship.

⁶ He has made me live in a dark place like those who

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have died a long time ago.

⁷ He has walled me in so that I cannot get out. He has made my bronze chain heavy.

⁸ Even when I was crying out and calling for help, He shut out my prayer.

⁹ He has walled up my road with hewn stones and has made my paths crooked.

¹⁰ He was a bear waiting in an ambush for me, a lion in hiding.

¹¹ He blocked my paths with thorns and tore me to pieces. He made me desolate.

¹² He drew His bow and set me up like a target for His arrow.

¹³ He drove the arrows of His quiver into my kidneys.

¹⁴ I became a laughing-stock to all my people, their song of mockery all day long.

¹⁵ He filled me with bitter drink and made me drink deeply of misery.

¹⁶ He caused me to grind my teeth on gravel. He trampled me down in ashes.

¹⁷ You excluded my soul from peace. I forgot happiness.

¹⁸ I thought, "My splendour and my hope have been ruined because of the LORD."

¹⁹ Remember my suffering and my homelessness, the wormwood and the bitterness!

²⁰ My soul continues to remember them and bends down over me.

An expression of hope in God

²¹ This is the thing that I call to mind, and this is why I have hope:

²² It is because of the LORD's mercies that we have not been completely cut off. For His compassion has not come to an end.

²³ It is new every morning. Your faithfulness is great.

²⁴ I have been saying to myself, "The LORD is my portion. Therefore, I shall put my hope in Him."

²⁵ The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him.

²⁶ It is good that one hopes, even in silence, for the salvation of the LORD.

²⁷ It is good for a person to carry a yoke while he is young.

²⁸ He should sit alone and keep silent. For the LORD has laid it on him.

²⁹ He should put his mouth in the dust. Perhaps there is hope.

³⁰ He should offer his cheek to the one who strikes him and receive plenty of insults.

³¹ For the Lord will not reject for ever.

³² However, if He has caused grief, He will show compassion, because His mercies are very great.

³³ For He has not taken pleasure in tormenting human beings or in oppressing them.

³⁴ To crush underfoot all the prisoners of the land,

³⁵ to twist a person's rights away from him in the

presence of the Most High, ³⁶ to suppress a human being in his lawsuit —surely the Lord has not approved of these things?

³⁷ Who is it who has spoken, and something has then happened unless the Lord had commanded it?

³⁸ Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that calamities and good things come?

³⁹ Why should a living human being, any person, complain about being punished for his sins?

⁴⁰ Let us examine our ways and search them out and turn back to the LORD!

A recognition that the enemy has punished us

⁴¹ Let us use our hands to lift up our hearts to God in heaven, saying: ⁴² "We have revolted and rebelled, and You have not forgiven!"

⁴³ "You have veiled Yourself in anger and pursued us. You have killed without pity.

⁴⁴ "You have veiled Yourself with a cloud to prevent any prayer from passing through.

⁴⁵ "You have made us into scum and refuse among the other peoples.

⁴⁶ "All our enemies have been opening their mouths against us.

⁴⁷ "Trembling, pitfalls, devastation and destruction have come upon us.

⁴⁸ "My eyes are flowing with streams of tears because of the destruction of the daughter of my people.

⁴⁹ "My eyes have been flowing without ceasing, without relief, ⁵⁰ until the LORD looks down from heaven and sees.

⁵¹ "My eyes have been afflicting me deeply because of all the daughters of my city.

⁵² "My enemies hunted me down like a bird for no reason.

⁵³ "They silenced my life in the pit and threw stones at me.

⁵⁴ "Water flowed over my head. I thought, 'I am lost.'

⁵⁵ "I called on Your name, O LORD, from the depths of the pit.

⁵⁶ "You heard me asking, 'Do not close Your ears to my cry for relief!'

⁵⁷ "You came near when I called to You. You said, 'Do not be afraid!'

⁵⁸ "You have defended the lawsuits involving my life, O Lord. You have redeemed my life.

⁵⁹ "You have seen the injustice done to me, O LORD. Obtain justice for me!

⁶⁰ "You saw all their malice, all their plots against me.

⁶¹ "You heard their insults, O LORD, all their plots against me.

⁶² "The whispering and the muttering of those who are attacking me have been against me all day long.

⁶³ "Watch them when they sit down and get up! I am the one whom they mock in song.

⁶⁴ "You will repay them, O LORD, for what they deserve, for what their hands have done!

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65 “You will make their minds deluded! May Your curse be on them!

66 “You will pursue them in anger and destroy them from under the heaven of the LORD.”

4

A description of Zion during the siege

1 How the gold has lost its lustre! How the fine gold loses its lustre! The holy stones lie scattered at the head of every street.

2 How the precious children of Zion, worth their weight in fine gold, have come to be valued like clay jars, which a potter’s hands have made!

3 Even jackals offer their breasts. They suckle their cubs. However, the daughter of my people has become really cruel, like ostriches in the desert.

4 The tongue of a breast-feeding infant sticks to the roof of its mouth because of thirst. The children have been demanding bread, but no one breaks off a piece of bread.

5 Those who used to eat delicious things have become destitute in the streets. Those who had been cared for in crimson cloth have been embracing ash heaps.

6 For the guilt of the daughter of my people has been greater than the iniquity of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment, without any human hand moving against it.

7 Zion’s princes had been purer than snow, whiter than milk. Their bodies had been ruddier than pearls of coral. Their appearance was like sapphires.

8 Now they look blacker than soot. They cannot be recognised on the streets. Their skin has shrivelled on their bones. It has become as dry as wood.

9 Those who have been killed by the sword are better off than those who die of hunger. They are wasting away, pierced through because the field lacks produce.

10 The hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children. They provided food for them during the destruction of the daughter of my people.

11 The LORD has given full vent to His wrath. He has poured out His hot anger. He has lit a fire in Zion that has consumed its foundations.

The wickedness of the leaders of Jerusalem

12 None of the kings of the earth, and no people living in the world believed that adversaries and enemies would enter through the gates of Jerusalem.

13 This has happened because of the sins of its prophets and the wrongdoings of its priests, who used to shed the blood of righteous people inside it.

14 They staggered like blind people in the streets. They had been defiled with blood, so that people would not dare to touch their garments.

15 People called out to them: “Go away! You are unclean. Go away! Go away! Do not touch anyone!” When they moved away and wandered off, people said among the nations, “They may not stay here any longer.”

16 The presence of the LORD has scattered them. He will not accept them favourably any longer. People had not been respecting the priests and had not been treating the elders kindly.

The pointless hope for rescue from other nations, the approaching end and the capture of the king

17 Our own eyes were still failing, as they were looking in vain for help, while we kept watch at our observation post for a nation that could not save.

18 People hunted down our steps so that we could not walk in our public squares. Our end had come close. Our days were finished. For our end had come.

19 Those who were pursuing us were faster than the eagles in the sky. They hunted us down on the mountains. They lay in wait for us in the wilderness.

20 The breath of our nostrils, the one anointed by the LORD, was trapped in their pits. We had thought that we would live in his shadow among the nations.

A warning about Edom’s impending doom

21 Rejoice and be glad, daughter of Edom, you who live in the land of Uz! However, the cup will also pass around to you. You will become drunk and expose yourself.

22 Daughter of Zion, your punishment has become complete. He will not keep you in exile any longer. Daughter of Edom, He will call you to account for your wrongdoing. He will uncover your sins.

5

A prayer for mercy because of the disgrace of Jerusalem

1 Remember, O LORD, what has happened to us. Look and see our disgrace!

2 Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, our homes to foreigners.

3 We have become orphans, without a father. Our mothers are like widows.

4 We have had to pay for the water that we drink. Our wood comes at a price.

5 Those who have been hunting us down are at our necks. We have become weary. We have been given no rest.

6 We have made promises to Egypt and to Assyria to get enough food.

7 Our fathers have sinned and are no more. We have been carrying the burden of their wrongdoings.

8 Slaves have been ruling over us. There is no one to release us from their hands.

9 We are risking our lives to get our food because of the sword in the desert.

10 Our skin has become as hot as an oven because of pangs of hunger.

11 Men have been raping women in Zion and virgins in the cities of Judah.

12 Their own hands have hanged princes. No respect has been shown to older men.

13 Young men have been forced to grind with hand-mills, and boys have been staggering under loads of wood.

Lamentations

¹⁴ Elders have stopped meeting at the city-gate. Young men have stopped using their stringed instruments.

¹⁵ Joy has gone from our hearts. Our dancing has changed into mourning.

¹⁶ The garland has fallen off our heads. How terrible indeed it is for us! For we have sinned.

¹⁷ This is why our hearts have become faint. Because of these things our eyes have grown dim, ¹⁸ because of Mount Zion, which lies desolate. Jackals have been prowling over it.

¹⁹ You, Yourself, LORD, will sit enthroned for ever. Your throne will last for all generations.

²⁰ Why will You forget us for ever? Why will You forsake us for such a long time?

²¹ Restore us to Yourself, O LORD, that we may be restored! Renew our days as of old, ²² unless You have completely rejected us and have become extremely furious with us.

EZEKIEL

1

Ezekiel's vision of the throne of God

¹ On the fifth day of the fourth month in the thirtieth year, while I was among the exiles beside the Chebar Canal, **the heavens were opened**, and **I saw** visions of God. ² On the fifth day of the month, during the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin, ³ the Word of the LORD came expressly to the priest Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans beside the Chebar Canal. The hand of the Lord came on him there. ⁴ As I looked, I saw a windstorm coming from the north. There was a large cloud, with flashing lightning surrounded by bright light. **The middle of the lightning** looked like gleaming brass. ⁵ What looked like **four living creatures** came from the middle of it. They looked like this: They had the shape of human beings. ⁶ However, each one of them had four faces and four wings. ⁷ Their legs were straight. The soles of their feet were like the hooves of calves. They were gleaming like shiny bronze. ⁸ They had human hands under their wings on each of their four sides. All four of them had faces and wings that were like this: ⁹ Their wings touched one another. The creatures did not change direction as they moved but each one of them went straight ahead. ¹⁰ Their faces looked like this: They were **human faces**, but each of the four had the face of **a lion** on the right side and the four of them had the face of **a bull** on the left. Each of the four also had the face of **an eagle**. ¹¹ That is what their faces looked like. Their wings were spread out, pointing upwards. Each creature had two wings that were touching each other, and the other two were covering their bodies. ¹² Each went straight ahead. They went wherever the Spirit wanted to go and did not change direction as they moved along. ¹³ In their appearance, the living creatures looked like burning coals **of fire**. It looked as if **torches** were moving back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and **lightning was coming out of the fire**. ¹⁴ The living creatures darted back and forth and looked like flashes of lightning. ¹⁵ While I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the ground beside each of the four-faced living creatures. ¹⁶ In appearance and their design the wheels looked like gleaming topaz. The four of them had the same shape. In their appearance and in their design one wheel seemed to be inside another wheel. ¹⁷ When they moved, they used to go in any of their four directions without turning as they moved. ¹⁸ The rims of their wheels were high and frightening. Each of the **four** had rims that were **full of eyes all around**. ¹⁹ When the living creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them. When the living creatures rose from the ground, the wheels rose. ²⁰ They used to go wherever the Spirit wanted to go. The wheels rose beside them. For the

spirit of each living creature was in the wheels. ²¹ When the creatures moved, the wheels used to move. When the creatures stood still, they used to stand still. When the creatures rose from the ground, the wheels rose beside them. For the spirit of each living creature was in the wheels. ²² Something like a dome was over the heads of the living creatures. It looked **like** gleaming and awe-inspiring **crystal** spread out above their heads. ²³ Under the dome their wings were stretched out straight, toward one another. Each creature had two wings that covered one side of its body and two wings that covered the other side. ²⁴ When they were moving, I heard the sound of their wings. It was like the sound of much water, like the voice of the Almighty, like a crowd or the noise of an army. When they stood still, they lowered their wings. ²⁵ A voice came from above the dome that was over their heads. When they stood still, they lowered their wings. ²⁶ Above the dome that was over their heads there was something that looked like **a throne** that had the appearance of a sapphire. Someone that looked like a human being was high above what looked like **a throne**. ²⁷ I saw something that looked like gleaming brass with what seemed to be fire inside it and **around it**. I saw something that looked like fire with a radiance around it upwards from what seemed to be His waist and downwards from what seemed to be His waist. ²⁸ The brightness all around looked like **the rainbow** in the clouds on a rainy day. That was what the glory of the LORD looked like. When I saw it, I fell with my face to the ground and heard the voice of One who was speaking.

2

Ezekiel's instruction to speak to a rebellious nation and his vision of a scroll

¹ He told me, “Son of man, **stand up on your feet**, that I may speak to you!” ² The Spirit entered me when He spoke to me and set me on my feet, and I heard Him speaking to me. ³ He told me: “Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to the rebellious nations that have rebelled against Me. They and their fathers have been in revolt against Me to this very day. ⁴ They are impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall tell them: ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said.’ ⁵ As for them, whether they listen or refuse to listen - for they are a rebellious family — they will, nevertheless, realise that a prophet has been among them.” ⁶ “However you yourself, son of man, must not be afraid of them or of what they say! Do not be afraid when briars and thorns are all around you and when you are living among scorpions! Do not be afraid of what they say! Do not be dismayed at their appearance, although they are a rebellious family! ⁷ You shall speak My Words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear! For they are rebellious.

⁸ “However, you yourself, son of man, must listen to what I am saying to you! Do not be rebellious like that rebellious family! Open **your mouth** and **eat** what I am giving you!”

⁹ When **I looked**, I saw a **hand** stretched out towards me and saw that a book in the form of a **scroll** was **in it**. ¹⁰ He opened it out in front of me. It had **writing on the front and on the back**. Words of lamentation, groaning and wailing were written on it.

3

¹ Then **He told me**: “Son of man, eat what you find! **Eat this scroll!** Then go and speak to the family of Israel!”

² I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat. ³ He told me, “Son of man, feed your belly and **fill your stomach with this scroll**, which I am giving you!”

I ate it, and it tasted as **sweet as honey in my mouth**.

⁴ Then He told me: “Son of man, go now to the family of Israel and use My Words to speak to them! ⁵ For you are not being sent to a people whose language is incomprehensible and difficult to speak but to the family of Israel. ⁶ I am not sending you to many nations whose language is incomprehensible and difficult to speak and whose words you do not understand. Otherwise, if I were to send you to them, they would listen to you. ⁷ However, the family of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, because they are not willing to listen to Me. For the whole family of Israel have hard foreheads and stubborn hearts. ⁸ Look! I have made your face as hard as their faces are and your forehead as hard as their foreheads are. ⁹ I have made your forehead like a diamond, harder than flint. You shall not be afraid of them or be terrified by their appearance, although they are a rebellious family.”

¹⁰ He also told me: “Son of man, take into your heart all My Words, which I shall speak to you, and listen to them with your ears! ¹¹ Go now to the exiles, to your own people! Speak to them and tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said,’ whether they listen or refuse to listen!”

¹² Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard a loud rumbling sound behind me: “Blessed be the glory of the LORD from His place!”

¹³ There was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another and the sound of the wheels beside them, as well as the sound of a loud rumbling. ¹⁴ The Spirit lifted me up and took me away. I went away feeling bitter. My spirit was hot. The hand of the LORD was heavy on me. ¹⁵ I went to the exiles at Tel-Abib, who were living beside the Chebar Canal, and sat down where they were living. I sat there among them for seven days. I was dumbfounded.

The appointment of Ezekiel to be a watchman

¹⁶ After seven days, the Word of the LORD came to

me: ¹⁷ “Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman over the family of Israel. When you hear a Word from My mouth, you shall give them a warning from Me. ¹⁸ When I tell a wicked person, ‘You will certainly die,’ but you do not warn him and do not speak to warn the wicked man to leave his wicked way, to save his life, that wicked person will die for his sin, but I shall hold you responsible for his death. ¹⁹ However, if you have warned the wicked person, and he has not turned away from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he will die for his sin, but you will have delivered your own life. ²⁰ If a righteous person turns away from his righteous conduct and does what is unjust, and I lay an obstacle before him, he will die. Because you have not warned him, he will die because of his sin. His righteous deeds, which he has done, will not be remembered, but I shall hold you responsible for his death. ²¹ However, if you warn the righteous person that the righteous person should not sin, and he does not sin, he will certainly live, because he has heeded the warning, and you will have delivered your own life.”

Directions to Ezekiel from God

²² The hand of the LORD came on me there. He told me: “Get up and go out into the valley! I shall speak to you there.”

²³ I got up and went out into the valley. I saw the glory of the LORD standing there, like the glory that I had seen beside the Chebar Canal and I fell face-down. ²⁴ Then the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet. He spoke to me and told me: “Go to your home and shut yourself inside! ²⁵ As for you, son of man, look! People will put ropes on you. They will tie you up with them, that you may not go outside among them. ²⁶ I shall make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth, so that you will be dumb and unable to be a person who rebukes them, although they are a rebellious family. ²⁷ However, when I speak to you, I shall open your mouth, and you shall tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said.’ Let the person who listens listen, and let the person who refuses to listen refuse! For they are a rebellious family.”

4

Ezekiel's imitation of the blockade of Jerusalem

¹ “You, son of man, get yourself a brick! Place it in front of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it! ² Set up siege-works against it, build a siege wall against it and heap up an assault ramp against it! Set up camps against it and place battering-rams against it all around. ³ You, take an iron baking-tray and set it up as an iron wall between you and the city! Turn your face toward the city! Let it be under siege! Lay siege against it! This will be a sign for the family of Israel. ⁴ Then you shall lie on your left side and place the sin of the family of Israel on it! You shall bear their sin for as many days as you are lying on your side! ⁵ I Myself have assigned to you the years of their sin cor-

responding to the number of days, three hundred and ninety days. You shall bear the sin of the family of Israel! ⁶ When you have completed these days, you shall lie down a second time, on your right side! You shall bear the sin of the house of Judah for forty days! I have assigned you one day for each year. ⁷ You shall turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem! With your arm bared you shall prophesy against the city! ⁸ Look! I shall place ropes on you, that you may not turn over from one side to the other, until you have completed the days of your siege. ⁹ You, get yourself some wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet and spelt! Put them in a single container, that you may use them to prepare food for yourself! You shall eat them during the number of days that you are lying on your side, three hundred and ninety days. ¹⁰ The food that you shall eat each day shall be by weight! You shall eat two hundred and forty grams at set times! ¹¹ You shall drink water by measuring it out, six hundred and thirty millilitres! You shall drink it at set times! ¹² You shall eat the bread as flat round barley loaves! You shall bake it by using human excrement for fuel while people watch you!”

¹³ The LORD said, “That is how the Israelites will eat their bread as something unclean among the nations where I shall drive them.”

¹⁴ Then I said: “Alas, Lord GOD! Look! I have never defiled myself. Since I was young until now I have never eaten anything that died by itself or was killed by wild animals, and no other meat that has become unclean has come into my mouth.”

¹⁵ Then He told me: “Look! I shall allow you to use cow manure instead of human excrement. You may prepare your food over that.”

¹⁶ He also said to me: “Son of man, Look! I shall cut off the supply of bread in Jerusalem. They will anxiously eat bread by weight and will shudder as they measure out the water that they drink. ¹⁷ I shall do this that they may lack food and water, be made to tremble at the sight of one another and waste away because of their sin.”

5

A revelation to Ezekiel about the fall of Jerusalem

¹ “You, son of man, get yourself a sharp sword! Use it as a barber’s knife and pass it over your head and your beard! Then get yourself scales and divide the hair! ² You shall burn one third of it in a fire in the middle of the city when the days of the siege are over! You shall take another third and use the sword to cut it up around the city! You shall scatter the other third to the wind! I shall draw a sword to go after the hair. ³ You shall take a small number of these hairs and wrap them in the skirts of your garment! ⁴ Then you shall take some of these again, throw them into the middle of the fire and burn them up. A fire will spread out from there to the whole family of Israel.

⁵ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “This is Jerusa-

lem. I have placed it in the middle of the other nations, with countries all around it. ⁶ It has been behaving rebelliously against My Decisions by committing more wickedness than the other nations and against My Statutes more than the other countries that are around her. Indeed, they have been rejecting My Decisions and not been living according to My Statutes.”

⁷ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because you have been more unruly than the other nations that are around you, because you have not been living according to My Statutes and have not been carrying out My Decisions and because you have not even been conforming to the standards of the nations that are around you, ⁸ therefore this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I, yes, I, am against you. I shall inflict penalties on you while the other nations are watching. ⁹ I shall do among you what I have never yet done and shall never do anything like this again, because of all your disgusting deeds. ¹⁰ Therefore, fathers will eat their sons among you, and sons will eat their fathers. I shall inflict penalties on you and scatter all those of you who remain to all the winds.

¹¹ Therefore, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your horrible things and with all your disgusting things, therefore I also shall certainly cut you down. My eye will not spare, and I Myself shall not have any pity. ¹² One third of you will **die by the plague** and **perish by hunger** among you. Another **third will fall by the sword** around you. I shall scatter the remaining third to all the winds and draw My sword after them.

¹³ Then My anger will come to an end, and I shall satisfy My fury on them and obtain My revenge. They will know that I am the LORD and that I have spoken in My jealousy, when I have brought My fury on them to an end. ¹⁴ I shall turn you into a wasteland and make you an object of reproach among the nations that are around you, and everyone who goes past will see it. ¹⁵ The city will be a reproach, a term of abuse, a warning and a horror to the nations that are around you when I inflict penalties on you in anger, in fury and with furious rebukes. I am the LORD and I have spoken. ¹⁶ When I shoot against them My calamitous arrows of **famine**, which will cause destruction and which I shall send to destroy you, I shall also bring more and more **famine** against you and break your staff of food. ¹⁷ I shall send **famine** and wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children. **Plague** and bloodshed will sweep through you, and I shall bring the **sword** on you. I am the LORD and I have spoken.”

6

A judgment against the idolatry of Israel

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, set your face toward the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them. ³ Say, ‘You mountains of Israel, hear the Word of the Lord GOD! This is what the

Lord GOD has said to the mountains, the hills, the streambeds and the valleys: “Look! I, even I, am going to bring a sword against you and destroy your high places. ⁴ Your altars will be deserted, your incense-altars will be smashed, and I shall throw down your slain men in front of your idols. ⁵ I shall lay the dead bodies of the Israelites in front of their idols and scatter your bones around your altars. ⁶ Wherever you live, the cities will be in ruins and the high places will be deserted, so that your altars will be laid in ruins and pay the penalty for their guilt. Your idols will be smashed and put out of existence. Your incense-altars will be cut down and what you have made will be wiped out. ⁷ People will fall slain among you, and you will know that I am the LORD. ⁸ However, I shall leave a remnant. When you have among the nations some who escape the sword and when you are scattered through the countries, ⁹ then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they have been taken as captives. They will remember that I have been crushed by their adulterous hearts, which have turned away from Me, and by their eyes, which have lusted after their idols. They will loathe themselves for the evils that they have committed and for all their detestable practices. ¹⁰ They will know that I am the LORD. I have not been threatening in vain that I shall bring this calamity on them.””

¹¹ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Clap your hands, stamp your foot and say, ‘Alas!’ because of all the wicked and detestable practices of the family of Israel, because of which they are falling by the **sword**, by **hunger** and by the **plague**! ¹² He who is far away will die of the **plague**. He who is near will fall by the **sword**. He who has survived and been spared will die of **hunger**. I shall bring My fury to an end on them. ¹³ Then you will know that I am the LORD, when their slain men lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every leafy tree, under every large tree with intertwining branches and wherever else they have been offering appeasing fragrance to all their idols. ¹⁴ I shall stretch out My hand against them and make the land desolate and a wasteland, wherever they have been living, from the wilderness to Diblah. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

7

A prophecy of calamity

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “As for you, son of man, this is what the Lord GOD has said to the land of Israel: ‘An end! The end has come on **the four corners of the land**. ³ Now the end has come upon you. I shall send My anger against you, pass judgment on you as your conduct deserves and penalise you for all your detestable practices. ⁴ My eye will not pity you, and I shall not have any mercy. For I shall penalise you for your conduct and for the detestable practices that are among you. Then you will know that I

am the LORD.”

⁵ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! A calamity, a unique calamity, is coming. ⁶ The end has come! The end has come! It has awakened against you. Look! It is coming. ⁷ Doom has come to you, inhabitants of the land. The time has come. The day is near. There will be dismay, and there will be no joyful shouting in the mountains. ⁸ Now I shall soon pour out My wrath on you, spend My anger against you, pass judgment against you as your conduct has deserved and impose penalties on you for all your detestable practices. ⁹ My eye will not pity, and I shall not have any mercy. I shall impose penalties on you, as your conduct has deserved, while your detestable practices are among you. Then you will know that I am the LORD and that I am striking you. ¹⁰ Look! The day! Look! It is coming! Your doom has come. The rod has begun to bud. Arrogance has blossomed. ¹¹ Violence has grown up into a staff of wickedness. None of the people will remain, none of their roaring, none of their noise, and there will be nothing prominent among them. ¹² The time has come. The day has arrived. He who has bought should not rejoice, and he who has sold should not mourn. For wrath will be against their whole crowd. ¹³ For he who has sold will not return to something that he has sold while he is still alive. For the vision applies to their whole crowd. It will not be reversed. Because of their sins, not one of them will keep hold of his life. ¹⁴ Although they have blown the trumpet and have made everything ready, no one will go into battle. For My fury is against their whole crowd. ¹⁵ The sword will be outside. The plague and famine will be inside. The sword will kill the one who is in the country. Hunger and the plague will consume the one who is in the city. ¹⁶ If any of their survivors escape, they will be on the mountains. All of them will be moaning like doves in the valleys, each one for his own sin. ¹⁷ All hands will hang helplessly, and all knees will drip with urine. ¹⁸ They will put on sackcloth, and horror will cover them. There will be shame on all faces, and there will be a shaved patch on all their heads. ¹⁹ They will throw their silver into the streets and treat their gold like something defiled. Their silver and gold will not be able to deliver them on the day of the wrath of the LORD. They will not satisfy their appetites or fill their stomachs. For their silver and gold have made them stumble into sin. ²⁰ He appointed His beautiful jewellery for majesty, but they used it to make their detestable images and their abhorrent objects. That is why I shall make their jewellery something defiled for them. ²¹ I shall hand it over to foreigners as plunder and to the wicked people of the earth as booty, and they will defile it.

²² “I shall turn My face away from those people, and foreigners will defile My treasured place. Robbers will enter it and defile it. ²³ Prepare a chain! For the

land is full of litigation about guilt for murder, and the city is full of violence. ²⁴ I shall bring the worst of the nations to take possession of their houses. I shall put an end to the pride of strong people, and their holy places will be defiled. ²⁵ Anguish is coming. When they look for peace, there will be none. ²⁶ One calamity will come after another. One rumour will follow another. They will demand a vision from a prophet, but the priest will lack the Law, and the elders will lack advice. ²⁷ The king will mourn, the prince will be clothed with despair, and the hands of the common people will be limp from horror. I shall treat them as they have deserved. I shall judge them by their own decisions. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

8

A condemnation of idolatry in Jerusalem

¹ On the fifth day of the sixth month, in the sixth year, while I was sitting in my house and while the elders of Judah were sitting in front of me, the hand of the Lord GOD fell on me there. ² When I looked, I saw something that had the appearance of fire. Below what looked like His waist, there was fire. What was above His waist seemed to be glowing, like gleaming bronze. ³ He stretched out what looked like a hand and caught me by a lock of hair on my head. The Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and took me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the northern gateway of the inner court. It was where the image of jealousy, which arouses anger, was situated. ⁴ I saw the glory of the God of Israel there. It looked like the vision that I had seen in the valley. ⁵ Then He told me, “Son of man, please look towards the north!” So, I looked toward the north and saw this image of jealousy in the entrance north of the altar gate.

⁶ He asked me: “Son of man, do you see what they are doing? Do you see the utterly detestable things that the family of Israel are doing here, with the result that I shall move far away from My sanctuary? However, you will see even more utterly detestable things.”

⁷ He took me to the entrance of the courtyard. When I looked, I saw a hole in the wall. ⁸ Then He told me, “Son of man, please dig through the wall!”

So, I dug through the wall and saw a doorway. ⁹ He told me, “Go in and see the wicked, disgusting things that they are committing here!”

¹⁰ So, I went in and looked. I saw every representation of loathsome crawling creatures and animals and all the idols of the family of Israel carved all around on the wall. ¹¹ Seventy elders of the family of Israel were standing in front of them. Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan, was standing among them. Each was holding his censer in his hand, and a fragrant cloud of incense was rising up. ¹² Then He asked me: “Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the family of Israel are doing in the dark? Each of them is in the room where his image is. For they are thinking, ‘The LORD does not see us. The LORD has forsaken the

land.’”

¹³ Then He told me, “You will see still more utterly disgusting things that they are doing.”

¹⁴ Then He took me to the entrance of the northern gate of the Temple of the LORD. I saw women sitting there weeping for Tammuz. ¹⁵ Then He asked me: “Have you seen this, son of man? You will see still more utterly detestable things than these.”

¹⁶ Then He took me into the inner court of the Temple of the LORD. I saw about twenty-five men at the entrance of the Temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar. They had their backs to the Temple of the LORD. They were facing east and worshipping the sun in the east. ¹⁷ He asked me: “Son of man, have you seen this? Is it too trivial for the family of Judah to be doing these detestable things, which they have been doing here? Rather, they have been filling the land with violence and provoking Me even more to anger. Look! They are putting the branches to their noses! ¹⁸ I Myself shall also act in wrath. My eye will not pity, and I shall not have any mercy. Even if they shout loudly in My ears, I shall not listen to them.”

9

The order for the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem

¹ Then He cried loudly in my ears: “Come closer, you who will carry out justice on the city! Each should have his destructive weapon in his hand!”

² I saw six men coming from the direction of the Upper Gate, which was facing north. Each one had his smashing weapon in his hand. Another man was among them dressed in linen, with a scribe’s writing-board at his waist. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. ³ The glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, on which it had been resting, to the threshold of the Temple. He called to the man dressed in linen, who had the scribe’s writing-board at his waist. ⁴ The LORD told him: “Pass along through the city, through Jerusalem and **write a mark on the foreheads** of the men who sigh and groan because of all the disgusting things that are being done inside the city!”

⁵ He told the others while I was listening: “Pass along through the city behind him and strike people down. Your eyes shall not pity, and you shall not show any mercy! ⁶ Kill and destroy old men, young men, maidens, little children and women but do not approach anyone who has the mark on him! **Begin at My Holy Place!**”

Therefore, they began with the elders who were in front of the Temple. ⁷ Then he told them, “Defile the Temple and fill the courts with dead people! Go out!” They began to go out and kept striking people down in the city. ⁸ While they were striking them down, I was left alone. I fell face-down and cried out: “Alas, Lord GOD! Are You going to destroy the whole remnant of Israel when You pour out Your wrath on Jerusalem?”

⁹ Then He told me: “The guilt of the family of Israel

and of Judah is extremely great. The land has been filled with bloodguilt, and the city is full of injustice. Indeed, people have been saying, ‘The LORD has forsaken the land and the LORD does not see.’¹⁰ As for Me, My eye will not pity, and I shall not show any mercy. I shall put the consequences of their conduct on their own heads.”

¹¹ Then I saw the man dressed in linen, who had his scribe’s writing-board at his waist, making a report. He said, “I have done as You have commanded me.”

10

The departure of God’s glory from His Temple

¹ When I looked at the dome that was over the heads of the cherubim, I saw something appear above them that was like a sapphire and looked like a throne.² He spoke to the man dressed in linen. He said: “Go in among the wheels underneath one of the cherubim! **Fill** your hands **with burning** coals from among the cherubim and pour them out over the city!”

He went in while I was watching.³ The cherubim were standing on the southern side of the Temple when the man went in. The cloud had filled the inner court.⁴ The glory of the LORD rose up from the cherub to the threshold of the Temple. The house was filled with the cloud, and the brightness of the glory of the LORD filled the court.⁵ The sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court. It was like the voice of the Almighty God when He speaks.⁶ When He commanded the man dressed in linen, “Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim!” He went in and stood beside one of the wheels.⁷ One of the cherubim stretched out his hand from among the cherubim into the fire that was among the cherubim. He took up some of it and put it into the hands of the man dressed in linen. He took it and went outside.⁸ The cherubim appeared to have what looked like human hands under their wings.⁹ When I looked, I saw four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside each cherub. The wheels looked like gleaming topaz.¹⁰ All four looked alike. Each wheel seemed to be inside another wheel.¹¹ When they moved, they used to go in any of their four directions without turning as they moved but used to go in the direction in which their heads were facing without turning as they moved.¹² Their whole bodies, their backs, their hands, their wings and the wheels were **full of eyes all around** in their wheels, which the four of them had.¹³ I heard that the wheels were called “the set of wheels.”¹⁴ Each one had four faces. The first face was that of a cherub, the second was **a human face**, the third was the face **of a lion**, and the fourth was the face **of an eagle**.¹⁵ Then the cherubim rose up. These were the living creatures that I had seen at the Chebar Canal.¹⁶ When the cherubim moved, the wheels used to move beside them. When the cherubim lifted up their wings to rise from the ground, the wheels also

did not leave their side.¹⁷ When those stood still, they used to stand still. When those rose up, the wheels rose up with them. For the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.¹⁸ Then the glory of the LORD left the threshold of the Temple and stood above the cherubim.¹⁹ The cherubim lifted up their wings and rose up from the ground while I was watching. When they went out, the wheels were beside them. They stood at the entrance of the eastern gate of the Temple of the LORD, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.²⁰ These were the living creatures that I had seen under the God of Israel at the Chebar Canal. I realised that they were cherubim.²¹ Each had four faces and each had four wings and what looked like human hands were under their wings.²² Their faces looked like the faces that I had seen beside the Chebar Canal. Each one of them used to move straight ahead.

11

A judgment against the rulers of Israel for misleading the people

¹ The Spirit lifted me up and took me to the eastern gate of the Temple of the LORD, the gate that faces east. I saw twenty-five men at the entrance of the gateway. I saw Jaazaniah, the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah, the son of Benaiah, among them. They were leaders of the people.² He told me: “Son of man, these are the men who make wicked plans and who give bad advice in this city.³ They are saying, ‘It is a long time before houses can be rebuilt. This city is the cooking-pot, and we are the meat.’⁴ Therefore, prophesy against them! Prophesy, son of man!”

⁵ The Spirit of the LORD fell upon me and told me, “Say, ‘This is what the LORD has said: “That is what you are saying, family of Israel. I know what is coming up in your minds.⁶ You have killed many people in this city and have filled its streets with corpses.⁷ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘The people whom you have killed and put in the middle of the city are the meat, and this city is the cooking-pot. However, He will take you outside of it.⁸ You have been afraid of the sword, but I shall bring the sword against you,’ declares the Lord GOD.⁹ ‘I shall take you out of the middle of the city. I shall hand you over to foreigners and inflict penalties on you.¹⁰ You will fall by the sword. I shall judge you at the border of Israel, and you will know that I am the LORD.¹¹ This city will not be your cooking-pot, and you will not be the meat inside it. I shall judge you at the border of Israel.¹² Then you will know that I am the LORD. For you have not been living by My Prescriptions or been carrying out My Decisions. Rather, you have been following the standards of the nations that are around you.’””

¹³ While I was prophesying, Pelatiah, the son of Benaiah, died. Then I fell face-down, gave out a loud cry and said: “Alas, Lord GOD! You are completely destroying the remnant of Israel!”

God’s promise to gather Israel out of the nations

¹⁴ Then the Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁵ “Son of man, your brothers, yes, your brothers, your relatives from whom you can claim redemption and the whole family of Israel, yes, all of them, are those whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have been telling, ‘Get far away from the LORD! This is the land that has been given to us as our property!’ ¹⁶ Therefore, say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Although I have sent them far away among the nations and although I have dispersed them among the other countries, yet I have been their sanctuary for a short time in the countries where they have gone.”’

¹⁷ “Therefore, say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “I shall gather you together from the other peoples, I shall assemble you out of the countries where you have been dispersed and give you the land of Israel.” ¹⁸ They will go there and will remove from it all its abhorrent and detestable things. ¹⁹ I shall give them one heart and put a new spirit inside them. I shall remove the stony heart from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh, ²⁰ that they may live by My Statutes, keep My Decisions and put them into practice. They will be My people, and I shall be their God. ²¹ However, as for those whose hearts follow their abhorrent and detestable things, I shall bring their conduct down on their own heads,’ declares the Lord GOD.”

The departure of God's glory from Jerusalem

²² Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them. The glory of the God of Israel was above them. ²³ The glory of the LORD went up from the middle of the city and stopped above the mountain that is on the eastern side of the city. ²⁴ Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in the vision by the Spirit of God to the exiles in Chaldea. Then the vision that I had been seeing went up and left me. ²⁵ I told the exiles all the things that the LORD had shown me.

12

Ezekiel's imitation of the exile of Judah

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, you are living among a rebellious family. They have eyes to see but have not been seeing. They have ears to hear but have not been listening. For they are a rebellious family. ³ As for you, son of man, pack your baggage for exile and go into exile in the daytime while they are watching! You shall go like an exile away from your place to another place while they are watching! Perhaps they will understand, although they are a rebellious family. ⁴ You shall bring out your luggage in the daytime while they are watching, as if it were luggage for exile! Then, while they are watching, you shall go out in the evening, as though you were going away into exile! ⁵ While they are watching, dig through the wall of the house and bring your belongings out through it! ⁶ While they are watching, you shall lift your luggage on your shoulder and carry

it out at dusk! You shall cover your face to prevent yourself from seeing the land! For I have made you a sign to the family of Israel.”

⁷ I did as I was commanded. I brought out my luggage during the day, as though it were luggage for exile. In the evening I dug through the wall of my house with my hands. At dusk I brought it out. I carried it on my shoulder while they were watching. ⁸ The next morning the Word of the LORD came to me: ⁹ “Son of man, has not the family of Israel, that rebellious family, been asking you, ‘What are you doing?’ ¹⁰ Tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “This revelation is about the prince in Jerusalem and about the whole family of Israel who are inside it.”’ ¹¹ Say, ‘I am a sign to you! They will have done to them what I have done. They will go into exile and into captivity.’ ¹² The prince who is among them will lift his luggage up on his shoulder at dusk and will go outside. People will dig through the wall to bring him out through it. He will cover his face, so that he does not see the land with his own eyes. ¹³ I shall spread My net over him, and he will be caught in My hunting-snare. I shall bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, although he will not see it. That is where he will die. ¹⁴ I shall scatter all who are around him, his helpers and his whole band of soldiers, toward every wind. I shall pursue them with a drawn sword. ¹⁵ They will know that I am the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them in the other countries. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, I shall let a few of them escape from the sword, from famine and from the plague, that they may declare all their detestable practices among the nations where they are going. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

¹⁷ The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸ “Son of man, you shall shake while you are eating your food and shall shudder and be anxious while you are drinking your water! ¹⁹ You shall tell the people of the land, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said about those who are living in Jerusalem, about the land of Israel: “They will be anxious while they are eating their food and will be horrified while they are drinking their water. As a result, its land will have everything in it laid waste, because of the violence of all those who are living in it. ²⁰ The inhabited cities will be laid waste, and the land will become a wasteland. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”’”

²¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ²² “Son of man, what is that proverb that you people have about the land of Israel, ‘The days are going on and on, and every vision is coming to nothing’? ²³ Therefore, tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “I shall put an end to this proverb, and people will not use it as a proverb in Israel any longer.”’ Nevertheless, tell them, ‘The days have come near when every vision will be fulfilled. ²⁴ For there will no longer be any deceitful vision or slippery oracle among the family of

Israel. ²⁵ For I am the LORD. I shall speak the Word that I shall speak. It is My Word and it will be fulfilled without any more delay. For during your lifetime, rebellious family, I shall speak the Word and carry it out,” declares the Lord GOD.”

²⁶ The Word of the LORD came to me: ²⁷ “Son of man, look! The family of Israel are saying, ‘The vision that he is seeing is meant for many days from now. He is prophesying about times in the distant future.’ ²⁸ Therefore, tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “None of My Words will be delayed any longer. It is a Word that I speak and will be carried out,”” declares the Lord GOD.”

13

A condemnation of false prophets

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me. He said, ² “Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, who are prophesying. Tell those who are prophesying from their own hearts: ‘Listen to the Word of the LORD! ³ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “How terrible for the foolish prophets! They are following their own spirits, without having seen anything. ⁴ Israel, your prophets have been like jackals among ruins. ⁵ You have not gone up into the gaps in the walls or built up a stone wall for the family of Israel, that it may stand firm in the battle on the day of the LORD. ⁶ They have been seeing deceitful visions and lying predictions. They are saying, ‘Declares the LORD,’ although the LORD has not sent them. Yet they expect Him to make what they say come true. ⁷ Have you not been seeing a deceitful vision and been uttering a lying prediction when you have been saying, ‘Declares the LORD,’ although I have not spoken? ⁸ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Because you have been uttering what is false and have been seeing lying visions, therefore look! I am against you,’ declares the Lord GOD. ⁹ ‘My hand will be against the prophets who are seeing deceitful visions and who are making lying predictions. They will not be in the confidential circle of My people. They will not be recorded in the register of the family of Israel or enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord GOD. ¹⁰ Precisely because they have been misleading My people, saying, “Peace,” when there is no peace and, because, when anyone builds a thin wall, these prophets actually coat it with whitewash, ¹¹ tell those who coat it with whitewash that their wall will fall! There will be a pouring rain. Then, large hailstones, you will fall. Then, violent wind, you will break it up. ¹² Look! When the wall has fallen, will people not ask you, “Where is the coating of clay that you put on it?”’ ¹³ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “I shall make a violent wind break out in My wrath. There will be a pouring rain in My anger. There will be large hailstones in wrath to cause complete destruction. ¹⁴ I shall tear down the wall that you have been coating with whitewash. I shall level it to the ground.

Its foundation will be exposed. When it falls, you will perish in the middle of it. Then you will know I am the LORD. ¹⁵ I shall bring My wrath to an end against the wall and against those who have been coating it with whitewash, that I may tell you, ‘The wall is gone, and those who have been coating it are gone.’ ¹⁶ Gone will be the prophets of Israel who have been prophesying about Jerusalem, and those who have been seeing visions of peace about it, when there has been no peace,” declares the Lord GOD.”

A proclamation against witches

¹⁷ “You yourself, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who are prophesying out of their own minds! Prophesy against them! ¹⁸ You shall say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “How terrible for the women who sew magic bands together on all wrists and make veils of all sizes for people’s heads! You want to hunt for people’s lives. Will you hunt down lives belonging to My people and preserve your own lives? ¹⁹ You have been profaning Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread. As a result, you have been putting to death lives that should not be dying and have been preserving lives that should not live, when you tell lies to My people, who listen to lies.””

²⁰ “Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I am against your magic bands, with which you are hunting the lives there as if they were birds. I shall tear them away from your arms and let go free the lives for which you hunt, the lives that are like birds. ²¹ I shall also tear off your veils and rescue My people from your hands, that they may not be like prey in your hands any longer. Then you will know that I am the LORD. ²² Because you have disheartened a righteous person with lies, when I had not disheartened him and because you have encouraged a wicked person, so that he does not turn away from his evil way, that I may preserve his life, ²³ therefore you will not see false visions or make predictions any longer. I shall rescue My people from your hands. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

14

A condemnation of idolaters

¹ Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me. ² Then the Word of the LORD came to me: ³ “Son of man, these men have become devoted to their idols. They have been placing a wicked obstacle in front of themselves. Should I allow them to consult Me at all? ⁴ Therefore, speak to them and tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “If anyone of the family of Israel who becomes devoted to his idols and places his wicked obstacle in front of himself and yet comes to the prophet, I, Myself, the LORD, shall see to it that, when that Israelite comes, I give him the answer that his many idols deserve. ⁵ I shall do this to recapture the devotion of the family of Israel, who have all become alienated from Me be-

cause of their idols.”

⁶ “Therefore, tell the family of Israel, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Repent! Turn away from your idols and turn your faces away from all your detestable practices! ⁷ For, when anyone of the family of Israel or any foreigner who is a resident in Israel deserts Me, devotes himself to his idols and places a wicked obstacle in front of himself and yet comes to the prophet to use him to consult Me, I, the LORD, shall see to it that I answer him Myself. ⁸ I shall set My face against that man. I shall make him a sign and a proverb and cut him off from among My people. Then you will know that I am the LORD. ⁹ If the prophet is deceived and makes a statement, I Myself, the LORD, have deceived that prophet. Then I shall stretch out My hand against him and destroy him from among My people Israel. ¹⁰ They will bear their guilt. The prophet will be as guilty as the one who consults him. ¹¹ This will prevent the family of Israel from wandering away from Me any longer and from defiling themselves any longer with all their rebellious acts. Then **they will be My people, and I Myself shall be their God,**” declares the Lord GOD.”

A statement that a person's righteousness is related only to his own rescue

¹² The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹³ “Son of man, when a land sins against Me by acting unfaithfully, and I stretch out My hand against it, break off its supply of food, let famine loose in it and destroy its people and animals, ¹⁴ if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in that land, they would rescue only their own lives by their righteousness,” declares the Lord GOD.

¹⁵ “If I allow wild animals to go through the land, and they depopulate the land, and it becomes such a desolate waste that no one travels through it because of the wild animals, ¹⁶ then, if these three men were in it, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they would certainly not rescue either their sons or their daughters. They alone would be rescued, and the land would be a desolate waste. ¹⁷ Or if I bring a sword against that land and say, ‘Let a sword go through the land!’ and I destroy the people and the animals in it, ¹⁸ if these three men were in it, as surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, “they would not rescue their sons or daughters but they alone would be rescued. ¹⁹ Or, if I send a plague into that land and pour out My wrath on it through bloodshed, so that I destroy people and animals in it, ²⁰ if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they would not rescue either a son or a daughter. They would rescue only their own lives by their righteousness.”

²¹ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “How much more when I let loose on Jerusalem My four dreadful acts of judgment, **sword, famine, wild animals** and the **plague**, to destroy people and animals in it! ²² However, there will be some sons and daughters who will indeed survive and be brought out of it.

Look! When they are coming out to you and when you see their conduct and their actions, you will be consoled for the calamity that I have brought on Jerusalem, for all that I have brought on it. ²³ They will console you when you see how they are living and what they are doing. Then you will know that I have not done everything that I have done in it without a reason,” declares the Lord GOD.

15

A comparison of Jerusalem to wood from a wild vine

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, how is the wood of a vine better than any other wood? Is it better than any other branch in the trees of the forest? ³ Do people take any wood from it to make anything useful? Do people take a peg from it to hang any container on it? ⁴ No! It is only put on a fire as fuel. When the fire has burnt away both ends of it, and the middle of it has been charred, is it useful for anything? ⁵ Look! When it is a whole piece, it is not useful for anything. How much less can it still be used to make anything when a fire has burnt and charred it! ⁶ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘I have assigned those who are living in Jerusalem as I have assigned the wood of a vine among the trees in a forest as fuel in a fire. ⁷ I shall set My face against them. If they escape from one fire, another fire will still burn them up. Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I set My face against them. ⁸ I shall make the land a desolate waste, because they have been acting unfaithfully,’ declares the Lord GOD.”

16

A comparison of Judah to an unfaithful bride

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, make the detestable practices of Jerusalem known to it! ³ You shall say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said to Jerusalem: “You originated from the land of the Canaanites and have descended from them. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite. ⁴ As for your birth, your umbilical cord was not cut on the day when you were born. You were not washed in water to make you clean. You were not rubbed down with salt or wrapped in strips of cloth. ⁵ No one who saw you had enough pity or compassion for you to do any of these things for you. Rather, you were thrown out into the open field, because you were loathed at the time when you were born. ⁶ Nevertheless, when I went past you and saw you kicking about in your own blood, I told you, as you lay in your blood, ‘Live!’ Yes, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ ⁷ I made you thrive like a plant in the field. You grew up, became tall and became very beautiful. Your breasts became firm, and your hair grew but you were naked and bare. ⁸ When I went past you and looked at you, I saw that you were at the age for love. I spread out the skirt of My garment over you and covered your nakedness. I swore an oath to you and made a Covenant with you,”

declares the Lord GOD. “Therefore, you became mine. ⁹ I washed you with water, rinsed your blood away from you and poured olive-oil on you. ¹⁰ I also clothed you with colourful woven cloth and put sandals of fine leather on you. I wrapped you in fine linen and dressed you with costly fabric. ¹¹ I decorated you with jewellery. I put bracelets on your wrists and a necklace around your neck. ¹² I put a ring in your nose, earrings on your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. ¹³ So, you adorned yourself with gold and silver, and your clothes were fine linen, costly fabric and colourful woven cloth. Your food was fine wheat-flour, honey and olive-oil. You grew increasingly beautiful and advanced to be a queen. ¹⁴ Your fame spread among the nations because of your beauty. For it was perfect, because of My splendour, which I had laid on you,” declares the Lord GOD.”

¹⁵ “However, you trusted in your beauty and used your fame to become a prostitute. You freely gave yourself as a prostitute to everyone who went past. Your beauty became his. ¹⁶ You took some of your garments and made many-coloured high couches for yourself and acted as a prostitute on them. Such things should not happen. They should not occur. ¹⁷ You also took your beautiful articles of jewellery from My gold and My silver, which I had given you, and made male images for yourself and engaged in prostitution with them. ¹⁸ You also took your colourful woven garments to cover the images and set My olive-oil and My incense in front of them. ¹⁹ Although I had fed you with fine flour, olive-oil and honey, you also put My food, which I had given you, in front of them for a soothing aroma. This is what has happened,” declares the Lord GOD.

²⁰ “You also took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to Me, and you sacrificed them to the idols as their food. Was your prostitution not enough? ²¹ You slaughtered My children! You gave them up by causing them to pass through the fire! ²² In all your detestable practices and acts of prostitution you did not remember the days when you were young, when you were naked and bare and kicking about in your own blood. ²³ After all your wickedness — how terrible, how terrible for you!” declares the Lord GOD — ²⁴ “you built a mound for yourself and made yourself a high place in every public square. ²⁵ You have been building your high places at the head of every road and have made your beauty detestable. You have been opening your legs wide to anyone who has been going past and have been committing increasing acts of prostitution. ²⁶ You have also been engaging in prostitution with your lustful neighbours, the Egyptians. You have been increasing your acts of prostitution to provoke Me to anger. ²⁷ So look! I have stretched out My hand against you. I have reduced your allotted territory. I have abandoned you to the greed of the women who hate you, the daugh-

ters of the Philistines, who are ashamed of your lewd conduct. ²⁸ You have also been engaging in prostitution with the Assyrians, because you have not been satisfied. Yes, while you were engaging in prostitution with them, you were still not satisfied. ²⁹ You have been increasing your acts of prostitution with the land of tradesmen, the Chaldeans, but you have still not been satisfied with this. ³⁰ How weak-willed your heart is!” declares the Lord GOD. “For you have been committing all these things. You have been doing what a headstrong prostitute does. ³¹ When you built your mounds at the head of every road and made your high places in every public square, you were not like a prostitute. For you scorned a prostitute’s wages. ³² You adulterous wife! You receive strangers instead of your own husband! ³³ Men pay a fee to all prostitutes, but you have been giving your gifts to all your lovers. You have been giving a present to them to come to you from all directions for your acts of prostitution. ³⁴ You have been different from other women in your acts of prostitution. Your prostitution has not been committed after men have run after you. You have been paying a fee for prostitution, and no payment has been made to you. You have been the opposite.

The punishment of Jerusalem for its unfaithfulness

³⁵ “Therefore, prostitute, listen to the Word of the LORD! ³⁶ This is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Because you have been exposing your genitals and uncovering your nakedness in your acts of prostitution with your lovers and with all your disgusting idols and because of the shed blood of your children, which you have been giving to these idols, ³⁷ therefore, look! I shall assemble all your lovers, to whom you have been giving pleasure, all those whom you have loved and all those whom you have hated. I shall gather them against you from all around and uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness. ³⁸ I shall judge you as women who commit adultery and who kill innocent people are judged. I shall bring on you the blood-vengeance of wrath and jealousy. ³⁹ I shall hand you over to your lovers. They will pull down your mounds and break down your high places. They will tear off your clothes, take away your beautiful jewels and leave you naked and bare. ⁴⁰ They will lead out an assembly against you, who will stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. ⁴¹ They will burn down your houses and inflict penalties on you while many other women are watching. I shall make you stop being a prostitute, and you will also not pay any more fees for prostitution. ⁴² Then I shall get relief from My wrath against you, and My jealousy will turn away from you. I shall be calm and shall not be angry any longer. ⁴³ Because you have not remembered the time when you were young but have enraged Me with all these things, therefore, look! I have brought your conduct down on your own head,’ de-

clares the Lord GOD. 'Have you not been behaving lewdly in addition to all your disgusting practices? ⁴⁴ Look! Everyone who uses proverbs will use this proverb about you: "The daughter is like her mother." ⁴⁵ You really are your mother's daughter. She loathed her own husband and her own children. You really are your sister's sister. They loathed their own husbands and their own children. The mother of all of you was a Hittite, and your father was an Amorite. ⁴⁶ Your elder sister was Samaria. She and her daughters were the ones who used to live to the north of you. Your younger sister was Sodom. She used to live to the south of you with her daughters. ⁴⁷ However, did you not live as they conducted themselves and follow their disgusting practices? In a very short time you were more corrupt than they were in all your ways. ⁴⁸ As surely as I live,' declares the Lord GOD, 'your sister Sodom herself together with her daughters has certainly not done the kinds of things that you yourself have done together with your daughters. ⁴⁹ Look! This was what your sister Sodom was guilty of: she, together with her daughters, was arrogant, overfed and had undisturbed calm but did not support poor and needy people. ⁵⁰ They were haughty and committed detestable things before Me. When I saw this, I removed them. ⁵¹ Samaria has not committed half as many sins as you have. You have done more disgusting things than they have. You have made your sisters appear righteous through all the disgusting things that you have been committing. ⁵² You too, must bear your own disgrace! For you have been interceding on behalf of your sisters. Because of your own sins, which you have been committing in more disgusting ways than they have, they used to be more righteous than you are. You also must be ashamed and bear your own disgrace, because you have made your sisters appear righteous! ⁵³ I shall restore their fortunes, both the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters. I shall also restore your own fortunes together with them, ⁵⁴ that you may bear your own disgrace and be ashamed of all that you have been doing, by giving comfort to them. ⁵⁵ As for your sisters, Sodom and her daughters will regain their previous position. Samaria and her daughters will regain their previous position. You and your daughters will also regain your previous position. ⁵⁶ Did you not speak about your sister Sodom as a shameful object lesson during the time when you were arrogant, ⁵⁷ before your wickedness was exposed? It was like the time when you become an object of reproach for the daughters of Aram and all those around her and for the daughters of the Philistines, for those who are all around, who despise you. ⁵⁸ You yourself will bear the penalty for your lewdness and your disgusting practices,' declares the LORD.

God's promise to establish an everlasting Covenant

⁵⁹ "For this is what the Lord GOD has said: 'I shall

treat you as your deeds have deserved. For you despised the oath that involved a curse when you broke the Covenant. ⁶⁰ Nevertheless, I Myself shall remember My Covenant with you when you were young and establish an everlasting Covenant for your benefit. ⁶¹ Then you will remember your conduct. You will be ashamed when you receive your elder sister and your younger sister. I shall give them to you as daughters but not because of your covenant. ⁶² I Myself shall establish My Covenant with you. Then you will know that I am the LORD, ⁶³ that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth again because of your disgrace, when I make atonement for you for all that you have been doing,' declares the Lord GOD."

17

The parable of the two eagles and a vine

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² "Son of man, ask the family of Israel a riddle and tell them a parable! ³ You shall say, 'This is what the Lord GOD has said: "A large eagle that had huge wings, long feathers and rich, many-coloured plumage came to Lebanon and took hold of the top of a cedar-tree. ⁴ He plucked off its highest twig and carried it to a land of merchants. He laid it down in a city of traders. ⁵ He took a seedling from that country and placed it in a fertile field. He placed it like a willow, a willow beside plenty of water. ⁶ It sprouted and became a low, spreading vine. Its leafy branches turned upwards toward the eagle, but its roots remained in their place. So, it became a vine, produced branches and put out shoots.'"

⁷ "There was another large eagle that had huge wings and many feathers. Look! This vine stretched out its roots toward him and sent out its branches toward him from the garden-bed where it had been planted, that he might water it. ⁸ It had been planted on good soil beside plenty of water, so that it could produce branches, bear fruit and become a magnificent vine. ⁹ Say, 'This is what the Lord GOD has asked: "Will it flourish? Will the first eagle not pull out its roots and strip off its fruit, that it may dry up and that all its fresh growth may wither? A strong arm or any people will not be needed to pull it by its roots. ¹⁰ Look! If it is planted again, will it flourish? Will it not wither completely when the east wind strikes it? It will wither away on the garden-bed where it had sprouted.'"

¹¹ Then the Word of the LORD came to me: ¹² "Please ask the rebellious family, 'Do you not know what this means?' Tell them, 'Look! The king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took its king and its leading people and brought them with him to Babylon. ¹³ He took another member of the royal family and made a treaty with him. He put him under oath, after he had taken away the chief men of the land. ¹⁴ He swore that the kingship would have inferior status and would not lift itself up again. He swore that he would keep his treaty, that the kingship might endure.

¹⁵ However, he rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt, that they might give him horses and a large army. Would he flourish? Would the one who did such things escape? If he broke the treaty, would he escape? ¹⁶ As surely as I live,' declares the Lord GOD, 'he will certainly die in Babylon, in the place where the king lives who had installed him as king. For he has despised his oath. He has broken his treaty with him. ¹⁷ Even with a mighty army and with a numerous company Pharaoh will not protect him in war, when assault-ramps are thrown up and siege-works are built to destroy many lives. ¹⁸ He was despising the oath by breaking the treaty. Indeed, when he has given his handshake and has nevertheless done all this, he will not escape. ¹⁹ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: "As surely as I live, it is certainly My oath that he has despised and My Covenant that he has broken. I shall bring it down on his own head. ²⁰ I shall spread My net over him, and he will be caught in My snare. I shall bring him to Babylon and begin to judge him there because he has violated his obligations to Me. ²¹ All his fugitives among all his troops will fall by the sword. The survivors will be scattered in every direction. Then you will know that I am the LORD and that I have spoken."'''

²² This is what the Lord GOD has said: "I Myself shall take one of the highest sprigs of a cedar-tree and set it out. I shall pluck off one of the topmost of its tender twigs and I Myself shall plant it on a high and lofty mountain. ²³ I shall plant it on the mountain-height of Israel. It will send out branches, produce fruit and become a magnificent cedar-tree. Every **bird**, every winged creature, will **live** under it. They will **live in the shade of its branches**. ²⁴ Then all the trees in the field will know that I am the LORD and that I have brought the high tree down low. I have made the low tree grow high. I have made the fresh tree wither and have caused the dry tree to sprout. I am the LORD. I have spoken, and I shall do it."

18

A declaration that everyone will be responsible for his own sins

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² "What do you people mean when you use this proverb about the land of Israel, 'The fathers eat unripe fruit, and the children's teeth feel dull?' ³ As surely as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "you will certainly not use this proverb in Israel any longer. ⁴ Look! All persons belong to Me. Both the soul of the father and soul of the son alike belong to Me. The person who sins is the one who will die. ⁵ If a man is righteous, he will do what is just and right. ⁶ He has not been eating sacrifices made on the hill-shrines. He has not been looking up to the idols of the family of Israel. He has not violated his neighbour's wife. He does not make an advance to a woman during her period. ⁷ He does not oppress anyone. He returns what he has taken as security for a loan. He does not commit any robbery. He

gives his food to a person who is hungry and covers a naked person with a garment. ⁸ He does not lend money on interest or accept an additional charge. He withholds his hand from injustice. He makes an honest decision between one man and another. ⁹ He lives by My Statutes, keeps My Decisions and carries them out faithfully. Such a man is righteous. He will certainly live," declares the Lord GOD.

¹⁰ "Suppose that the man has a son who is violent, commits murder or does any of these things. ¹¹ Although the father himself has not been doing any of these things, yet, if the son has been eating sacrifices made on the hill-shrines and has violated his neighbour's wife, ¹² if he oppresses a poor and needy person and commits robbery, if he does not return what he has taken as security, if he has been looking up to the idols, if he has been doing other disgusting things, ¹³ if he has been lending money at interest or accepting an additional charge, will he live? He will not live. He has been doing all these disgusting things. He will certainly die. He will be responsible for his own death.

¹⁴ "Now, suppose that this man has had a son who has seen all the sins that his father has committed. Although he has seen them, he does not commit such things. ¹⁵ He has not been eating sacrifices made on the hill-shrines. He has not been looking up to the idols of the family of Israel. He has not violated his neighbour's wife. ¹⁶ He does not oppress anyone. He does not seize anything as security for a loan. He has not committed robbery. He has given his food to a person who is hungry and has covered a naked person with a garment. ¹⁷ He has refused to harm a poor person. He has not accepted any interest or additional charge. He has been putting My Decisions into practice and has been walking in My Statutes. He will not die for his father's sin. He will certainly live. ¹⁸ Because his father has been resorting to extortion, robbing his fellow-Israelite and doing what is wrong among his people, he will certainly die for his sin.

¹⁹ "However, you ask, 'Why should the son not suffer for his father's sin?' Because the son has been doing what is just and right, has been keeping all My Statutes and putting them into practice, he will certainly live. ²⁰ The person who sins is the one who will die. A son will not suffer for his father's sin, and a father will not suffer for his son's sin. The righteousness of a righteous person will be credited to him, and the wickedness of a wicked person will be credited to him.

²¹ "However, if a wicked person turns away from all his sins, which he has been committing and, if he keeps all My Statutes and does what is just and right, he will certainly live. He will not die. ²² None of the rebellious acts that he has been committing will be remembered against him. He will live because of his righteousness, which he has been putting into practice.

²³ Do I have any pleasure at all in the death of a wicked person?" asks the Lord GOD. "Do I not desire that he should turn from his ways and live? ²⁴ However, when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness, acts unjustly and does the same disgusting things as a wicked person has done, will he live? None of the righteous deeds that he has done will be remembered because of his unfaithfulness, of which he is guilty, and because of his sin, which he has committed. He will die because of them.

²⁵ "Yet you say, 'The behaviour of the Lord is not fair.' Please listen, family of Israel! Is My behaviour not fair? Are not the ways you behave the ones that are not fair? ²⁶ When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and acts unjustly, he will die for those things. He will die because of the unjust things that he has been committing. ²⁷ Moreover, when a wicked person turns away from the wickedness that he has been committing and does what is just and right, he will save his life. ²⁸ Because he has considered all the rebellious acts that he has been committing and has turned away from them, he will certainly live. He will not die. ²⁹ Yet the family of Israel says, 'The behaviour of the Lord is not fair.' Are the ways in which I behave not fair, family of Israel? Are your ways not the ones that are unfair?

³⁰ "Therefore, family of Israel, I shall judge each of you according to his conduct," declares the Lord GOD. "Repent and turn away from all your rebellious acts, that sin may not cause your downfall. ³¹ Cast away from you all your rebellious acts, which you have been committing! Make yourselves new hearts and new spirits. Why should you die, O family of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord GOD. "Therefore, repent and live!"

19

A lament for Israel's princes

¹ "As for you, sing a lamentation for the princes of Israel. ² You shall say: 'What a lioness your mother was! She lay down among lions. She reared her cubs among young lions. ³ She brought up one of her cubs. He became a young lion and learned how to tear prey. He devoured people. ⁴ The nations heard about him. He was caught in their pit, and they used hooks to lead him away to Egypt. ⁵ When she saw that she had been waiting in vain, that her hope was lost, she took another of her cubs and made him a young lion. ⁶ He prowled about among the other lions. He became a young lion and learned how to tear prey. He devoured people. ⁷ He knew their widows. He laid waste their cities and the land together with everything in it became desolate because of the noise of his roaring. ⁸ People set the nations against him from the surrounding provinces. They spread their net over him. He was caught in their pit. ⁹ They used hooks to put

him in a collar and took him to the king of Babylon. They put him in a fortress, that his roar might not be heard any longer on the mountains of Israel.'

¹⁰ "Your mother was like a vine with the same bloodline as yours. It was planted beside the water. It was bearing fruit and had thick branches, because there was plenty of water. ¹¹ It had strong stems that were fit for rulers' sceptres. It grew to be high up, among other leafy plants. Its height made it conspicuous with its thick leafy tendrils. ¹² However, the vine was torn up in fury and thrown down on the ground. The east wind dried up its fruit. Its strong stems were torn off and withered. Fire consumed them. ¹³ Now it has been replanted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land. ¹⁴ Fire has gone out from the main stem of its shoots. It has consumed its fruit, so that no strong stem, no sceptre that a ruler could use, has remained in it." This is a lamentation and has been used as a lamentation.

20

A record of Israel's past and present sins

¹ On the tenth day of the fifth month in the seventh year, some of the elders of Israel came to consult the LORD and sat down in front of me. ² The Word of the LORD came to me: ³ "Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel and tell them, 'This is what the Lord GOD has asked: "Are you coming to consult Me? As surely as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I shall certainly not allow you to consult Me.'"

⁴ "Will you judge them? Will you judge them, son of man? Inform them of the disgusting things that their fathers have done. ⁵ Tell them, 'This is what the Lord GOD has said: "On the day when I chose Israel, I made an oath with My hand raised to the descendants of the family of Jacob. I made Myself known to them in Egypt. I swore to them with My hand raised and said, 'I am the LORD, your God.' ⁶ On that day I swore to them with My hand raised that I would bring them out of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands. ⁷ I told them, 'Each one of you must throw away the vile idols on which he has set his eyes! Do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt! I am the LORD, your God.' ⁸ However, they rebelled against Me. They refused to listen to Me. None of them threw away the vile idols on which he had set his eyes. They did not abandon the idols of Egypt. Therefore, I said that I would pour out My wrath on them and express all My anger against them inside the land of Egypt. ⁹ However, I acted for the sake of My own name, to prevent it from being defiled in the sight of the nations among whom they were living. I had made Myself known to them to take them out of Egypt while those nations were watching.'"

¹⁰ "So, I brought the Israelites out of Egypt and led them into the wilderness. ¹¹ I gave them My Statutes and made My Decisions known to them. If any person

puts them into practice he will live through them. ¹² I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD and that I declare them holy. ¹³ However, the family of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They did not live according to My Statutes. They rejected My Decisions, although a person will live through putting them into practice. They also greatly profaned My Sabbaths. So, I said that I would pour out My wrath on them in the wilderness, to wipe them out completely. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, I acted for the sake of My own name, that it might not be profaned in the sight of the nations who had seen Me bringing the Israelites out. ¹⁵ With My hand raised I had even threatened to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land that I had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands. ¹⁶ I had done this because they had rejected My Decisions, had not been living according to My Statutes and had been profaning My Sabbaths. For their hearts were following their idols. ¹⁷ Nevertheless, I looked on them with pity, so that I did not destroy them or wipe them out completely in the wilderness. ¹⁸ "I told their children in the wilderness, 'Do not live according to the prescriptions of your fathers! Do not keep their decisions and do not defile yourselves with their idols!' ¹⁹ I am the LORD, your God. Live according to My Statutes! Keep My Decisions and put them into practice! ²⁰ Keep My Sabbaths holy! Let them be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD, your God!" ²¹ However, the children rebelled against me. They did not live according to My Statutes and did not keep My Decisions and put them into practice, although a person will live through putting them into practice. They profaned My Sabbaths. So, I said that I would pour out My wrath on them and express all My anger against them in the wilderness. ²² However, I held back My hand and acted for the sake of My own name, to prevent it from being profaned in the sight of the nations who had seen Me bring out the Israelites. ²³ With My hand raised I Myself also swore to them in the wilderness that I would disperse them among the nations and scatter them through the other countries. ²⁴ For they had not been putting My Decisions into practice and had been rejecting My Statutes. They had been profaning My Sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their fathers' idols. ²⁵ I Myself even gave them Instructions that were not good and Decisions through which they could not have life. ²⁶ I defiled them through their own gifts when they offered all their first-born, that I might terrify them. I did this that they might know that I am the LORD."

²⁷ "Therefore, son of man, speak to the family of Israel and tell them, 'This is what the Lord GOD has said: "Your fathers insulted Me in this respect also, by being unfaithful to Me. ²⁸ When I had brought them into

the land that I had sworn with My hand raised to give them, and they saw any high hill or any leafy tree, they offered their sacrifices there and presented sacrificial gifts there that made Me angry. They made their soothing aroma there and poured out their drink-offerings there. ²⁹ I had asked them, 'What is the high place to which you are going?' It has been named a 'high place' to this day."

³⁰ "Therefore, tell the family of Israel, 'This is what the Lord GOD has asked: "Are you defiling yourselves by living as your fathers did? Are you engaging in prostitution by following their abhorrent practices? ³¹ When you present your gifts by sacrificing your children in fire, you keep on defiling yourselves with all your idols to this day. Shall I Myself allow you to consult Me, family of Israel? As surely as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I shall certainly not allow you to consult Me. ³² What is coming up in your minds will certainly never happen. You are thinking, 'Let us be like the other nations, like the clans in the other countries, by serving wood and stone!'"

A promise that God will restore Israel

³³ "As surely as I live," declares the Lord GOD, "I shall certainly be King over you, by using a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and by pouring out wrath. ³⁴ I shall bring you out from the other peoples and gather you out of the other countries where you have been dispersed, by using a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and by pouring out wrath. ³⁵ I shall lead you into the wilderness of the peoples and there I shall put you on trial face to face. ³⁶ I put you on trial as I put your fathers on trial in the wilderness of the land of Egypt," declares the Lord GOD. ³⁷ "I shall make you go past under the rod and bring you into the obligation of the Covenant. ³⁸ I shall purge out the rebels among you and those who are defying Me. I shall bring them out of the land where they are living temporarily, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

A pronouncement about the future of Israel

³⁹ "As for you, family of Israel, this is what the Lord GOD has said: 'Each one of you should go and serve his idols! However, after that, you will certainly listen to Me. You will not profane My holy name any longer with your gifts and with your idols. ⁴⁰ For there on My holy mountain, the mountain-height of Israel,' declares the Lord GOD, 'the whole family of Israel, all of them, will serve Me in the land. I shall take pleasure in them there. I shall require your contributions and your best presents, together with all your other holy offerings. ⁴¹ I shall be favourable to you as **a pleasing aroma** when I bring you out from the other peoples and gather you out of the other countries where you have been dispersed. I shall show that I am holy among you while the nations are watching. ⁴² Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country that I have sworn with My hand raised to give to your fa-

thers. ⁴³ There you will remember your conduct and all your deeds, with which you have been defiling yourselves. You will be disgusted with yourselves for all your evil deeds, which you have been committing.

⁴⁴ Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I deal with you for the sake of My own name, not according to your evil conduct or according to your corrupt deeds, O family of Israel,' declares the Lord GOD."

A proclamation about a fire in the Negev

⁴⁵ The Word of the LORD came to me: ⁴⁶ "Son of man, set your face toward the south! Prophecy ecstatically toward the south! Prophecy against the forest-land in the Negev! ⁴⁷ Tell the forest in the Negev, 'Listen to the Word of the LORD! This is what the Lord GOD has said: "Look! I shall light a fire in you, and it will burn up every green tree and every dry tree in you. The blazing flame will not go out. All faces from the south to the north will be scorched by it.

⁴⁸ All human beings will see that I, the LORD, have lit it. It will not go out.'"

⁴⁹ Then I said: "Alas, Lord GOD! They are asking about me, 'Is he not one who only speaks in riddles?'"

21

A proclamation about God's drawn sword

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² "Son of man, set your face towards Jerusalem and speak ecstatically against the holy places! Prophecy against the land of Israel! ³ Tell the land of Israel, 'This is what the LORD has said: "Look! I am against you. I shall draw My sword from its sheath and cut off from you the righteous person and the wicked person. ⁴ Because I shall cut off from you the righteous person and the wicked person, My sword will come out of its sheath against all human beings from the south to the north. ⁵ All human beings will know that I am the LORD. I have drawn My sword from its sheath. It will not go back there again.'"

⁶ "As for you, son of man, groan! Groan with shaking hips and bitter grief while they are watching you!

⁷ When they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' you shall say, 'Because of the news. For it is coming. Every heart will melt, and all hands will hang limp. Every spirit will be disheartened, and all knees will become as weak as water. Look! It is coming. It will happen,' declares the Lord GOD."

⁸ The Word of the LORD came to me: ⁹ "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'This is what the LORD has said: "Say: 'A sword, a sword has been sharpened and also polished. ¹⁰ It has been sharpened to carry out a slaughter, polished to flash like lightning! Or should we rejoice? The sword despises the sceptre of My son and every other kind of wood. ¹¹ He has given the sword to be polished and to be grasped with the hand. This is a sword that has been sharpened and this is one that has been polished to be put in the hand of one who slays.'"

¹² "Cry out and wail, son of man! For it will come against My people. It is against all the leading men of Israel. They have been thrown to the sword together with My people. Therefore, slap yourself on the hip in grief! ¹³ Surely it will be tested. What if the sword despises even the sceptre? The sceptre will be no more," declares the Lord GOD.

¹⁴ "As for you, son of man, prophesy! Clap your hands! Let the sword strike twice, yes, three times! It is a sword for those who are to be slain. This is a sword for the great slaughter, which surrounds them, ¹⁵ that hearts may melt and that many may stumble. I have appointed the sword to kill people at all their gates. Alas! It has been made to be like lightning. It is grasped to slaughter. ¹⁶ Focus on the right! Pay attention to the left or wherever your sharp edge is assigned! ¹⁷ I Myself shall also clap My hands and make My fury subside. I Myself, the LORD, have spoken."

The sword of the king of Babylon

¹⁸ The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁹ "As for you, son of man, mark out for yourself two roads for the sword of the king of Babylon to come! Both of them shall come from the same land! Cut out a signpost! Cut it out where the road to the city begins! ²⁰ Mark a road for the sword to come to the Ammonite city of Rabbah and mark another for it to come to Judah, to the fortified city of Jerusalem! ²¹ For the king of Babylon will stand at the junction in the road, where the two roads fork, to try to obtain omens. He will shake the arrows. He will consult the images. He will examine the animal-livers. ²² The omen for Jerusalem will be in his right hand, to set battering-rams, to give the command to slaughter, to raise a battle-cry, to set battering-rams against the city-gates, to heap up a siege-mound and to build siege-towers.

²³ "However, those who have sworn solemn oaths will think that this is a false omen. Nevertheless, He will remind them of their guilt, that they may be captured.

²⁴ "Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: 'Because you have caused your guilt to be remembered, by uncovering your rebellious acts, so that your sins become apparent in everything that you are doing, because you have been remembered, you will be forcibly captured. ²⁵ As for you, you profane and wicked prince of Israel, your day has come. It is the time when you will finally be punished.'

²⁶ "This is what the Lord GOD has said: 'Remove your turban! Get rid of your crown! Nothing will continue as it is. **Raise up** what is **low!** **Bring down low** what is high! ²⁷ A ruin! A ruin! I shall make it a ruin! This will also not happen until the One comes who has a right to it. Then I shall give it to Him.'"

A proclamation against the Ammonites

²⁸ "You yourself, son of man, must prophesy and say, 'This is what the Lord GOD has said about the Ammonites and about their insults. You shall say: "A sword! A sword has been drawn to slaughter! It has

been polished to consume and to flash like lightning!²⁹ Although they see false visions about you and although they make lying predictions about you, to place you on the necks of profane and wicked people, their day will come. It will be the time when they are finally punished.³⁰ Return your sword to its sheath! I shall judge you in the place where you were created, in the land where you originated.³¹ I shall pour out My indignation on you. I shall blow on you with the fire of My wrath. I shall hand you over to brutish men, who are skilled in destruction.³² You will become fuel for the fire. Your blood will be in the middle of the land. You will not be remembered. For I, the LORD have spoken.””

22

A judgment on Jerusalem because of its murderous history

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “As for you, son of man, will you judge, will you judge this city, which is guilty of bloodshed? Then tell it about all the disgusting things that it has been doing! ³ You shall say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “You are a city that murders people who are living in it. The city’s time has come. It has been making idols inside itself, so that it has become unclean. ⁴ You have become guilty through your own blood, which you have been shedding. Through your idols, which you have been making, you have become unclean. You have brought your days close to their end. You have come to the end of your years. Therefore, I shall make you an object of scorn to the nations and a laughing-stock to all the other countries. ⁵ Those who are near you and those who are far from you will make fun of you. Your name will become unclean. You will be filled with dismay.””

⁶ “Look! Each of the princes of Israel in you has been using his own arm to murder people. ⁷ People have been treating fathers and mothers in you with contempt. They have been treating resident-foreigners brutally inside you. They have been oppressing orphans and widows in you. ⁸ You have been despising My holy places and profaning My Sabbaths. ⁹ There have been people in you who have slandered others to murder them. People in you have been eating sacrificial food on the mountains. They have been behaving lewdly in you. ¹⁰ Men in you have been having relations with their fathers’ wives. They have been violating women in you who are unclean during their periods. ¹¹ One man has been doing what is disgusting with his neighbour’s wife. Another has been lewdly defiling his daughter-in-law. Another in you has violated his own sister, his father’s daughter. ¹² People in you have been accepting bribes to commit murder. You have been charging interest and making an additional charge. You have been making profit from your neighbour through extortion. However, you have forgotten Me,” declares the Lord GOD.

¹³ “Look! I shall clap My hands at the dishonest gain

that you have been making and at the murder that has been committed inside you. ¹⁴ Will your courage endure or will your hands be strong in the days when I deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken and I shall do it. ¹⁵ I shall scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the other countries. I shall completely rid you of your uncleanness. ¹⁶ The nations will see that you have become defiled in yourself. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

¹⁷ The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸ “Son of man, the family of Israel has become dross to Me. All of them are bronze, tin, iron and lead inside a smelting-furnace. They have become the dross left from silver. ¹⁹ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Because you have all become dross, look! I shall gather you into Jerusalem. ²⁰ As silver, bronze, iron, lead and tin are put together in a smelting-furnace that people may blast fire on them to melt them, so I shall gather you in My anger and in My wrath, put you in and melt you. ²¹ I shall gather you and blow on you with the fire of My wrath, and you will be melted in it. ²² You will be melted in it as silver is melted in a smelting-furnace. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out My wrath on you.””

²³ The Word of the LORD came to me: ²⁴ “Son of man, tell the city, ‘You are a land that has not been made clean. It will not be rained on in the day of indignation. ²⁵ The conspiracy of its prophets inside it is like a roaring lion that is tearing its prey. They have been devouring human lives. They take treasure and precious belongings. They have turned many of its women that are in it into widows. ²⁶ Its priests have been treating My law violently and have been profaning My holy things. They have not been distinguishing between what is holy and what is ordinary. They have not been teaching the difference between what is unclean and what is clean. They have been shutting their eyes to My Sabbaths, and I have become defiled among them. ²⁷ Its princes inside it are like wolves that tear their prey. They commit murder. They destroy people’s lives to make dishonest profits. ²⁸ Its prophets have been daubing whitewash for them. They see false visions and make lying predictions for them. They say, “This is what the Lord GOD has said,” when the LORD has not spoken. ²⁹ The common people have been practising extortion and committing robbery. They have been oppressing poor and needy people. They have been unlawfully mistreating foreign residents. ³⁰ When I searched for a man among them who might build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, to prevent Me from destroying it, I did not find anyone. ³¹ Therefore, I shall pour out My indignation on them. I shall consume them with the fire of My wrath. I shall bring down their conduct on their own heads,’ declares the Lord GOD.”

23

A condemnation of Samaria and Jerusalem for acting like prostitutes

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of the same mother. ³ They became prostitutes in Egypt. They became prostitutes when they were young. There men fondled their breasts and there they caressed their virgin nipples. ⁴ These were their names: The elder girl was named ‘Oholah,’^{*141} and her sister was named ‘Oholibah’.^{*142} They became Mine and gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah is the name for Samaria, and Oholibah is the name for Jerusalem. ⁵ Oholah practised prostitution although she was Mine. She longed for her Assyrian lovers, who were her neighbours. ⁶ They were clothed in purple wool. They were governors and state-officials. They were all desirable young men and riders mounted on horses. ⁷ She gave herself as a prostitute to all the important men in Assyria. She defiled herself with all the idols of all those after whom she lusted. ⁸ She did not give up her prostitution, which she had begun in Egypt. For, when she was young, men went to bed with her. They caressed her virgin breasts and poured out their obscene conduct on her. ⁹ Therefore, I handed her over to her lovers. I put her in the hands of the Assyrians, for whom she had been lusting. ¹⁰ These stripped her naked. They took away her sons and her daughters. They killed her with the sword. Women began to gossip about her when punishment had been inflicted on her. ¹¹ “When her sister Oholibah saw this, she became more corrupt than her sister in her lust and in her prostitution. It was worse than the fornication of her sister. ¹² She longed for the Assyrians. They were governors and state officials, who were her neighbours. They were clothed most opulently. They were riders mounted on horses. They were all desirable young men. ¹³ I saw that she had defiled herself. Both of them had been acting in the same way. ¹⁴ However, she went further in her prostitution. She saw carved pictures of men on the wall. They were the images of Chaldeans painted in bright red. ¹⁵ They were wearing belts on their waists and had flowing turbans on their heads. All of them resembled officers. They were like Babylonians, natives of Chaldea. ¹⁶ As soon as she saw them, she longed for them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. ¹⁷ The Babylonians came to make love to her on her bed. They defiled her with their fornication. After they had defiled her, she turned away from them in disgust. ¹⁸ When she behaved openly as a prostitute and exposed her nakedness, I turned away from her in disgust, as I had turned away in disgust from her sister. ¹⁹ She practised even more of her prostitution as she remembered the time when she was young, when she had been a prostitute in Egypt.

²⁰ She lusted after their boyfriends, whose genitals were like those of donkeys and whose semen was like that of horses. ²¹ You longed to do the lewd things that you did when you were young, when the Egyptians caressed your nipples because you had young breasts.

²² “Therefore, Oholibah, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I shall stir up against you your lovers, from whom you have turned away in disgust. I shall bring them against you from every side, ²³ the Babylonians, all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, Koa and all the Assyrians. They are all desirable young men, governors, state officials, officers and other highly regarded men. All of them ride on horses. ²⁴ They will come against you with weapons, with chariots, wagons and many soldiers. They will take up positions against you on every side with large shields, small shields and helmets. I shall entrust the judgment to them. They will use their own kinds of verdicts to punish you. ²⁵ I shall direct My jealousy against you, that they may deal with you in fury. They will cut off your nose and your ears, and your survivors will fall by the sword. They will take away your sons and your daughters, and those of you who are left will be devoured by fire. ²⁶ They will also strip off your clothes and take away your beautiful jewels. ²⁷ I shall put an end to your lewd conduct and your prostitution, which began in Egypt. You will not look longingly at these things or remember Egypt any longer.’

²⁸ “For this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I shall hand you over to those whom you hate. I shall put you in the hands of those from whom you turned away in disgust. ²⁹ They will treat you with hatred and take away everything for which you have worked. They will leave you naked and bare. The nakedness of your prostitution, your lewd conduct and your fornication will be exposed. ³⁰ These things have brought this on you, because you have been acting as a prostitute with the nations, through defiling yourself with their idols. ³¹ You have been acting in the same way as your sister. Therefore, I shall put her cup in your hand.’

³² “This is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘You will drink your sister’s cup, which is deep and wide. You will be laughed at and mocked. This cup holds a large amount. ³³ You will be filled with drunkenness and agony. It is a cup of horror and desolation. It is the cup of your sister, Samaria. ³⁴ You will drink it and drain it out. You will gnaw its fragments. You will tear your breasts. For I Myself have spoken,’ declares the Lord GOD. ³⁵ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Because you have forgotten Me and thrust Me behind your back, you yourself must bear the consequences of your lewd conduct and your prostitution.’”

³⁶ The LORD also said to me: “Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then tell them about

¹⁴¹ Oholah means “Her tabernacle.”

¹⁴² Oholibah means, “My Tabernacle is in her.”

their disgusting practices! ³⁷ For they have been committing adultery and have blood on their hands. They have been committing adultery with their idols. They have even been presenting their children, whom they have borne to Me, as sacrifices to the idols as their food. ³⁸ They have also been doing these things to Me. They have at the same time been defiling My Holy Place and have been profaning My Sabbaths. ³⁹ For, when they have slaughtered their children for their idols, they have at the same time been coming into My Holy Place to profane it. Look! This is what they have been doing inside My Temple. ⁴⁰ You people have even sent messengers to invite men to come from far away. Look! When they arrived, you washed yourself for them. You painted your eyes and decorated yourself with your jewellery. ⁴¹ You were sitting on an elegant couch, with a table in front of it that had been made ready, on which you had placed My incense and My olive-oil. ⁴² The sound of a carefree crowd was around her. Drunkards from the desert were brought in, even in addition to a crowd of common men. They put bracelets on the wrists of the women and beautiful crowns on their heads.

⁴³ “Then I said about this woman, who had been worn out by her urge to be adulterous, ‘Now they will continue to pay her for her prostitution, yes, even for hers!’ ⁴⁴ They have had relations with her. They had relations with those lewd women, Oholah and Oholibah, as men have relations with a prostitute! ⁴⁵ However, righteous men will sentence them to be punished as women who commit adultery and to be punished as women who commit murder. For they are adulteresses and have blood on their hands.’

⁴⁶ “For this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Bring up an assembly against them and consign them to terror and plunder!’ ⁴⁷ The assembly shall stone them and cut them down with their swords! They shall kill their sons and their daughters and burn down their houses. ⁴⁸ I shall rid the land of lewd conduct, that all the women may receive a warning and may not commit lewd conduct, as you have been doing. ⁴⁹ They will bring your lewd conduct down on you. You will bear the penalty for your sinful idolatry. Then you will know that I am the Lord GOD.”

24

A comparison of Jerusalem to a rusty cooking pot

¹ On the tenth day of the tenth month, in the ninth year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, write down the name of this day, this very day. The king of Babylon has thrown himself against Jerusalem on this very day. ³ Tell this rebellious family a parable! Tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Put the cooking-pot on the fire! Set it on! Pour water in it also! ⁴ Put the pieces of meat together in it, all the best pieces, the leg and the shoulder! Fill the pot with the best bones! ⁵ Take the pick of the flock!

Stack up the bones in their place! Boil it well, so that it also cooks the bones in it!”

⁶ “Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘How terrible it will be for this city, which is guilty of bloodshed, this pot, which has rust on it! Its rust will not come off! Take out its pieces of meat one at a time, without choosing any particular piece! ⁷ For the blood that it has shed is still inside it. It has poured the blood on the bare rock. It has not poured it out on the ground, where the dust would have covered it. ⁸ As a result, this has aroused My wrath, so that I shall take revenge. I shall pour out its blood on bare rock, so that it will not be covered.’

⁹ “Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘How terrible for this city, which is guilty of bloodshed! I Myself shall also make a high stack. ¹⁰ Pile up the pieces of wood! Light the fire! Boil the meat right through! Mix in the spices and let the bones be burnt up! ¹¹ Then set the empty pot on the coals, that it may become hot, that its copper may burn, that the uncleanness inside it may be poured out and that its rust may be burnt off. ¹² Effort has only caused weariness. Its thick rust will not come away from it. Let its rust go into the fire! ¹³ Lewd conduct is what has made you unclean. Because I would have cleansed you, but you have not become clean from your impurity, you will never become clean any longer until I have satisfied My fury on you. ¹⁴ I, the LORD, have spoken. It will happen. I shall do it. I shall not leave it unattended. I shall not spare. I shall not relent. You will be judged according to your conduct and your actions,’ declares the Lord GOD.”

Ezekiel's silent sorrow over his wife's death, which expressed grief over the destruction of Jerusalem

¹⁵ The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁶ “Son of man, look! I am about to take away from you by the plague the one whom your eyes delight to see. However, you shall not mourn, you shall not weep or shed any tears. ¹⁷ Sigh but do it silently! You shall not observe any of the ceremonial mourning for dead people! Wrap your turban around your head! You shall put your sandals on your feet! You shall not cover your moustache! You shall not eat the food that people eat!”

¹⁸ So, I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded. ¹⁹ The people asked me, “Will you not tell us what these things that you are doing mean for us?”

²⁰ Then I told them, “The Word of the LORD came to me, ²¹ ‘Tell the family of Israel: “This is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I shall profane My Holy Place, about which you boast so proudly, the thing that your eyes delight to see and the delight of your souls. Your sons and your daughters whom you left behind will also fall by the sword. ²² You shall do as I have been doing! You shall not cover your moustaches! You shall also not eat the food that people eat!

²³ Your turbans shall be wrapped on your heads, and your sandals shall be put on your feet! You shall not mourn or weep but must rot away because of your sins and must groan to one another! ²⁴ Ezekiel will be a sign to you. You must do exactly as he has been doing. When this happens, you will know that I am the Lord GOD.””

²⁵ “As for you, son of man, on the day when I take away from them their place of refuge, the splendid object of their joy, the thing that their eyes delight to see, the delight of their eyes and what their souls long for and when I take away their sons and daughters, will not ²⁶ a certain fugitive come to you on that day to let you hear the news with your own ears? ²⁷ On that day you shall open your mouth and speak to the fugitive! You shall not be silent any longer! You shall be a sign to them, that they may know that I am the LORD!”

25

A proclamation against Ammon

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, set your face toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them. ³ Tell the Ammonites, ‘Listen to the Word of the Lord GOD! This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because you said, ‘Aha!’ over My Holy Place when it was profaned, over the land of Israel when it was stripped of inhabitants and over the family of Judah when they went into exile, ⁴ therefore look! I am handing you over to the people of the east. They will possess your land, so that they will set up their camps among you and make their dwellings among you. They will eat your produce and drink your milk. ⁵ I shall make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a resting-place for flocks. Then you will know that I am the LORD.””

⁶ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because you have been clapping your hands, stamping your feet and rejoicing with all the malice in your heart against the land of Israel, ⁷ Therefore, look! I shall stretch out My hand against you and hand you over to the nations as plunder. I shall cut you off from the other peoples and exterminate you from the other countries. I shall destroy you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

A proclamation against Moab

⁸ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because Moab and Seir have said, ‘Look! The family of Judah is like all the other nations,’ ⁹ therefore look! I shall expose the mountain-slope of Moab from the cities, from its cities that are on its frontier, which are the glory of the country, Beth-Jeshimoth, Baal-Meon and Kiriathaim. ¹⁰ I shall give it, together with the Ammonites, to the people of the East as a possession, so that the Ammonites will not be remembered any longer among the other nations. ¹¹ I shall inflict punishment on Moab. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

A proclamation against Edom

¹² This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because Edom has been trying to get revenge against the family of Judah and has become very guilty by taking revenge on them, ¹³ therefore this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘I shall stretch out My hand against Edom and wipe out human beings and animals in it. I shall make it a site of ruins. People will fall by the sword from Teman to Dedan. ¹⁴ I shall use My people Israel to take revenge on Edom. My people will deal with Edom in accordance with My anger and My wrath. Then they will know My retribution,”” declares the Lord GOD.

A proclamation against the Philistines

¹⁵ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because the Philistines have been acting in vengeance and have taken revenge with malice in their hearts and with ancient hostility, to carry out destruction, ¹⁶ therefore this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I shall stretch out My hand against the Philistines. I shall wipe out the Cherethites and exterminate what is left on the seacoast. ¹⁷ I shall carry out acts of severe revenge on them and rebuke them angrily. They will know that I am the LORD when I lay My revenge on them.””

26

A proclamation against Tyre

¹ On the first day of the month in the eleventh year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, because Tyre has been saying about Jerusalem, ‘Aha! The gateway of the peoples has been broken. It has been transferred to my possession. Let me be filled, now that it has been laid waste!’ ³ therefore this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I am against you, Tyre. I shall bring up many nations against you, as the sea causes its waves to rise. ⁴ They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down its towers. I shall sweep its soil away from it and turn Tyre into a bare rock. ⁵ In the middle of the sea it will be a dry place where people spread out fishing-nets. For I Myself have spoken,”” declares the Lord GOD. “It will become plunder for the nations. ⁶ The sword will kill people in its daughter-settlements that are on the mainland. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

⁷ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I shall bring Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the greatest king, against Tyre from the north, with horses and chariots and with horsemen and an army with many soldiers. ⁸ He will kill off your settlements on the mainland with the sword. He will set up a siege wall against you, throw up a siege-ramp against you and raise a roof of shields against you. ⁹ He will direct the blows of his battering-rams against your walls and break down your towers with his chisels. ¹⁰ Because of the huge number of his horses, their fine dust will cover you. Because of the noise of the horsemen, wagons and chariots, your walls will shake when he

enters through your gates as men enter a city when its walls have been broken. ¹¹ He will trample all your streets with the hoofs of his horses. He will kill your people with the sword, and your strong stone-pillars will fall to the ground. ¹² They will rob your riches and plunder your merchandise. They will break down your walls and tear down your delightful houses. They will throw your stones, timbers and soil into the water. ¹³ I shall put a stop to your noisy songs, and **the music of your lyres will not be heard any longer.** ¹⁴ I shall make you a bare rock. You will be a dry place where people spread out fishing-nets. You will not be rebuilt. For I Myself, the LORD, have spoken,” says the Lord GOD.

¹⁵ This is what the Lord GOD has asked Tyre: “Will the coastlands not shake at the sound of your fall, when wounded people groan, when people are slaughtered inside you? ¹⁶ Then all the princes on the sea-coast will come down from their thrones. They will remove their robes and take off their colourful woven garments. They will clothe themselves with terror. They will sit on the ground, tremble constantly and shudder at you. ¹⁷ **They will raise a lamentation over you and say** to you: ‘How you have been destroyed, you who had been settled from the seas, you highly-praised **city**, you who had been powerful on the sea, you and the people who lived in you, who had imposed their terror on all its inhabitants!’ ¹⁸ Now the coastlands will tremble on the day when you fall. The coastlands, which are beside the sea, will be dismayed at your collapse.”

¹⁹ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “When I turn you **into a desolate city**, like cities that have no one living in them, when I bring up the deep ocean over you and when the vast waters cover you, ²⁰ then I shall bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of long ago. I shall make you live in the world below, like the ancient ruins, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited. However, I shall set splendour in the land of the living. ²¹ I shall assign you to sudden terror, and you will be no more. When people look for you, **you will never be found again,**” declares the Lord GOD.

27

A lamentation over Tyre

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “As for you, son of man, take up a lamentation over Tyre! ³ Tell Tyre, which is situated at a harbour on the sea, the trader with the peoples on many coastlands: ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Tyre, you have been saying, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’ ⁴ Your borders are in the middle of the sea. Your builders have made your beauty perfect. ⁵ They have made all your planks from juniper-trees on Senir. They have taken cedar-trees from Lebanon to make masts for you. ⁶ They have made your oars from large trees in Bashan. They have made your decks from cypress-wood from the coasts

of Cyprus and inlaid them with ivory. ⁷ Your sails have been made of fine embroidered linen from Egypt and been serving as your flags. Your coverings have been blue and purple cloths from the coasts of Elishah. ⁸ People who were living in Sidon and Arvad have been your oarsmen. Your skilful men, O Tyre, have been inside your city. They have been your sailors. ⁹ The elders of Gebal and its skilful men have been in you, caulking your seams. All the ships of the sea with their mariners have been in you to trade your merchandise. ¹⁰ Men from Persia, Lydia and Libya have been in your army as your soldiers. They have hung their shields and helmets in you. They have made you splendid. ¹¹ Men from Arvad and Helech have been on your walls all around, and men of Gamad have been in your towers. They have hung their round shields all around your walls. They have made your beauty perfect. ¹² Tarshish has been trading with you because of your great wealth of every kind. They have been exchanging **silver, iron, tin** and lead for your merchandise. ¹³ People from Ionia, Tubal and Meshech have been trading with you. They have been exchanging **human beings** and **bronze** articles for your merchandise. ¹⁴ People from Beth-Togarmah have been exchanging horses, war-horses and mules for your merchandise. ¹⁵ Men from Dedan have been trading with you. Many coastlands have been your commercial agents. They have been bringing back ivory tusks and ebony as payment for your goods. ¹⁶ Aram has been trading with you because of your many products. They have been exchanging precious stones, purple wool, embroidered cloth, fine linen, corals and rubies for your merchandise. ¹⁷ Judah and Israel have been trading with you. They have been exchanging wheat from Minnith, baked goods, honey, olive-oil and balsam for your merchandise. ¹⁸ Damascus has been trading with you for your many products, because of your great wealth of every kind. It has been exchanging wine from Helbon and wool from Sahar. ¹⁹ People from Dan and Greeks from Uzal have been trading for your merchandise. They have been exchanging wrought iron, cinnamon and sweet cane for your merchandise. ²⁰ Dedan has been trading saddle blankets with you. ²¹ Arabia and all the princes of Kedar have been your commercial agents. They have been trading with you in lambs, rams and goats. ²² The merchants from Sheba and Raamah have been trading with you. They have been exchanging the best of all kinds of spices, all **precious stones** and **gold** for your merchandise. ²³ Haran, Canneh, Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Assyria and Kilmad have been trading with you. ²⁴ They have been trading with you in your marketplaces for splendid clothes, purple robes, embroidered cloth and in multicoloured rugs of twisted and tightly knotted cords. ²⁵ The ships of Tarshish have been your carriers for your merchandise. You have been filled with very heavy cargo in the

middle of the sea.”

²⁶ “Your oarsmen have brought you out into the high seas. The east wind has wrecked you in the middle of the sea. ²⁷ **Your riches**, your merchandise, the goods that you sell, **your mariners, your seamen**, those who caulk your seams, your traders in merchandise, all your men of war who are in you and all your crews, which are in you, will sink into the middle of the sea on the day when you are ruined. ²⁸ Your shore-lands will quake at the sound when your **seamen** cry out. ²⁹ All who handle the oars, **the seamen** and all **the other mariners** will disembark from their ships and stand on the shore. ³⁰ **They will wail aloud and cry out** bitterly over you. They will **put dust on their heads** and roll in ashes. ³¹ They will shave a bare patch on their heads because of you and put sackcloth on their waists. They will **weep** over you with bitter hearts and bitter **mourning**. ³² In their **wailing** they will take up their **funeral-song** for you and lament over you: ‘**What** else is **like** Tyre, like something that is destroyed in the middle of the sea?’ ³³ When your merchandise went out on the seas, you satisfied many peoples. You enriched the kings of the earth with your great wealth and goods for trade. ³⁴ When the seas broke you up in the deep water, your merchandise and all the crews in you have sunk down. ³⁵ All those who are living on the coastlands have been appalled because of you. The hair of their kings has bristled with horror. Their faces have been troubled. ³⁶ The traders among the other peoples have been whistling because of you. You have become a sudden terror and will never exist again.”

28

A proclamation against the king of Tyre

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, tell the ruler of Tyre, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because you **are arrogant**, you have been saying, ‘**I am a god**. I have been sitting on the throne of God in the middle of the sea.’ However, you are only a human being and not God, although you have resolved to be as wise as God is. ³ Indeed, you are wiser than Daniel is. Nothing secret has been hidden from you. ⁴ You have been using your wisdom and understanding to acquire wealth for yourself. You have been putting gold and silver into your treasuries. ⁵ You have increased your wealth by using your great skill in trading. Your wealth has made you arrogant.””

⁶ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because you have resolved to be as wise as God is, ⁷ therefore look! I shall bring foreigners against you, the most ruthless of the nations. They will draw their swords against your beautiful wisdom and defile your splendour. ⁸ They will throw you down into the pit, and you will die the death of those who are killed in the middle of the sea. ⁹ Will you still say, ‘I am God,’

in the presence of those who kill you? You will be only a human being and not God, in the hands of those who are thrusting you through. ¹⁰ You will die the death of uncircumcised men at the hands of foreigners. For I Myself have spoken,” declares the Lord GOD.

¹¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹² “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre! You shall tell him, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “You used to be a perfect example, full of wisdom and perfectly beautiful. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God. You were covered with every kind of precious stone: sardius, topaz, emerald, jasper, carnelian, jade, sapphire, purple garnet and carbuncle. Your jewelled pendants and settings were worked in gold. They were prepared on the day when you were created. ¹⁴ You were a cherub with spreading wings, which gave protection. When I was appointing you, you were on the holy mountain of God. You walked among flashing stones. ¹⁵ Your conduct was blameless from the day when you were created, until wickedness was found in you. ¹⁶ When your trading was extensive, your heart was filled with violence. When you sinned, I deposed you in disgrace from the mountain of God. I brought calamity on you, you cherub, who had given protection. I removed you from among the flashing stones. ¹⁷ You were arrogant because of your beauty. You corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. I threw you to the ground. I put you in front of kings that they might gloat over you. ¹⁸ You defiled your own holy places because of your many sins and dishonest trade. So, I made a fire come out of you, which consumed you. I turned you to ashes on the ground while all who saw you were watching. ¹⁹ All who know you among the peoples have been horrified because of you. You have come to a terrible end and will never exist again.””

A proclamation against Sidon

²⁰ The Word of the LORD came to me: ²¹ “Son of man, set your face against Sidon and prophesy against it! ²² You shall say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I am against you, Sidon. I shall show My glory inside you. Then people will know that I am the LORD, when I inflict punishment on it and show My holiness through it. ²³ I shall send a plague against it and make blood flow in its streets. People will fall slain inside it because of the sword, which is against it on every side. Then they will know that I am the LORD. ²⁴ The family of Israel will no longer have a painful brier or an agonising thorn among all their neighbours, who used to despise them. Then they will know that I am the Lord GOD.””

A promise of blessing for Israel

²⁵ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “When I gather the family of Israel from the peoples among whom they have been scattered, I shall show My holiness in them while the nations are watching. Then they will live in their own land, which I gave to My servant Ja-

cob. ²⁶ They will live securely in it. They will build houses and plant vineyards. They will live securely when I inflict punishments on all the surrounding people who used to despise them. Then they will know that I am the LORD, their God.”

29

A proclamation against Egypt

¹ On the twelfth day of the tenth month, in the tenth year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt. ³ You shall say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I am against you, Pharaoh, king of Egypt. You are the large water-monster that lies in the middle of his branches of the Nile. He has been saying, ‘My Nile is my own. I have made it for myself.’ ⁴ I shall put hooks in your jaws and make the fish of your branches of the Nile stick to your scales. I shall pull you out of your branches of the Nile, together with all the fish of your Nile branches. They will be sticking to your scales. ⁵ I shall throw you out into the desert, you and all the fish of your branches of the Nile. You will fall on the surface of the open country, and no one will pick you up or gather you. I shall give you as food to the wild animals and to the birds of the sky.

⁶ Then all those who are living in Egypt will know that I am the LORD. For you have been a walking stick made out of a reed to the family of Israel.

⁷ Whenever they took hold of you with their hands, you used to splinter and tear all their shoulders. Whenever they leant on you, you used to break and used to completely stop their hips from moving.”

⁸ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I shall bring a sword against you and cut off from you human beings and animals. ⁹ The land of Egypt will become a wasteland and a pile of rubble. Then people will know that I am the LORD. For he has been saying, ‘The Nile is mine, and I have made it.’ ¹⁰ Therefore, look! I am against you and against your branches of the Nile. I shall turn the land of Egypt into a barren and desolate pile of rubble from Migdol to Syene and as far as the border of Cush.

¹¹ No human being will walk through it. No animal will walk through it. No one will live there for forty years. ¹² I shall make the land of Egypt more desolate than any other desolated countries. For forty years its cities will be more desolate than other cities that have been laid waste. I shall disperse the Egyptians among the nations and scatter them through other countries.”

¹³ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “After forty years I shall gather the Egyptians from the other peoples, where they have been dispersed. ¹⁴ I shall bring back the Egyptian captives and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin, and there they will be a lowly kingdom. ¹⁵ It will be more lowly than the other kingdoms. It will not raise itself above the other nations any longer. I shall make them

so small that they will not rule over the other nations.

¹⁶ The family of Israel will not rely on Egypt any longer. It will remind the Israelites of its sin when they turned to them for support. Then they will know that I am the Lord GOD.”

A prediction that Babylon will plunder Egypt

¹⁷ On the first day of the first month in the twenty-seventh year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸ “Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon made his army work extremely hard against Tyre. Every head was given a bald patch, and every shoulder was rubbed raw. Nevertheless, he and his army gained no reward at Tyre for the effort that they made against it. ¹⁹ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I shall give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. He will carry off its wealth. He will take loot and plunder from the land to be the wages for his army. ²⁰ I have given him the land of Egypt as his payment, for which he has laboured. For he and his army have done it for Me,’” declares the Lord GOD.

²¹ “On that day I shall cause a horn to sprout up for the family of Israel and give you the ability to speak among them. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

30

A lamentation for Egypt

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, prophesy and say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Wail, ‘How sad for the day!’ ³ For the day is near. The day of the LORD is near. It will be a cloudy day, a crucial time for the nations. ⁴ A sword will come against Egypt, and anguish will come on Cush, when people fall slain in Egypt. Its wealth will be taken away, and its foundations will be broken up. ⁵ Cush, Put and Lydia, all the mixed races, Kub and the people belonging to the land of the Covenant will fall by the sword together with Egypt.””

⁶ This is what the LORD has said: “Those who support Egypt will fall. Its majestic power will come down. People will fall in it by the sword from Migdol to Syene,” declares the Lord GOD. ⁷ “They will be more desolate than other desolated countries, and their cities will be laid waste more than other ruined cities.

⁸ Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I set fire to Egypt. All those who assist it will be shattered.

⁹ On that day messengers will go out from Me in ships to terrify the complacent people of Cush. Anguish will come on them on the crucial day for Egypt. For look! It is coming!”

¹⁰ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “I shall use Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, to put an end to the wealth of Egypt. ¹¹ He and his people with him, the most ruthless among the nations, will be brought in to destroy the land. They will draw their swords against Egypt and fill the land with dead bodies. ¹² I shall turn the branches of the Nile into dry land. I shall

sell the land into the hands of wicked people. I shall use foreign people to bring desolation on the land and on everything in it. I Myself, the LORD, have spoken.”

¹³ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “I shall destroy the idols and put an end to the images at Memphis. There will not be a prince from the land of Egypt any longer. I shall put fear in the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ I shall cause Pathros to be deserted, set fire to Zoan and inflict punishments on Thebes. ¹⁵ I shall pour out My wrath on Pelusium, the fortress of Egypt, and cut off very many people in Thebes. ¹⁶ I shall set fire to Egypt. Pelusium will writhe in agony. Thebes will be broken through and Memphis will face enemies in broad daylight. ¹⁷ The young men of Aven and of Pi-Beseth will fall by the sword and these cities will go into captivity. ¹⁸ At Tehaphnehes the day will hold back when I break the yoke-bars of Egypt there. Its proud strength will come to an end in it. As for Egypt, a cloud will cover it and its villages will go into captivity. ¹⁹ When I inflict punishments on Egypt they will know that I am the LORD.”

A proclamation against Pharaoh

²⁰ On the seventh day of the first month in the eleventh year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ²¹ “Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Look! It has not been bandaged to heal it. It has not had a splint put on it to tie it up, that it may become strong enough to take hold of a sword.” ²² Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I am against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. I shall break his arms, both the strong arm and the broken one. I shall knock the sword out of his hand. ²³ I shall scatter the Egyptians among the other nations and disperse them through the other countries. ²⁴ I shall make the arms of the king of Babylon strong and put My sword in his hand. However, I shall break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan in front of him like a fatally wounded man. ²⁵ I shall strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will drop down. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I put My sword in the hand of the king of Babylon, and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt. ²⁶ I shall scatter the Egyptians among the other nations and disperse them throughout the other countries. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

31

A prediction that Egypt will be conquered as Assyria has been conquered

¹ On the first day of the third month, in the eleventh year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, ask Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and his many people: ‘To whom may you be compared in your greatness? ³ Look! Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon, with beautiful branches that shaded the forest. It was very high, and its top went through the thick boughs. ⁴ Waters made the tree grow. Underground-springs made it tall. Streams flowed around the place where

the tree had been planted, and its channels let water flow to all the other trees in the area. ⁵ That is why it towered high above all the other trees in the area. Its boughs became numerous, and its branches became long because there was plenty of water where it sent out its roots. ⁶ **All the birds of the sky made their nests in its twigs.** All the wild animals gave birth to their young under its branches. All the great nations lived in its shade. ⁷ Its great size and its long, leafy branches were beautiful. For its roots went down to copious water. ⁸ The cedar-trees in the garden of God could not surpass it. The juniper-trees could not match its twigs. The plane trees had no branches like those of this tree. No tree in the garden of God could equal it in beauty. ⁹ I had made it beautiful with its many leafy branches. All the trees in Eden, which were in the garden of God, envied it.”

¹⁰ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because it has grown very high and set its top up among the leafy branches and because it was proud of being so high, ¹¹ I shall hand it over to a ruler among the nations. He will certainly deal with it. So, I drove it out, as its wickedness deserved. ¹² Foreigners, the most ruthless of the nations, have cut it down and made it fall. Its branches have fallen on the mountains and in all the valleys. Its boughs have been broken in all the streambeds of the land. All the peoples of the earth have gone down from its shade and have left it. ¹³ All the birds of the sky have perched on its fallen trunk, and all the wild animals have been among its branches. ¹⁴ This has happened that no trees growing beside water may become arrogant because of their height and may not set their tops up among the thick foliage and that no other trees among all those that are well-watered may reach up as high as they have. For they have all been consigned to death, to the world below, to be among the children of Adam, to go to those who go down to the pit.”

¹⁵ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “I caused mourning on the day when the cedar went down to Sheol. I closed off the underground-springs because of it and held back its streams. The many sources of water were restrained. I dressed Lebanon in mourning clothes because of it. All the other trees in the area withered because of it. ¹⁶ I made the other nations tremble at the sound of its fall, when I cast it down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit. All the trees of Eden, the choicest and best ones in Lebanon, all that were well watered, were consoled in the world below. ¹⁷ They also went down to Sheol with it, to those who had been killed by the sword. They had also been its auxiliaries and had been living in its shade among the nations. ¹⁸ Which among the trees of Eden have you resembled in this way in glory and in greatness? Nevertheless, you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the world below. You will lie among the uncircumcised, with those whom the sword

has killed. This tree is Pharaoh and all his many people,” declares the Lord GOD.

32

A lamentation over Pharaoh and Egypt

¹ On the first day of the twelfth month in the twelfth year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, take up a lamentation over Pharaoh, the king of Egypt! You shall tell him: ‘You thought that you were like a lion among the nations but are like a monster in the waters. You have been thrashing about in your streams, churning up the water with your feet and making its streams muddy.’”

³ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “I shall spread My net over you, when many peoples have assembled, and they will haul you up in My dragnet. ⁴ I shall throw you down on the ground. I shall fling you over an open field. I shall make all the birds of the sky perch on you and make the animals of the whole earth have enough to eat from you. ⁵ I shall lay your flesh on the mountains and fill the valleys with your rotting carcass. ⁶ I shall drench the land with your flowing blood as far as the mountains. The ravines will be full of you. ⁷ When I put out your light, I shall cover the sky and darken its stars. I shall cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon will not give its light. ⁸ I shall darken all the shining lights in the sky above you. I shall put darkness on your land,” declares the Lord GOD.

⁹ “I shall disturb the hearts of many peoples, when I bring the news of your collapse among the nations, into lands that you have not known. ¹⁰ I shall make many peoples dumbfounded because of you. The hair of their kings will bristle with horror because of you, when I swing My sword before them. On the day when you fall, each of them will tremble every moment for his own life.”

¹¹ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “The sword of the king of Babylon will come against you.

¹² I shall cause your many people to fall by the swords of warriors. All of them will be the most ruthless among the nations. They will smash the pride of Egypt, and all its many people will be destroyed. ¹³ I shall destroy all its animals beside many streams of water. The feet of human beings will not churn the water up any longer, and the hoofs of animals will not make it muddy. ¹⁴ Then I shall make their water settle and cause their streams to flow like olive-oil,” declares the Lord GOD.

¹⁵ “When I turn Egypt into a wasteland, when the land has been stripped of everything that had filled it and when I have struck down all who are living in it, they will know that I am the LORD.”

¹⁶ This is a funeral-song. The women of the nations will chant this funeral-song for Egypt. They will chant the funeral-song over it, over Egypt and over all its many people. They will chant a funeral-song for it,” declares the Lord God.

A prediction that the Egyptians will join the other nations in the grave

¹⁷ On the fifteenth day of the month, in the twelfth year, the Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸ “Son of man, mourn over the many people of Egypt! Send them down, along with the daughters of other mighty nations, to the world below, to those who go down to the pit: ¹⁹ ‘Whom have you surpassed in beauty? Go down and be laid to rest with uncircumcised people!’ ²⁰ The Egyptians will fall among those who have been slain by the sword. Egypt has been consigned to the sword. Drag it away, together with all its many people! ²¹ The mightiest warriors will speak in the middle of Sheol to Pharaoh together with his allies: ‘The uncircumcised people have come down and have lain down, struck down by the sword.’ ²² Assyria and all its company are there. Its graves are all around it. All of them have been slain. They have fallen by the sword. ²³ The graves of Assyria have been made in the innermost parts of the pit. Its company is all around its grave. All of them have been slain. Those who had caused terror in the land of the living have fallen by the sword.

²⁴ “Elam is there and all its many people, around its grave. All of them have been slain. They have fallen by the sword and gone down uncircumcised to the world below. They had terrified people in the land of the living. They have borne their disgrace with those who go down to the pit. ²⁵ A bed has been assigned to Elam among the slain with all its many people. Its graves are all around it. All of them are uncircumcised and have been slain by the sword. For they had terrified others in the land of the living. They have borne their disgrace with those who go down to the pit. Elam has been put among those who have been slain.

²⁶ “Meshech and Tubal are there, and all their many people. Their graves are all around them. All of them are uncircumcised. They have been slain by the sword. For they terrified people in the land of the living. ²⁷ They do not lie with the fallen uncircumcised warriors who have gone down to Sheol with their weapons of war. Their swords have been placed under their heads. Their wrongs have been laid on their bones. For as warriors they have terrified others in the land of the living. ²⁸ However, as for you, [Pharaoh], you will be broken and lie among uncircumcised people, with those who have been slain by the sword.

²⁹ “Edom is there, with its kings and all its princes. Despite all their strength, they have been laid with those who have been slain by the sword. They lie with uncircumcised people, with those who go down to the pit.

³⁰ “The clan-leaders of the north are there, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down in shame with those who have been slain, although they have used their strength to terrify others. They lie uncircumcised with those who have been slain by the sword. They have borne their shame with those who go down to the pit.

31 “When Pharaoh sees them, Pharaoh himself, together with his whole army, will be consoled for all his many people, who have been slain by the sword,” declares the Lord GOD. 32 “For I have had him cause terror in the land of the living. Pharaoh himself, together with all his many people, will be laid to rest among those who are uncircumcised, with those who have been slain by the sword,” declares the Lord GOD.

33

The call of Ezekiel to be a watchman for Israel

1 The Word of the LORD came to me: 2 “Son of man, speak to your countrymen and tell them, ‘If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, 3 and, if he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people, 4 then if anyone who hears the sound of the trumpet ignores the warning, and the sword comes and takes his life, his blood will be on his own head. 5 He has heard the sound of the trumpet but ignored its warning. His blood will be on himself. However, if he has taken the warning, he will have saved his life. 6 However, if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow his trumpet, so that he fails to warn the people, and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that person has been taken away because of his sin. However, I shall hold that watchman responsible for his death.’

7 “As for you, son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman for the family of Israel. You shall listen to what I say and give them a warning from Me! 8 When I tell a wicked person, ‘You wicked person, you will certainly die!’ and you do not speak to warn the wicked person to turn from his way, that wicked person will die in his wickedness, but I shall hold you responsible for his death. 9 However, if you warn a wicked person to turn from his way, and he has not turned from his way, he will die because of his sin. However, you yourself will have saved your own life.

A statement of God’s justice and mercy

10 “As for you, son of man, tell the family of Israel, ‘This is what you have been saying: “Our wrongdoings and our sins are weighing us down. We are wasting away because of them. How, then, can we live?”’

11 “Tell them, ‘As surely as I live,’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘I certainly take no pleasure in the death of a wicked person. Rather, I take pleasure in the wicked person’s turning from his way that he may live. Turn back! Turn back from your evil ways! Why, then, will you die, family of Israel?’

12 “As for you, son of man, tell your countrymen, ‘The righteousness of a righteous person will not deliver him on the day when he rebels. On the day when a wicked person turns from his wickedness, he will not stumble because of his wickedness. The righteous person will not be able to live because of his right-

eousness on the day when he sins. 13 When I promise a righteous person that he will certainly live, and he then trusts in his own righteousness and commits evil, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered. Rather, he will die because of his evil, which he has committed. 14 When I tell a wicked person, “You will certainly die,” and he then turns away from his sin and does what is just and right, 15 if the wicked person returns the security for a loan, makes restitution for what he has stolen, lives by the Statutes of life and does not commit evil, then he will certainly live. He will not die. 16 None of his sins, which he has committed, will be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right. He will certainly live.’

17 “However, your countrymen are saying, ‘The Way of the Lord is not just,’ when it is their own way that is not just. 18 When a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and commits evil, he will die because of it. 19 When a wicked person turns away from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he will live because of it. 20 Nevertheless, you are saying, ‘The Way of the Lord is not just.’ You family of Israel, I shall judge each of you according to his own ways.”

A report about the capture of Jerusalem

21 On the fifth day of the tenth month, in the twelfth year of our captivity, a man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has been captured.”

22 In the evening before the man who had escaped arrived, the hand of the LORD had come on me. He had opened my mouth by the time the man came to me in the morning. Therefore, my mouth was opened, and I was not silenced any longer.

A prediction of calamity for the survivors in Jerusalem

23 The Word of the LORD came to me: 24 “Son of man, the people who are living in these ruined places in the land of Israel keep saying, ‘Abraham was only one man, yet he gained possession of the land. However, we are many. The land has been given to us as our possession.’ 25 Therefore, tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “You are eating meat with the blood in it. You are looking up to your idols. You are murdering people. Should you, then, possess the land? 26 You have been relying on your swords. You have been doing detestable things. Each of you is defiling his neighbour’s wife. Should you, then, possess the land?”’

27 “This is what you shall tell them: ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “As surely as I live, those who are in the ruined places will certainly fall by the sword. I shall give anyone who is in the open field to the wild animals to devour. Those who are in strongholds and in caves will die from the plague. 28 I shall make the land a desolate waste. Its proud strength will come to an end. The mountains of Israel will be so desolate that no one goes across them. 29 Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have made the

land a desolate waste because of all their detestable things, which they have been committing.”

³⁰ “As for you, son of man, your countrymen, who are talking together about you beside the walls and in the doorways of the houses, have each been telling one another: ‘Please, come and listen to what the Word is that is coming from the LORD!’ ³¹ They have been coming to you as people usually come. They have been sitting in front of you as if they were My people. They are listening to what you are saying but will not carry it out. For, although they are acting with devotion in their mouths, their hearts are pursuing their unjust gain. ³² Look! They regard you as a love-song sung with a beautiful voice and as one who plays well on an instrument. Although they listen to what you are saying, they do not put it into practice. ³³ When this happens, and it will certainly happen, then they will know that a prophet has been among them.”

34

A promise that God Himself will take care of His sheep, because the shepherds of Israel have not been good shepherds

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel! Prophesy! You shall tell these shepherds: ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “How terrible it will be for the shepherds of Israel, who have been taking care only of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the sheep? ³ You eat the fat parts. You clothe yourselves with the wool. You slaughter the fat animals. You do not take care of the sheep. ⁴ You have not strengthened the weak ones or healed the sick ones; you have not bandaged the injured ones or brought back the scattered ones; you have not searched for the lost ones and have ruled them harshly and violently. ⁵ They have **scattered because there has been no shepherd**. They became food for all the wild animals when they were scattered. ⁶ My sheep are going astray through all the mountains and over every high hill. My sheep have been dispersed over the whole surface of the earth, with no one searching for them and no one trying to find them.”’

⁷ “Therefore, shepherds, listen to the Word of the LORD: ⁸ ‘As surely as I live,’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘the reason why My sheep have become a prey and My sheep have become food for all the wild animals is certainly that there has been no shepherd. My shepherds have not been searching for My sheep but have been taking care only of themselves and have not been taking care of My sheep. ⁹ Therefore, shepherds, listen to the Word of the LORD: ¹⁰ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I am against the shepherds. I shall hold them accountable for My sheep. I shall dismiss them from taking care of the sheep. The shepherds will not take care only of themselves any longer. I shall rescue My sheep from their mouths, to prevent them from being food for them.”’”

¹¹ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I

Myself shall search for My sheep and look after them.

¹² As a shepherd cares for his flock when he is among his scattered sheep, so I shall look after My sheep. I shall rescue them from all the places where they have been scattered on a cloudy and very gloomy day. ¹³ I shall bring them out from the peoples, gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land. I shall be a shepherd to them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the inhabited places of the land. ¹⁴ I shall look after them in good pasture, and their grazing-land will be on the mountain-heights of Israel. There they will lie down in good grazing-land and graze in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ I Myself shall shepherd My sheep and I Myself shall let them lie down,” declares the Lord GOD.

¹⁶ “**I shall search for the lost ones**, bring back those that have been scattered, bandage the injured ones and strengthen the sick ones. I shall destroy the ones that are fat and the strong. I shall shepherd them with justice.

¹⁷ “As for you, My flock, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Look! I judge between individual sheep and between rams and male goats. ¹⁸ Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink water that has settled that you must make the rest of the water muddy with your feet? ¹⁹ Must My sheep feed on what you have trampled with your feet and drink what you have made muddy with your feet?’”

²⁰ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said to them: “Look! I, yes, I Myself, shall judge between a fat sheep and a lean sheep. ²¹ Because you shove with your sides and shoulders and butt all the weak animals away with your horns until you have scattered them to the outside, ²² I shall save My flock, that they may not be something to plunder any longer. I shall judge between one sheep and another.

A promise of one Messianic Shepherd and a Covenant of peace

²³ “I shall appoint one Shepherd over them, My Servant David, and **He will shepherd them. He will take care of them** and He Himself **will be their Shepherd**.

²⁴ **I Myself, the LORD, shall be their God**, and My Servant David will be the Prince among them. I Myself, the LORD, have spoken.

²⁵ “I shall make a Covenant of peace with them and rid the land of wild animals, that they may live safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. ²⁶ I shall make them and the places around My hill a blessing. I shall send the rain at the right time. There will be showers of blessing. ²⁷ Then the trees in the field will produce their fruit, and the earth will yield its crops. People will live safely on their own land. They will know that I am the LORD when I break the bars of their yokes and rescue them from the hands of those who had enslaved them. ²⁸ The nations will not plunder them any longer, and the wild animals will not

devour them. They will live securely, and no one will make them afraid. ²⁹ I shall provide for them a place that is renowned for its good crops. No people will be carried off by hunger in the land any longer, and they will not suffer the insults of the nations any longer. ³⁰ They will know that I, the LORD, their God, am with them and that they, the family of Israel, are My people,” declares the Lord GOD.

³¹ “You are My sheep, the sheep of My pasture. You are human beings, and I am your God,” declares the Lord GOD.

35

A proclamation against Edom

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it! ³ You shall tell it, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I am against you, Mount Seir. I shall stretch out My hand against you and make you a desolate waste. ⁴ I shall turn your cities into ruins, and you will become a wasteland. Then you will know that I am the LORD. ⁵ Because you have always been an enemy of Israel and have handed the Israelites over to the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment, ⁶ therefore, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “I shall prepare you for bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you. Since you have not hated bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you. ⁷ I shall make Mount Seir a desolate waste and cut off from it all who go there and come from there. ⁸ I shall fill its mountains with people who have been killed. People killed by the sword will fall on your hills, in your valleys and in all your ravines. ⁹ I shall turn you into a permanent wasteland. No one will live in your cities. Then you will know that I am the LORD.”

¹⁰ “Because you have been saying, ‘These two nations and these two countries will be mine, and we shall take possession of them’ — even though the LORD has been there — ¹¹ ‘therefore, as surely as I live,’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘I shall do to you what you have done to them in your anger and your envy, because you hate them. I shall also make Myself known among them when I judge you. ¹² Then you will know that I am the LORD. I have heard all the insults that you have been speaking against the mountains of Israel. You have been saying: “They have been deserted. They have been handed over to us to devour.”

¹³ “You have been using your mouths to magnify yourselves against Me. You have been speaking against Me profusely. I have heard it.”

¹⁴ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “The whole world will be glad when I turn you into a wasteland.

¹⁵ Because you were glad because the inheritance of the family of Israel became desolate, that is how I shall treat you. You will become a wasteland, Mount Seir, and so will all Edom, all of it. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

36

A prophecy of blessings for the mountains of Israel

¹ “As for you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel! You shall say, ‘You mountains of Israel, listen to the Word of the LORD! ² This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because the enemy has been saying about you, ‘Aha!’ and, ‘The ancient heights have become our possession,’ ³ therefore prophesy! Say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Precisely because they have made you desolate and pestered you from all sides, so that you have become the possession of the rest of the nations, and people have been talking maliciously and gossiping about you, ⁴ therefore, mountains of Israel, listen to the Word of the Lord GOD: This is what the Lord GOD has said to the mountains, the hills, the ravines, the valleys, the desolate wastes and the abandoned cities, which have been plundered and mocked by the rest of the surrounding nations: ⁵ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘I have certainly spoken in My fiery zeal against the rest of the nations and against all Edom.’”””””

“They have given My land to themselves as a possession with wholehearted joy and deep disdain, that they may plunder its pasturelands. ⁶ Therefore, prophesy about the land of Israel! You shall tell the mountains, the hills, the ravines and the valleys, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I have spoken in My zeal and My wrath, because you have suffered the insults of the nations.”

⁷ “Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘I have raised My hand to swear that the nations that are all around you will certainly suffer for their own insults.’

⁸ “However, O mountains of Israel, you will put forth your branches and bear your fruit for My people Israel. For they will soon come back in. ⁹ For look! I am for you. I shall turn toward you, and you will be cultivated and sown. ¹⁰ I shall increase the number of people on you. The whole family of Israel, all of it, will live on you. The cities will be inhabited, and the ruined places will be rebuilt. ¹¹ I shall increase the number of people and animals on you. They will be numerous and fruitful. I shall cause you to be inhabited as in your previous time and do more good to you than when you began. Then you will know that I am the LORD. ¹² I shall cause human beings to walk on you, even My people Israel. They will take possession of you, and you will be their inheritance. You will never again bereave them of children.”

¹³ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Because they have been telling you, ‘You have been devouring human beings and been bereaving your nation of children,’ ¹⁴ therefore you will not devour human beings any longer or cause your nation to stumble any longer,” declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁵ “I shall not let you hear the insults of the nations any longer. You will no

longer bear the taunts of other peoples. You will no longer cause your nation to stumble any longer,” declares the Lord GOD.

¹⁶ The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁷ “Son of man, when the family of Israel were living in their own land, they used to defile it by their conduct and their actions. To Me their conduct was as unclean as a woman’s menstrual period. ¹⁸ Therefore, I poured out My wrath on them because of the blood that they had poured out on the land and because they had defiled the land with their idols. ¹⁹ I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the other countries. I judged them as their conduct and their actions deserved. ²⁰ However, wherever they went among the nations they profaned My holy name. For people used to say about them, ‘These are the people of the LORD and yet they have left His land.’ ²¹ Nevertheless, I took pity on My holy name, which the family of Israel had been profaning among the nations where they had gone. ²² Therefore, tell the family of Israel: ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “It is not for your sake that I am doing this, O family of Israel, but for My holy name, which you have been profaning among the nations where you have gone. ²³ I shall restore the holiness of My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name that you have been profaning among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I show Myself as holy among you while they are watching. ²⁴ I shall take you out of the nations, gather you out of all the other lands and bring you into your own land. ²⁵ I shall pour out clean water on you, and you will be clean. I shall pronounce you clean from all your forms of uncleanness and from all your idols. ²⁶ I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you. I shall remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I shall put My Spirit inside you and cause you to walk in My Statutes, keep My Decisions and put them into practice. ²⁸ You will live in the land that I have given to your fathers. You will be My people, and I Myself shall be your God. ²⁹ I shall save you from all your uncleanness. I shall summon the grain and make it plentiful and not bring any famine on you. ³⁰ I shall make the trees bear fruit plentifully and make the fields yield plentifully, that you may not suffer disgrace among the nations any longer because of famine. ³¹ Then you will remember your evil ways and your wicked deeds and you will be disgusted with yourselves for your sins and your detestable practices. ³² It is not for your sake that I shall act,” declares the Lord GOD. “You must know this! Be ashamed and embarrassed because of your conduct, family of Israel!””

³³ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “On the day when I cleanse you from all your sins, I shall cause the cities to be lived in again and the ruined places

will be rebuilt. ³⁴ The land that has been laid waste will be cultivated, instead of being a wasteland for everyone going past to see. ³⁵ People will say: ‘This land here, which had been laid waste, has become like the Garden of Eden. The cities that had been ruined places, laid waste and overthrown are now fortified and inhabited.’ ³⁶ Then the nations that are left all around you will know that I am the LORD. I shall have rebuilt the ruined places. I shall have replanted the desolated place. I am the LORD. I have spoken and I shall do it.”

³⁷ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “I shall also let the family of Israel ask Me to do this for them: I shall make their people as numerous as sheep. ³⁸ The cities that had been laid waste will be filled with flocks of people like the flocks for holy offerings, like the flocks at Jerusalem during its times for feasts. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

37

The vision of the valley of dry bones

¹ The hand of the LORD came on me. He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and put me down in the middle of the valley. It was full of bones. ² He kept leading me past them and all around them. I saw very many of them on the surface of the valley and saw that they were very dry. ³ Then He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones return to life?”

I answered, “Lord GOD, You Yourself know.”

⁴ Then He told me: “Prophesy over these bones and tell them, ‘Dry bones, listen to the Word of the LORD! ⁵ This is what the Lord GOD has said to these bones: “Look! I shall cause **breath** to enter you, and you will **live**. ⁶ I shall put tendons on you, make flesh come on you and cover you with skin. I shall **put breath in you**, and you will return to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.””

⁷ So, I kept prophesying as I had been commanded. While I was prophesying, there was a noise and suddenly a rattling sound, and the bones came closer together, one bone attaching itself to another. ⁸ While I kept looking, I saw that there were tendons on them, flesh grew on them, and skin covered them over. However, there was no breath in them.

⁹ Then He told me: “Prophesy to the breath! Prophesy, son of man, and tell the breath, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Come from the **four winds, O breath**, and breathe on these slain people, that they may **return to life**.””

¹⁰ So, I kept prophesying, as He had commanded me, and **breath entered them**. They returned to life and stood up on their feet, an exceedingly large army.

¹¹ Then He told me: “Son of man, these bones are the whole family of Israel. Look! They are saying, ‘Our bones are dry, and our hope is being lost. We have been completely cut off.’ ¹² Therefore, prophesy and tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look, My people! I shall open your graves and bring

you up out of your graves. I shall bring you to the land of Israel. ¹³ Then, My people, you will know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up out of your graves. ¹⁴ **I shall put My Spirit in you; you will live, and I shall settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I am the LORD. I have spoken and shall carry it out,**” declares the LORD.”

God's promise to be the God of Israel and Judah

¹⁵ The Word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁶ “As for you, son of man, take a piece of wood and write on it, ‘Belonging to Judah and to the people of Israel associated with him!’ Then take another piece of wood and write on it, ‘Ephraim’s piece of wood, belonging to Joseph and all the family of Israel associated with him!’ ¹⁷ Join them to one another to form one piece of wood, that they may become one in your hand! ¹⁸ When your countrymen ask you, ‘Will you not tell us what you mean by these?’ ¹⁹ tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I shall take Joseph’s piece of wood, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel associated with him and put them with Judah’s piece of wood. I shall make them one piece of wood, that they may be one in My hand.”’

²⁰ “When the pieces of wood on which you write are in your hand where they can see them, ²¹ tell them, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I shall take the people of Israel out of the nations where they have gone. I shall gather them from all around and bring them to their own land. ²² I shall make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. One King will reign over them all. They will not be two nations any longer and not divided into two kingdoms any longer. ²³ They will not defile themselves with their idols, with their other detestable practices or with any of their rebellious acts any longer. I shall save them from all their settlements in which they have been sinning. I shall declare them clean. **They will be My people, and I shall be their God.** ²⁴ My Servant David will be King over them, and they will all have one Shepherd. They will live according to My Decisions, keep My Statutes and put them into practice. ²⁵ They will live in the land that I gave to My servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They, their children and their grandchildren will live in it for ever. David, My Servant, will be their Prince for ever. ²⁶ I shall make a Covenant of peace with them. It will be **an everlasting Covenant** with them. I shall put them in their land, cause them to increase in number and put My Holy Place among them for ever. ²⁷ My residence will be with them. **I shall be their God, and they will be My people.** ²⁸ Then the nations will know that I am the LORD and that I make Israel holy, when My Holy Place is among them for ever.””

38

A proclamation of judgment against Gog, the prince of Meshech and Tubal and against his army

¹ The Word of the LORD came to me: ² “Son of man, set your face against Gog, in the land of **Magog**, the chief prince of Meshech, and Tubal! Prophecy against him! ³ You shall say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech, and Tubal. ⁴ I shall turn you around and put hooks into your jaws. I shall lead you out with your whole army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armour, a large company. All of them will have large and small shields and will be armed with swords. ⁵ Persia, Cush and Put will be with them. They will all have shields and helmets. ⁶ Gomer will come with all his contingents. Beth-Togarmah will come from the farthest part of the north with all its contingents. There will be many peoples with you. ⁷ Be ready! Be prepared, you and all your forces, which have assembled around you! You shall be a sentinel for them! ⁸ You will be summoned after a long time. In the years to come you will go to a land that has been restored after war. It will be a land whose people have been gathered out of many nations on the mountains of Israel, which had been an ongoing wasteland. Its people have been brought out of the nations and are now all living in safety. ⁹ Then you will go up. You will go in like a storm. You, together with and all your contingents and the many peoples with you will cover the land like a cloud.”’

¹⁰ “This is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘On that day thoughts will come into your mind, and you will invent an evil plan. ¹¹ You will say: “I shall go up against a country with unwalled villages. I shall attack the people who are living peacefully and securely. All of them will be living without walls and without bars and gates.” ¹² You will take plunder and loot them. You will turn your hand against the ruined places where people are living again and against a people that has been gathered out of the nations, who have been acquiring livestock and possessions and who are living at the middle of the earth. ¹³ Sheba, Dedan, the merchants of Tarshish and all its leaders will ask you, ‘Are you coming to take plunder? Have you assembled your contingents to carry off booty, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and possessions, to seize a large amount of plunder?’”

¹⁴ “Therefore, son of man, prophecy! Tell Gog: ‘This is what the Lord GOD has asked: “On that day when My people Israel are living without fear of danger, will you not be aware of it? ¹⁵ You will come from your place in the farthest parts of the north, and many peoples will be with you. All of them will be riding on horses. You will be a large company and a huge army. ¹⁶ You will come up against My people Israel, like a cloud that covers the land. In a future time I shall bring you against My land, that the nations may acknowledge Me when I use you, Gog, to display My holiness while they are watching.”’

¹⁷ “This is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘Are you the

one about whom I spoke in earlier times through My servants, the prophets of Israel? In those times they prophesied for years that I would bring you against them.’¹⁸ “On that day, on the day when Gog attacks the land of Israel,” declares the Lord GOD, “My hot anger will be aroused.¹⁹ I have said, in My zeal and in My blazing wrath: ‘**On that day** there will certainly be a **great earthquake** in the land of Israel.’²⁰ The fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the animals in the field, all the creeping things that crawl on the ground and all the human beings that are on the surface of the earth will shake at My presence. The mountains will be thrown down, the steep cliffs will fall and every wall will fall to the ground.²¹ I shall summon a sword against Gog on all My mountains,’ declares the Lord GOD. ‘Every man will use his sword against his brother.²² I shall use plagues and **bloodshed** to carry out judgment against Gog. I shall send torrential rains, **hailstones, fire and sulphur** down on him, on his contingents and on the many peoples who are with him.²³ I shall prove that I am great, show that I am holy and make Myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.’”

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The destruction caused by the armies of God

¹ “As for you, son of man, prophesy against Gog! You shall say, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Look! I am against you, Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.’² I shall turn you around, drag you along, bring you up from the farthest parts of the north and lead you in against the mountains of Israel.³ Then I shall knock your bow out of your left hand and make your arrows fall out of your right hand.⁴ You, together with all your contingents and the peoples that are with you will fall on the mountains of Israel. **I shall give you** as food to **all kinds of birds** of prey and to the wild animals.⁵ You will fall on the open field. For I Myself have spoken,’” declares the Lord GOD.

⁶ “I shall send fire against Magog and on those who dwell without fear of danger on the coastlands. Then they will know that I am the LORD.⁷ I shall make My holy name known among My people Israel and not allow My holy name to be profaned any longer. The nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.⁸ Look! It is coming. It will happen,” declares the Lord GOD. “This is the day about which I have spoken.⁹ Then those who live in the cities of Israel will go out, set fire to weapons and burn them. They will burn small and large shields, bows, arrows, javelins and lances. They will make fires with them for seven years.¹⁰ They will not collect firewood from the fields or chop down anything from the forests. For they will make fires with the weapons. They will take plunder from those who used to plunder them. They will seize booty from those who used to take booty from them,” declares the Lord GOD.

The burial of Gog

¹¹ “On that day I shall give Gog a burial place there in Israel, the Valley of the Travellers, east of the Sea. It will block the way for those who are travelling through. There people will bury Gog and his entire multitude. It will be called ‘The Valley of the Multitude of Gog.’¹² The family of Israel will keep on burying them for seven months, to make the land clean.¹³ All the people of the land will keep on burying them. They will gain renown on the day when I show My glory,” declares the Lord GOD.¹⁴ “They will delegate men to travel continually through the land. With the help of the people who are passing through, they will bury those who remain on the surface of the land, to make it clean. At the end of seven months they will make a search.¹⁵ When these travellers go through the land and anyone sees a human bone, then he will set up a marker beside it, until the gravediggers have buried it in the Valley of the Multitude of Gog.¹⁶ ‘Hamonah’^{*143} will also be the name of the city. In this way will they make the land clean.”¹⁷ “As for you, son of man, this is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘**Tell every kind of bird** and all the wild animals: “**Gather together** and come! Assemble from all around to **My sacrificial meal**, which I am preparing for you! It will be a huge sacrificial meal on the mountains of Israel. **You will eat meat** and drink blood.¹⁸ **You will eat the flesh of warriors** and drink the blood of the princes **of the earth**, of rams, lambs, he-goats and bulls. They will all be fattened creatures of Bashan.¹⁹ You will eat fat until you are satisfied and drink blood until you are drunk **at My sacrificial meal**, which I shall prepare for you.²⁰ **You will be satisfied** at My table **with horses, charioteers, warriors** and all other kinds of soldiers,’” declares the Lord GOD.

²¹ “I shall set My glory among the nations. All the nations will see My judgment, which I have carried out, and My hand, which I have laid on them.²² The family of Israel will know that I am the LORD, their God, from that day on.²³ The nations will know that the family of Israel have gone into exile because of their sin, because they have acted so unfaithfully against Me that I hid My face from them and handed them over to their enemies, and all of them fell by the sword.²⁴ I have treated them as their uncleanness and as their rebellious actions have deserved, and I have hidden My face from them.”

²⁵ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “Now I shall bring Jacob back from captivity and have compassion on the whole family of Israel and be zealous for My holy name.²⁶ They will forget their shame and all the unfaithful things that they have done against Me when they live safely in their own land with no one to make them afraid.²⁷ When I bring them back from the other peoples and gather them

¹⁴³ “Hamonah” means “Multitude.”

from the lands of their enemies, I shall use them to show that I am holy in the sight of many nations. ²⁸ Then they will know that I am the LORD, their God, because I have sent them into exile among the nations and then gathered them into their own land. I shall not leave any of them remaining among the nations any longer. ²⁹ I shall not hide My face from them any longer, because I shall pour out My Spirit on the family of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.

40

A description of the new Temple of God

¹ On the tenth day of the month in the beginning of the twenty-fifth year of our captivity and fourteen years after Jerusalem had been captured, on that very day, the hand of the LORD came on me, and He took me there. ² In visions of God He **took me** to the land of Israel and set me down **on a very high mountain**. On the south side of the mountain there were some buildings like those in **a city**. ³ When he **took me** there, I saw a man who looked like bronze. **He had** a linen cord and **a reed for measuring** in his hand. He was standing in the gateway. ⁴ The man told me: "Son of man, use your eyes to see and your ears to listen! Pay attention to everything that I shall show you! For you have been brought here that I may show it to you. Tell the family of Israel everything that you see!"

The eastern outer gateway

⁵ I saw a wall all around the outside of the Temple. **The measuring-reed** in the man's hand was six cubits ^{*144} long, with one cubit consisting of a forearm and one span. He **measured** the width of **the wall-structure** as one reed-length, and it was one reed-length high. ⁶ Then he went into the gateway that faced east. He went up its steps and measured the threshold of the gateway. It was one reed-length wide, and the other threshold was one reed-length wide. ⁷ Each recess was one reed-length wide and one reed-length deep. The space between the recesses was two metres and sixty-seven centimetres. The threshold of the gateway beside the porch of the gateway facing the Temple was one reed-length. ⁸ Then he measured the porch of the gateway, facing the Temple. It was one reed-length. ⁹ Then he measured the porch of the gateway. It was four metres and twenty-five centimetres. Its columns were one metre and six centimetres. The porch of the gateway faced the Temple. ¹⁰ There were three recesses on one side of the eastern gateway, and three on the other side. All three were the same size. The columns on each side were the same size. ¹¹ Then he measured the width of the entrance of the gateway. It was five metres and thirty-three centimetres. The gateway was six metres and ninety-three centimetres wide. ¹² There was a barrier of five hundred and thirty-three centimetres on each side in front of the recesses. The recesses were three metres and

twenty centimetres square. ¹³ Then he measured the gateway from the ceiling of the one recess to the ceiling of the opposite one. It was thirteen metres and thirty-two centimetres wide. The openings faced each other. ¹⁴ He also measured the columns. They were thirty-two metres high. He measured the gateways next to the columns on every side of the courtyard. ¹⁵ The distance from the front of the gateway at the entrance to the front of the porch of the gateway on the inside was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres. ¹⁶ The recesses and their columns inside the gateway had framed windows all around. In just the same way the porches had windows all around on the inside. The columns had palm-shaped decorations.

The outer courtyard, the pavement and the blocks of thirty rooms — compare 42:1-9

¹⁷ Then he brought me into the outer courtyard. I saw that rooms and a pavement had been made all around the courtyard. Thirty rooms were at the edge of the pavement. ¹⁸ The pavement ran along the sides of the gateways. It was as wide as the gateways were. This was the lower pavement. ¹⁹ Then he measured the distance from the inner front of the lower gate to the outer front of the inner court. It was fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres on the eastern side. The northern side was next.

The northern outer gateway and its steps

²⁰ He also measured the length and the width of the gateway that faced toward the north, which belonged to the outer court. ²¹ Its three recesses on each side, its columns and its porch were the same in size as those of the first gate. It was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres long and thirteen metres and thirty-two centimetres wide. ²² Its windows, its porch and its palm-shaped decorations were the same in size as those of the gateway that faced toward the east. People could go up to it by seven steps so that its porch was in front of them. ²³ There was a gateway to the inner courtyard opposite the gateway on the north, as there was on the east. He measured fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres from one gateway to the other one.

The southern outer gateway and its steps

²⁴ Then he led me toward the southern side. I saw that there was a gateway that faced south. He continued to measure its columns and its porch. They had the same measurements as the others. ²⁵ The gateway and its porch had windows on all sides like the windows in the others. It was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres long and thirteen metres and thirty-two centimetres wide. ²⁶ Seven steps went up to it and led to its porch. Its columns had a palm-shaped decoration on each side of them.

The southern gateway to the inner courtyard and the inner courtyard — compare 40:44, 47

²⁷ There was a gateway on the southern side of the inner court. He measured fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres between the gateways on the southern side. ²⁸ Then he brought me into the inner court

¹⁴⁴ Six cubits is three metres and twenty centimetres

through the southern gateway. He measured the southern gateway. It had the same measurements as the others.²⁹ Its recesses, columns and porch had the same measurements as the others. The gateway and its porch had windows all around. It was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres long and thirteen metres and thirty-two centimetres wide.³⁰ There were porches all around, thirteen metres and thirty-two centimetres long and two metres and sixty-seven centimetres wide.³¹ Its porches faced the outer courtyard. There were palm-shaped decorations on their columns, and their stairways had eight steps.

The eastern gateway to the inner courtyard

³² Then he took me into the inner courtyard on the eastern side and measured the gateway. It had the same measurements as the others.³³ Its recesses, columns and porch had the same measurements as the others. The gateway and its porch had windows all around. It was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres long and thirteen metres and thirty-two centimetres wide.³⁴ Its porch faced the outer courtyard. It had palm-shaped decorations on each side of its columns, and its stairway had eight steps.

The northern gateway to the inner courtyard

³⁵ Then he brought me to the northern gate and began to measure it. It had the same measurements as the others,³⁶ as did also its recesses, its columns and its porch. It had windows all around. It was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres long and thirteen metres and thirty-two centimetres wide.³⁷ Its porch faced the outer court and had palm-shaped decorations on each side of its columns. Its stairway had eight steps.

Rooms where burnt offerings are washed

³⁸ There was a room with a door beside the columns at the gateways, where they washed the burnt offering.

Tables where sacrificial animals are slaughtered

³⁹ There were two tables on each side in the porch at the gateway, on which the burnt offerings, the sin-offerings and the guilt-offerings were slaughtered.

The rooms for priests

⁴⁰ Off to the side, on the outside as one goes up to the northern gateway there were two tables, and there were two more tables at the other side of the porch of the gateway.⁴¹ There were four tables on each side of the gateway, eight tables on which the sacrifices were slaughtered.⁴² There were also four tables of dressed stone for the burnt offering. They were eighty centimetres long, eighty centimetres wide and fifty-three centimetres high. The pieces of equipment with which they slaughtered the burnt offerings and the other sacrifices were to be placed on them.⁴³ Pegs seventy-six millimetres long had been set in the wall all around. The meat of the sacrifices was to be put on the tables.

Rooms for the singers and the priests

⁴⁴ On the outside of the inner gateway in the inner courtyard there were rooms for the singers. One room was at the side of the northern gateway facing south, and the other was at the side of the eastern gateway

facing north.⁴⁵ He told me: "This room, which faces south, is for the priests who are fulfilling their duties at the Temple.⁴⁶ The room that faces north is for the priests who are fulfilling their duties at the altar. These are the descendants of Zadok, the only descendants of Levi who may approach the LORD to minister to Him."

The inner courtyard and the altar for sacrifice — compare 43:13-18)

⁴⁷ Then he measured the courtyard. It was square, fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres long and fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres wide. The altar was in front of the Temple.

The porch of the Temple

⁴⁸ Then he took me to the porch of the Temple and measured the columns of the porch. They were two metres and sixty-seven centimetres wide on each side. The width of the gateway was one metre and sixty centimetres on each side.

The Temple-steps

⁴⁹ The porch was ten metres and sixty-seven centimetres long and five metres and eighty-seven centimetres wide. Its columns were beside the steps that led up to it. Pillars were next to the columns, one on each side.

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The Holy Place in the Temple

¹ Then he took me to the Temple and measured the columns. The columns were three metres and twenty centimetres wide on each side along the width of the Tabernacle.² The width of the doorway was five metres and thirty-three centimetres, and the sidewalls were two metres and sixty-seven centimetres on each side of the doorway. He measured the length of the Holy Place. It was twenty-one metres and thirty-three centimetres and was ten metres and sixty-seven centimetres wide.

The Most Holy Place

³ Then he went into the inner room and measured the columns at the entrance. They were one metre and sixty-seven millimetres. The entrance was three metres and twenty centimetres high, and the entrance was three metres and seventy-three centimetres wide.⁴ He measured the length of the room as far as the end of the main hall as ten metres and sixty-seven centimetres. It was ten metres and sixty-seven centimetres wide. He told me, "This is the Most Holy Place."

⁵ Then he measured the wall of the Temple. It was three metres and twenty centimetres thick. Each side-room all around the Temple was two metres and thirteen centimetres wide.⁶ The side-rooms were on three levels, one above the other. There were thirty on each level. The side-rooms extended to the wall of the Temple all around it. The side-rooms had supports, that the wall of the Temple might not support them.

⁷ The side-rooms became wider all around at each successive level. For the structure surrounding the Temple went from one storey to another all around the Temple. Therefore, higher up, the Temple became wider. In this way one went up from the lowest storey

to the top storey through the middle storey.

The raised platform

⁸ I also saw that the Temple had a raised platform all around. From the foundations of the side-rooms the height was three metres and twenty centimetres, the full length of the measuring reed. ⁹ The outer wall of the side rooms was two metres and sixty-seven centimetres thick. The open area between the side rooms of the Temple had the same width. ¹⁰ The distance between the priests' rooms that were all around the Temple was ten metres and sixty-seven centimetres. ¹¹ The doors of the side-rooms opened into the open area. One door faced toward the north, and another door toward the south. The open space was two metres and sixty-seven centimetres wide all around.

The annexe on the western side — compare 2 Kings 23:11

¹² The building that was facing the courtyard on the western side was thirty-seven metres and thirty-three centimetres wide. The wall of the building was two metres and sixty-seven centimetres wide all around and forty-eight metres long.

The western building

¹³ Then he measured the Temple. It was fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres long. The courtyard, the building and its walls were also fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres long. ¹⁴ The eastern façade of the building and the courtyard were fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres wide. ¹⁵ Then he went on to measure the length of the building facing the courtyard that was at the back, together with its galleries on each side. They were fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres.

The appearance of the Temple and its surroundings

The inside of the outer sanctuary, the porches facing the courtyard, ¹⁶ the thresholds, the framed windows and the galleries all around their three stories from the threshold on were panelled with woodwork all around, from the floor up to the windows. The windows were covered ¹⁷ to the space above the doorway, even as far as the inner sanctuary, both on the outside and on all the walls all around, inside and outside, there was a measured pattern. ¹⁸ It had been made with cherubim and palm-trees. There was a palm-tree between every two cherubs. Each cherub had two faces. ¹⁹ A human face was turned toward the palm-tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion was turned toward the palm-tree on the other side. It had been made like this all around the whole Temple. ²⁰ Cherubim and palm-trees had been made from the floor as far as the area above the doorway. They were on the wall of the Holy Place. ²¹ The doorposts of the Holy Place were square. The appearance of the front of the Holy Place was similar. ²² The altar was wooden, one metre and sixty centimetres high, one metre and sixty-seven millimetres long and one metre and sixty-seven millimetres wide. Its corners, its length and its walls were wooden. He also told me: "This is the table that is in the presence of the LORD." ²³ The Holy Place and the

Most Holy Place each had a double door. ²⁴ The doors had two leaves each, two folding leaves. There were two leaves in the one door and two leaves in the other door. ²⁵ Cherubim and palm-trees had been made on the doors of the Holy Place. They were cherubim and palm-trees like the ones that were on the walls. There was a wooden overhang on the front of the porch outside. ²⁶ There were framed windows and palm-trees on each side, on the sidewalls of the porch, the side-rooms of the Temple and the overhangs.

42

The outer courtyard and the three-storey chambers for the priests

¹ Then he led me out on the northern pathway into the outer court. He brought me to the rooms that were opposite both the open area and the northern building. ² The northern doorway was at the front of the longer side, which measured fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres. The width was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres. ³ Opposite the ten metres and sixty-seven centimetres that belonged to the inner court and opposite the pavement that belonged to the outer court, one gallery faced another gallery in three stories. ⁴ In front of the rooms there was an inner passageway five metres and thirty-three centimetres wide at a distance of fifty-three centimetres. The doors of these rooms faced north. ⁵ The upper rooms were narrower. For the galleries took more space away from them than from rooms on the lower and middle levels of the building. ⁶ For they were arranged on three levels. They did not have pillars like the pillars in the courtyards. That is why the upper rooms were shorter than the rooms on the lower and the middle levels up from the ground. ⁷ There was a stone wall on the outside, parallel to the rooms, toward the outer court and in front of the rooms. It was twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres long. ⁸ For the rooms of the outer court were twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres long. However, the rooms that faced the sanctuary were fifty-three metres and thirty-three centimetres long. ⁹ Below these rooms there was an entrance on the eastern side. A person could enter them from the outer courtyard. ¹⁰ There were rooms on the breadth of the stone wall of the court, facing the east. They faced both the open area and the building. ¹¹ There was a passageway in front of them. They were like the rooms on the northern side. They were as long and as broad as those were and had the same exits, dimensions and doorways. ¹² They corresponded to the doorways of the rooms that faced the south. There was an entrance at the beginning of the passageway, the passage that was in front of the corresponding wall on the east as one enters them. ¹³ Then he told me: "The northern rooms and the southern rooms that are opposite the open area are the holy rooms, where the priests who approach the LORD will eat the most holy offerings. That is where they will place the most holy offerings, the grain-offerings,

the sin-offerings and the guilt-offerings. For the place is holy. ¹⁴ When the priests enter the Holy Place, they do not go out of it into the outer court until they leave behind there the garments in which they have been ministering. For these are holy. They put on other clothes before they approach the places that are meant for the people.”

The measurements around the Temple area

¹⁵ When he had finished measuring the interior of the Temple area, he led me out through the gateway that faces east and measured the area all around. ¹⁶ He measured the eastern side with the measuring reed. It was five hundred reed-lengths [one-kilometre and six-hundred metres] all around according to the measuring reed. ¹⁷ He measured the northern side. It was five hundred reed-lengths all around according to the measuring reed. ¹⁸ He measured the southern side. It was five hundred reed-lengths according to the measuring reed. ¹⁹ Then he turned to the western side and measured it. It was five hundred reed-lengths according to the measuring reed. ²⁰ He measured it on the four sides. It had a wall all around it. It was five hundred reed-lengths long and five hundred reed-lengths wide, to separate what was holy from what was common.

43

The filling of the new Temple with God's glory

¹ Then he led me to the gate, the gate that faced towards the east. ² I saw that the glory of the God of Israel came from the east. His **voice** was **like the sound of plentiful water**, and the earth shone because of His glory. ³ The vision that I saw seemed like the vision that I had seen when He came to destroy the city and like the visions that I had seen beside the Chebar Canal, and I fell face-down. ⁴ The glory of the LORD entered the Temple through the gate that faced toward the east. ⁵ The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner courtyard. I saw that the glory of the Lord had filled the Temple. ⁶ While the man was standing beside me, I heard Someone speaking to me from the Temple. ⁷ He told me: “Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place for the soles of My feet. This is where I shall dwell among the Israelites for ever. The family of Israel will not defile My holy name any longer, neither they nor their kings, by their prostitution and by the dead bodies of their kings at their high places. ⁸ They have done this by setting their threshold beside My threshold and their doorposts beside My doorposts, with only a wall between Me and them. They have been defiling My holy name by their detestable practices, which they have been committing. So, I have destroyed them in My anger. ⁹ Now they must completely remove from Me their prostitution and the dead bodies of their kings. Then I shall dwell among them for ever.”

¹⁰ “As for you, son of man, inform the family of Israel about the Temple, that they may be ashamed of their

sins! Let them consider the detailed measurements!

¹¹ If they are ashamed of all that they have been doing, make known to them the design of the Temple, its arrangement, its exits, its entrances and its whole arrangement! Inform them about all its Statutes, its whole arrangement and all its Instructions! Then write these things down for them while they are watching, that they may remember all of its arrangement and all of its Statutes and put them into practice! ¹² This is the Instruction about the Temple: The whole precinct all around the top of the mountain shall be most holy! Look! This is the Instruction about the Temple.”

The altar in the new Temple

¹³ “These are the measurements of the altar in cubits that measure one cubit and one handbreadth: its gutter is fifty-three centimetres deep and fifty-three centimetres wide. There is a rim measuring one span ^{*145} around its edge. This is the trunk of the altar. ¹⁴ From the gutter on the ground to the lower ledge it is one metre and sixty-seven millimetres high and fifty-three centimetres wide. The distance from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge is two metres and thirteen centimetres and is fifty-three centimetres wide. ¹⁵ The altar-hearth is two metres and thirteen centimetres. There are four horns projecting upwards from the altar-hearth. ¹⁶ The altar-hearth has four corners and is completely square, six metres and forty centimetres long by six metres and forty centimetres wide. ¹⁷ The ledge is also completely square, seven metres and forty-seven centimetres long by seven metres and forty-seven centimetres wide. It has a rim around it twenty-seven centimetres wide. Its gutter is fifty-three centimetres all around. The steps of the altar face towards the east.”

¹⁸ He told me, “Son of man, This is what the Lord GOD has said: ‘These are the Regulations for the altar on the day when it is made for offering burnt offerings on it and for pouring blood against it: ¹⁹ You shall give a bull from the herd for a sin-offering to the Levitical priests, who have descended from Zadok, and who come near Me to minister to Me!’ declares the Lord GOD. ²⁰ ‘You shall take some of its blood and put it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge and on the rim around it! You shall cleanse the altar from sin and make atonement for it! ²¹ You shall also take away the bull for the sin-offering, that it may be burnt in the designated part of the Temple area, outside the Holy Place! ²² On the second day you shall offer a male goat that has no blemish for a sin-offering! They shall cleanse the altar from sin as they have used the bull to cleanse it from sin! ²³ When you have finished the cleansing from sin, you shall offer a bull that has no blemish from the herd and a ram from the flock that has no blemish! ²⁴ You shall present them before the LORD, and the priests shall sprinkle salt on them and offer them as

¹⁴⁵ A span was about twenty-two centimetres.

burnt offerings to the LORD! ²⁵ Each day for seven days you shall prepare a male goat for a sin-offering! A bull from the herd and a ram from the flock that have no blemish shall also be prepared! ²⁶ For seven days they shall make atonement for the altar, cleanse it and consecrate it! ²⁷ When they have completed these days, then, from the eighth day on, the priests shall prepare your burnt offerings and your peace-offerings on the altar! Then I shall be favourable to you,” declares the Lord GOD.

44

The sealing of the eastern gate

¹ Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the Holy Place, which faces towards the east. It had been shut tight. ² The LORD told me: “This gate will remain shut tight. It shall not be opened, and no one shall enter through it! For the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered through it. It shall remain shut tight! ³ The prince himself is the only one who may sit in it to eat bread before the LORD. He may come in through the porch of the gateway but shall go out the same way!”

The men who serve in the new Temple

⁴ Then he brought me through the northern gateway to the front of the Temple. When I looked, I saw that **the glory of the LORD had filled the Temple** of the LORD, and I fell face-down. ⁵ The LORD told me: “Son of man, pay close attention! Use your eyes to see and your ears to hear everything that I am telling you about all the Regulations for the Temple of the LORD and all its Laws. Pay close attention to those who may enter the Temple and all those who must be brought out of the Holy Place. ⁶ Tell the rebellious people, the family of Israel, ‘This is what the Lord GOD has said: “Family of Israel, enough of all your detestable practices! ⁷ You are admitting foreigners, who are uncircumcised in hearts and bodies, so that they are in My Holy Place. You are profaning My Temple when you offer My food, the fat and the blood, to Me. You have been breaking My Covenant, in addition to all your other detestable practices. ⁸ You have not been keeping your Obligations concerning My holy things but have been arranging for others to observe My Requirements in My Holy Place for you.””

⁹ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “No foreigner, who is uncircumcised in heart and body, out of all the foreigners who are among the Israelites, shall enter My Holy Place!”

The unfaithfulness of the Levites

¹⁰ “However, the Levites who went far away from Me when Israel wandered off, when they wandered away from Me to follow their idols, will suffer the consequences of their sin. ¹¹ They should have been ministers in My Holy Place. They should have been sentries at the gates of the Temple and should have been ministering in the Temple. They should have been slaughtering the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for the

people. They should have been standing in front of the people, to minister to them. ¹² Because they were ministering to them in front of their idols and were causing the family of Israel to fall into sin, therefore I have raised My hand in an oath concerning them,” declares the Lord GOD, “that they will suffer the consequences of their sin. ¹³ They shall not approach Me to act as My priests! They shall not approach any of My holy things or the things that are most holy! They shall bear their disgrace and suffer for the detestable practices that they have been committing! ¹⁴ Nevertheless, I shall put them in charge of the duties at the Temple, to carry out all its service and all that must be done in it.

Permission for the priests to continue to serve

¹⁵ “However, the Levitical priests, who are the descendants of Zadok, who observed the Requirements for My Holy Place when the Israelites wandered away from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me! They shall stand before Me to offer to Me the fat and the blood!” declares the Lord GOD.

¹⁶ “They shall enter My Holy Place! They shall approach My table to minister to Me! They shall observe My Requirements! ¹⁷ When they enter the gates of the inner courtyard, they shall wear linen garments! They shall not wear any woollen material while they are ministering at the gates of the inner court or inside the Temple! ¹⁸ They shall wear linen turbans on their heads and linen double aprons around their waists! They shall not wear any clothes that make them perspire! ¹⁹ When they go out into the outer courtyard, where the people are, they shall take off their clothes, in which they were ministering! They shall leave them in the holy rooms! They shall put on other clothes, that they may not transfer holiness to the people by means of their garments! ²⁰ They shall not shave their heads or allow their hair to hang loosely! They shall certainly keep the hair on their heads trimmed! ²¹ No priests shall drink any wine when they enter the inner courtyard! ²² They shall not marry a widow or a divorced woman! They may marry only virgins who are descendants of the family of Israel or a widow who is the widow of another priest. ²³ They shall teach My people the difference between what is holy and what is common! They shall show them how to distinguish between what is unclean and what is clean! ²⁴ In any lawsuit they shall act as judges and pass judgment on it according to My Decisions! They shall keep My Laws and My Statutes regarding all My appointed feasts! They shall keep My Sabbaths holy! ²⁵ They shall not make themselves unclean by going near a dead human being! However, they may make themselves unclean for a father, a mother, a son, a daughter, a brother or an unmarried sister. ²⁶ After he has become clean, a count of seven days shall be made for him! ²⁷ On the day when he goes into the Holy Place in the inner court to minister in the Holy Place, he

shall make his sin-offering!” declares the Lord GOD.
 28 “This shall be their inheritance! I am their inheritance. You shall not give them any possession in Israel! I am their possession. 29 They shall eat the grain-offering, the sin-offering and the guilt-offering! Everything dedicated by a ban in Israel shall belong to them! 30 The best of all the first-fruits of all kinds and every other contribution of every kind out of all your contributions shall belong to the priests! You shall also give the first of your dough to the priests, that a blessing may rest on your family! 31 The priests shall not eat anything that has been found dead or has been torn by wild animals, whether it is a bird or an animal!”

45

The allocation of land for the priests, the Levites and the prince

1 “When you allot the land as an inheritance, you shall select a portion of the land for the LORD as a holy district, thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres long and five kilometres and thirty-three metres wide! The entire area shall be holy! 2 Out of this, an area two hundred and sixty-six metres and sixty-six centimetres square shall be for the Holy Place, with an open space of twenty-six metres and sixty-five centimetres around it! 3 From this measured district you shall measure off a section that is thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres long and five kilometres and thirty-three metres wide! The sanctuary, the Most Holy Place, shall be in this! 4 It shall be the holy portion of the land for the priests, who minister in the Holy Place and come near to minister to the LORD! It shall be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary! 5 An area thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres long and five kilometres and thirty-three metres wide shall belong to the Levites, who minister at the Temple! They shall have twenty rooms as their possession!

6 “You shall assign an area two kilometres and sixty-seven metres wide and thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres long as the property of the city alongside the holy district! It shall belong to the whole family of Israel!

The ruler's portion

7 “The leader shall have the land on both sides of the holy district and on both sides of the property belonging to the city! It shall extend in the west from the western side and in the east from the eastern side! It shall run lengthways, parallel to one of the tribal portions from the western border to the eastern border! 8 This shall be his land! It shall be his property in Israel! My princes shall not oppress My people any longer but let the family of Israel have the land according to their tribes!”

9 This is what the Lord GOD has said: “You have gone far enough, princes of Israel! Desist from violence and oppression and do what is just and right! Stop driving My people from their land!” declares the

Lord GOD.

The requirement that the people must use honest weights and measures

10 “You shall have honest scales, an accurate dry measure and an accurate liquid measure! 11 The dry measure and the liquid measure shall be the same size! The bath*¹⁴⁶ shall hold one tenth of a homer*¹⁴⁷ and the ephah*¹⁴⁸ shall hold one tenth of a homer! The homer shall be the standard of measurement! 12 The shekel*¹⁴⁹ shall consist of twenty gerahs! Your mina*¹⁵⁰ shall equal twenty shekels plus twenty-five shekels plus fifteen shekels!

Rules for contributions to the prince in Israel

13 “This is the contribution that you shall give: one sixth of an ephah*¹⁵¹ from each homer of wheat, and you shall give one sixth of an ephah from each homer of barley! 14 The prescribed portion of olive-oil, measured by the bath, shall be one tenth of a bath from each cor! One cor*¹⁵² shall consist of ten baths or one homer! For ten baths are equivalent to one homer. 15 You shall contribute one sheep from each flock of two hundred, from the well-watered land of Israel! You shall use them for offerings, for burnt offerings and for peace-offerings, to make atonement for them!” declares the Lord GOD.

16 “All the people of the land shall be obliged to make this contribution to the prince in Israel! 17 It shall be the prince's duty to furnish the burnt offerings, the grain-offerings and the drink-offerings at the feasts, the New Moon festivals, the Sabbaths, at all the other appointed feasts of the family of Israel! He shall provide the sin-offerings, the grain-offerings, the burnt offerings and the peace-offerings, to make atonement on behalf of the family of Israel!”

Instructions about feasts — Exodus 12:1-20, Leviticus 23:33-43

18 This is what the Lord GOD has said: “On the first day of the first month, you shall take a young bull that has no blemish from the herd and cleanse the sanctuary from sin! 19 The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin-offering and put it on the doorposts of the Temple, the four corners of the ledge of the altar and the gateposts of the inner courtyard! 20 You shall do the same on the seventh day of the month for anyone who has sinned unintentionally or through ignorance! So, you shall make atonement for the Temple! 21 On the fourteenth day of the first month you shall celebrate the Passover, a feast lasting for seven days, when bread without yeast shall be eaten! 22 On that day the prince shall provide a bull as a sin-offering for himself and for all the people of the land! 23 On each of the seven days of the feast he shall provide seven bulls and seven rams that have no blemish as a burnt offering to the LORD and a male goat on each day as

¹⁴⁶ A bath was a liquid measure of forty litres.

¹⁴⁷ A homer was a measure of four hundred litres.

¹⁴⁸ An ephah was a dry measure of forty litres, or half a bushel.

¹⁴⁹ A shekel weighed twelve grams.

¹⁵⁰ A mina was seven hundred and twenty grams.

¹⁵¹ A sixth of an ephah was 6.7 litres, or three quarts.

¹⁵² A cor was four hundred litres.

a sin-offering! ²⁴ He shall also provide a grain-offering, forty litres for each bull, forty litres for each ram and four litres of olive-oil for every forty litres! ²⁵ During the seven days of the feast beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month he shall make a similar provision of the sin-offerings, the burnt offerings, the grain-offerings and the olive-oil!”

46

Instructions about the Sabbath and the New-Moon feast

¹ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “The gate of the inner court that faces east shall be shut on the six working days but be opened on the Sabbath day! It shall also be opened on the day of the New Moon!

² The prince shall enter from the outside through the porch of the gateway! He shall take his stand beside the post of the gateway! The priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace-offerings! He shall worship at the threshold of the gateway and then leave! The gate shall not be shut until the evening! ³ The people of the land shall worship at the entrance of that gateway in the presence of the LORD on the Sabbaths and on the New Moons! ⁴ The burnt offering that the prince presents to the LORD on the Sabbath day shall be six lambs that have no blemish and one ram that has no blemish! ⁵ The grain-offering with the ram shall be forty litres and the grain-offering with the lambs shall be as much as he wants to give, together with four litres of olive-oil with each forty litres! ⁶ On the day of the New Moon he shall offer a young bull without blemish from the herd, six lambs and one ram, which shall be without blemish! ⁷ As a grain-offering he shall provide forty litres with the bull and forty litres with the ram, as much as he can afford to give with the lambs and four litres of olive-oil with each forty litres!

Other instructions about worship

⁸ “When the prince enters, he shall enter through the porch of the gateway and leave by the same way!

⁹ When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed feasts, the person who enters through the northern gate to worship shall leave through the southern gate! The person who enters through the southern gate shall leave through the northern gate! No one shall return through the gateway through which he has entered, but each one shall leave through the gateway opposite him! ¹⁰ When they enter, the prince shall enter with them and when they leave, he shall leave!

¹¹ “At the feasts and at the appointed festivals the grain-offering with each bull shall be forty litres and forty litres with each ram! However, with the lambs the prince may give as much as he wants to give. Four litres of olive-oil shall be given together with each forty litres!

¹² “When the prince prepares a voluntary offering, either a burnt offering or peace-offerings as a voluntary offering to the LORD, the gate that faces the east

shall be opened for him! He shall provide his burnt offering or his peace-offerings as he provides them on the Sabbath day! Then he shall leave and, after he has left, the gate shall be shut!

¹³ “You shall provide a lamb that is one year old and has no blemish as a burnt offering to the LORD every day! You shall provide one every morning! ¹⁴ You shall prepare a grain-offering with it every morning! It shall be seven litres, together with one litre and three hundred millilitres of olive-oil to moisten the flour! It shall be a grain-offering to the LORD! This is a permanent and regular statute. ¹⁵ Provide the lamb, the grain-offering and the olive-oil every morning as a regular burnt offering!”

The prince's inheritance

¹⁶ This is what the Lord GOD has said: “If the prince makes a gift to any of his sons as his inheritance, it shall belong to his sons! It shall be their property by inheritance! ¹⁷ However, if he makes a gift out of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall belong to him until the year of release! Then it shall revert to the prince! It is certainly his own inheritance and shall belong to his sons! ¹⁸ The prince shall not take any of the inheritance of the people! He must not force them to give up their property! He shall give his sons their inheritance out of his own property, that none of My people may be driven away from his property!”

The priests' kitchens

¹⁹ Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gateway, to the holy rooms for the priests that faced north. I saw that a place was there at the extreme western end of them. ²⁰ He told me: “This is the place where the priests will boil the guilt-offerings and the sin-offerings and where they will bake the grain-offerings, to avoid bringing them out into the outer court and communicating holiness to the people.”

The rooms for cooking the sacrifices of the people

²¹ Then he brought me out to the outer courtyard and took me past the four corners of the courtyard. I saw that there was another courtyard in each corner of the courtyard. ²² The enclosed courtyards that were in each of the four corners of the courtyard were twenty-one metres and thirty-three centimetres long and sixteen metres wide. Each of the four corner-rooms was the same size. ²³ A stone wall was all around inside the four corner-rooms. Fireplaces had been made all around on the inside, at the bottom of the rows of stone. ²⁴ Then he told me, “These are the kitchens where those who minister at the Temple will boil the sacrifices of the people.”

47

The water flowing from the Temple

¹ Then he brought me back to the door of the Temple. I saw **water** coming out **from** under the threshold of the eastern side of Temple. For the front of the Temple was facing the east. The **water** was **flowing** down **from** under the southern side of the Temple, south of

the altar. ² Then he brought me through the northern gateway and led me around on the way out to the outer gateway that faces towards the east. I saw that the water was spurting out of the southern side. ³ When the man was going out towards the east, he had a measuring-line in his hand. He measured five hundred and thirty-three metres and then led me through the water. The water was ankle-deep. ⁴ Then he measured another five hundred and thirty-three metres and led me through the water. The water was knee-deep. Then he measured another five hundred and thirty-three metres and led me through the water. The water was up to the hips. ⁵ Then he measured another five hundred and thirty-three metres. It was a river that I could not pass through. For the water had risen. The water was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be waded through. ⁶ He asked me, "Son of man, have you seen this?"

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. ⁷ While I was going back, I saw very many **trees on both banks of the river**. ⁸ He told me: "This **water is flowing away** towards the eastern district. It is flowing down towards the desert region and going into the sea.*¹⁵³ When the water is made to flow into the sea, that water will be made fresh. ⁹ Wherever the two rivers go, every swarming living creature will live. There will be very many fish. For this water has gone there that the other water may be made fresh. Everything will live where the river flows. ¹⁰ Fishermen will stand beside the sea. From En-Gedi to En-Eglaim it will be a place to spread out dragnets. Its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Mediterranean Sea. ¹¹ Its swamps and marshes will not be made fresh. They will be set apart for salt. ¹² Every kind of fruit **tree** will grow on its bank, on **both sides of the river**. **Their leaves** will not wither, and **their fruit** will not come to an end. They will **produce** fresh fruit **every month**, because the **water** for them **flows out** of the Holy Place. Their **fruit** will supply food, and **their leaves will provide healing**."

The borders of the land when it is allocated — compare Numbers 34:1-12

¹³ This is what the Lord GOD has said: "These are the boundaries at which you shall divide the land for an inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel! Joseph shall receive two portions! ¹⁴ You shall divide equally with one another the inheritance that I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers! This land shall be allotted to you as your inheritance!

¹⁵ "This shall be the boundary of the land: On the northern side, from the Mediterranean Sea the border shall run along the road to Hethlon and the entrance of Zedad, ¹⁶ Hamath, Berothah and Sibram, which lies on the border between Damascus and Hamath! It shall run as far as Hazer-Hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran! ¹⁷ So, the boundary shall run from the Mediterranean Sea to Hazar-Enan, which is on the northern

border of Damascus! The border of Hamath shall lie to the north! This shall be the northern side!

¹⁸ "On the eastern side you measure off the boundary between Hauran and Damascus and along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel. You shall make the border beside the Dead Sea! This shall be the eastern side!

¹⁹ "On the southern side, it shall run from Tamar as far as the water of Meribah-Kadesh and along the ravine to the Mediterranean Sea! This shall be the southern side!

²⁰ "On the western side the Mediterranean Sea shall be the boundary to a position opposite Lebo-hamath! This shall be the western side!

²¹ "You shall divide this land among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel. ²² You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the foreign residents among you who have had children among you. You shall treat them as native-born people among the Israelites. They shall receive by lot an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. ²³ You shall assign foreigners their inheritance in whatever tribe they are living," declares the Lord GOD.

48

The land allocated for each tribe

¹ "These are the names of the tribes: Dan shall have one portion, beginning in the extreme north, along the road to Hethlon and Lebo-Hamath, as far as Hazar-Enan, which is on the northern border of Damascus near Hamath, from the eastern side to the west.

² Asher shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Dan, from the eastern side to the west. ³ Naphtali shall have one portion adjoining the territory of Asher, from the eastern side to the west. ⁴ Manasseh shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Naphtali, from the eastern side to the west. ⁵ Ephraim shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Manasseh, from the eastern side to the west. ⁶ Reuben shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Ephraim, from the eastern side to the west. ⁷ Judah shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Reuben, from the eastern side to the west.

⁸ "Adjoining the territory of Judah, from the eastern side to the west, shall be the allocation that you shall set apart. It shall be thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres wide. It shall be equal in length to one of the other tribal portions, from the eastern side to the western side, and the sanctuary shall be in the middle of it. ⁹ The allocation that you shall set apart for the LORD shall be thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres long and five kilometres and thirty-three metres wide. ¹⁰ The holy allocation shall belong to these people, namely, the priests. It shall be thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres on the northern side, five kilometres and thirty-three metres wide on the western side, five kilometres and thirty-three metres wide on the eastern side and thirteen kilometres and thirty-

¹⁵³ The sea: that is, the Dead Sea.

three metres long on the southern side. The sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the middle of it. ¹¹ It shall belong to the consecrated priests, the descendants of Zadok, who have been fulfilling My Requirements and who did not go astray as the Levites did when the Israelites went astray. ¹² It shall belong to them as an allocation to the LORD out of the allocation of the land. It shall be most holy, adjoining the territory of the Levites. ¹³ The Levites shall have an area that is thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres long and five kilometres and thirty-three metres alongside the territory of the priests. Its total length shall be thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres, and its width shall be five kilometres and thirty-three metres. ¹⁴ They shall not sell or exchange any of it. They shall not allow this best portion of the land to pass to others. For it is holy to the LORD.

¹⁵ “The remainder, two kilometres and sixty-seven metres wide and thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres long, shall be for the ordinary use of the city, for houses and for pastureland. The city shall be in the middle of it. ¹⁶ These shall be its measurements: The northern side shall be two kilometres and four hundred metres. The southern side shall be two kilometres and four hundred metres. The eastern side shall be two kilometres and four hundred metres, and the western side shall be two kilometres and four hundred metres.

¹⁷ The pastureland for the city shall be one hundred and thirty-three metres and thirty-two centimetres on the north, one hundred and thirty-three metres and thirty-two centimetres on the south, one hundred and thirty-three metres and thirty-two centimetres on the east and one hundred and thirty-three metres and thirty-two centimetres on the west. ¹⁸ The remainder of the length alongside the holy allocation shall be five kilometres and thirty-three metres on the east and five kilometres and thirty-three metres on the west. It shall be alongside the holy allocation. Its produce shall supply food for the workers of the city. ¹⁹ The workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it. ²⁰ The whole allocation, which you shall set apart, shall be square, thirteen-kilometres and thirty-three metres on each side. You shall set aside the holy allocation together with the property of the city.

²¹ “What remains on both sides of the holy allocation and of the property of the city shall belong to the prince. It shall extend from the thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres of the allocation to the eastern bor-

der and westward from the thirteen kilometres and thirty-three metres to the western border, parallel to the tribal portions. These areas shall belong to the prince. The holy allocation with the sanctuary of the Temple shall be in the middle of them. ²² Therefore, the property of the Levites and the property of the city shall be in the middle of what belongs to the prince. What belongs to the prince shall be between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

²³ “This is what the rest of the tribes shall receive: Benjamin shall have one portion, from the eastern side to the western side. ²⁴ Simeon shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Benjamin, from the eastern side to the western side. ²⁵ Issachar shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Simeon, from the eastern side to the western side. ²⁶ Zebulun shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Issachar, from the eastern side to the western side. ²⁷ Gad shall have one portion, adjoining the territory of Zebulun, from the eastern side to the western side. ²⁸ The boundary adjoining the territory of Gad on the southern side shall run from Tamar to the water of Meribah-Kadesh and along the ravine to the Mediterranean Sea. ²⁹ This is the land that you shall allot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions.” declares the Lord GOD.

The gates of the new city of God

³⁰ “These shall be the exits of the city: The northern side shall be two kilometres and four hundred metres long. ³¹ Since the **gates** of the city shall be named **after the tribes of Israel, the three gates on the northern side** shall be one gate for Reuben, one gate for Judah and one gate for Levi. ³² **The eastern side** shall be two kilometres and four hundred metres long. The **three gates** shall be one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin and one gate for Dan. ³³ **The southern side** shall measure two kilometres and four hundred metres. The **three gates** shall be one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar and one gate for Zebulun. ³⁴ **The western side** shall be two kilometres and four hundred metres long. Its **three gates** shall be one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher and one gate for Naphtali. ³⁵ The circumference of the city shall be nine kilometres and six hundred metres. **The name of the city** from that time on shall be, ‘THE LORD IS THERE.’”

DANIEL

1

The faithfulness of Daniel and his three friends to the Law of God — compare 2 Kings 24:16

¹ In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ² The Lord delivered Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into his hand, together with some of the vessels of the Temple of God. He took them to the temple of his god in Babylonia and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. ³ The king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief court-official, to bring some of the Israelites, namely, descendants of the royal family and the nobility. ⁴ They were to be young men without physical defect, of good appearance, suitable for instruction in every kind of wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning and competent to stand in the king's palace. He was to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵ The king assigned them a daily allowance of the fine food that the king ate and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. ⁶ Among these were some young men of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. ⁷ The chief court-official gave them other names. He named Daniel "Belteshazzar", he named Hananiah "Shadrach", named Mishael "Meshach" and named Azariah "Abednego." ⁸ However, Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's fine food or with the wine that he drank. Therefore, he asked the chief court-official for permission not to defile himself. ⁹ God let the chief court-official be kind and compassionate towards Daniel. ¹⁰ The chief court-official told Daniel: "I am afraid of my master, the king. He has determined what you should eat and drink. Why, then, should he see that you people were looking thinner than the other young men who are your own age? Then you would endanger my head with the king."

¹¹ Then Daniel told the overseer, whom the chief court-official had put in charge of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, ¹² "Please **test** us, your servants, for **ten days**! Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink! ¹³ Then compare how we look with how the other young men look who are eating the fine food of the king, and treat your servants on the basis of what you see!"

¹⁴ He listened to them about this and **tested** them for **ten days**. ¹⁵ After ten days they looked healthier and better fed than all the other young men who were eating the fine food of the king. ¹⁶ So, the overseer continued to remove their fine food and the wine that they were to drink and gave them vegetables. ¹⁷ God gave these four young men understanding and insight in all kinds of literature and wisdom. Daniel also had under-

standing about all kinds of visions and dreams. ¹⁸ At the end of the period that the king had set to bring them in, the chief court-official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹ When the king interviewed them, no one out of them all could be found to equal Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Therefore, they entered the king's service. ²⁰ In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the soothsayer-priests and enchanters that were in his whole kingdom. ²¹ Daniel continued there until the first year of King Cyrus.

2

The dream of Nebuchadnezzar about a statue made of four kinds of metals

¹ In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams. He was deeply troubled and could not sleep. ² Then the king commanded that the soothsayer-priests, the enchanters, the sorcerers and the Babylonian wise men should be summoned to tell the king his dreams. When they came in and stood before the king, ³ The king told them: "I have had a dream. I am deeply anxious to know what the dream means."

⁴ The Babylonian wise men told the king in Aramaic: "Your Majesty, live for ever! Tell the dream to us, your servants, and we shall give an interpretation."

⁵ The king answered the Babylonian wise men: "This is what I have firmly decided: if you do not tell me the dream and explain what it means, the members of your bodies will be torn apart, and your houses will be turned into piles of rubble. ⁶ However, if you tell me the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts, presents and great honour. Therefore, show me the dream and its interpretation!"

⁷ They answered a second time, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we shall interpret it!"

⁸ The king replied: "I am certain that you are trying to gain time, because you have seen that this is what I have firmly decided. ⁹ If you do not tell me the dream, there is only one verdict for you. You have conspired to speak deceitful and wicked words before me until the times change. Therefore, tell me the dream, that I may know whether you can tell me what it means!"

¹⁰ The Babylonian wise men answered the king: "There is not a man on the earth who can tell the king what he is asking. For no other great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician, enchanter or Babylonian wise man. ¹¹ What you are asking is difficult, Your Majesty. No one else can tell it to Your Majesty except the gods, who do not dwell with human beings."

¹² Because of this the king became furiously angry and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon should be executed. ¹³ So, the decree was issued that the wise men should be put to death. Men were

searching for Daniel and his companions, to put them to death.

¹⁴ Then Daniel spoke discretely and tactfully to Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁵ He asked Arioch, the king's officer, "Why is the decree from the king so harsh?"

Then Arioch explained the situation to Daniel.

¹⁶ Daniel went in and asked the king to grant him a period of grace, that he might explain the meaning to the king.

¹⁷ Then Daniel went home and made the matter known to his companions, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. ¹⁸ He told them to ask for mercy from the God of heaven about this mystery, that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision during the night. Then Daniel praised **the God of heaven**. ²⁰ Daniel said: "Blessed be the name of God from everlasting to everlasting! For He is wise and powerful. ²¹ He changes times and seasons. He deposes kings and establishes kings. He gives wisdom to wise people and discernment to those who have insight. ²² He reveals deep and hidden things. He knows what is in darkness, and light dwells with Him. ²³ To You, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise. For You have given me wisdom and power. You have now made known to me what we asked from You. For you have made the king's matter known to us."

²⁴ Therefore, Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to execute the wise men of Babylon. When he went to him he told him: "Do not execute the wise men of Babylon! Bring me in before the king, and I shall tell the king the interpretation."

²⁵ Then Arioch immediately brought Daniel in before the king and told him: "I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can tell the king the meaning."

²⁶ The king asked Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Can you tell me the dream that I have seen and interpret it?"

²⁷ Daniel answered the king: "No wise men, enchanters, magicians or fortune-tellers can tell the king the mystery about which the king has asked.

²⁸ However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He will tell King Nebuchadnezzar **what will happen** in days to come. This is the dream that you had and the visions that passed through your mind while you were in bed. ²⁹ Your Majesty, while you were on your bed, you began to think about **what would happen in the future**. He who reveals mysteries has made known to you **what will happen**. ³⁰ This secret has not been revealed to me because I am wiser than any other living persons are but that Your Majesty may be told the meaning and that you may understand the thoughts in your mind.

³¹ "Your Majesty, you were having a vision. You saw

a large image. This image, which was very large and exceptionally bright, was standing in front of you and looked awesome. ³² The head of this image was of pure gold. Its chest and arms were of silver. Its belly and thighs were of bronze. ³³ Its lower legs were of iron. Its feet were partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ You kept watching until a stone was cut out without human hands. It struck the image on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. ³⁵ Then at the same time the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were smashed. They became like the chaff on threshing-floors in summer. The wind carried them away, so that **not a trace of them could be found**. However, the stone that had struck the image became a large mountain and filled the whole world.

³⁶ "That was the dream. Now we shall tell Your Majesty what it means. ³⁷ Your Majesty, you are the greatest king. For the God of heaven has given to you the kingship, the power, the strength and the glory.

³⁸ He has put in your hand human beings, wild animals and the birds of the sky, wherever they live. He has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold. ³⁹ Another kingdom that is inferior to yours will arise after you. Then there will be a third kingdom, one of bronze, which will rule over the whole world.

⁴⁰ A fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron. For iron smashes and crushes everything. As iron crushes things, it will shatter and crush all these others. ⁴¹ As you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, there will be a divided kingdom. Yet some of the strength of iron will be in it. For you saw iron mixed with the wet clay. ⁴² The toes on the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay. The kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³ As you saw the iron mixed with wet clay, so people will mix with one another in human offspring. However, they will not stick to one another, as iron does not mix with clay.

⁴⁴ "At the time of those kings, **the God of heaven** will set up a **kingdom** that will never be destroyed. The kingdom will not be left to another people. It will crush and completely annihilate all these kingdoms. However, it **will last for ever**. ⁴⁵ Since you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain without human hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to Your Majesty **what will happen in the future**. The dream is true, and its interpretation is trustworthy."

The promotion of Daniel and his friends

⁴⁶ Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell face-down before Daniel and showed him respect. He commanded that an offering and incense should be presented to him.

⁴⁷ The king told Daniel: "Certainly, your God is the **God of gods** and the **Lord of kings** and one who reveals mysteries. For you have been able to reveal this mystery."

⁴⁸ Then the king gave Daniel high honours and many

great gifts. He made Daniel ruler over the whole province of Babylon and the chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as administrators over the province of Babylon. However, Daniel remained at the king's court.

3

The refusal of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden idol

¹ King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue that was thirty metres high and three metres wide. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

² King Nebuchadnezzar sent men to gather the satraps, the prefects, the governors, the advisers, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the other officials of the provinces to attend the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

³ Then the satraps, the prefects and the governors, the advisers, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates and all the other administrators of the provinces assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. They stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴ Then the herald proclaimed loudly: "**People, nations and language-groups**, this is what you are commanded!

⁵ When you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the lyre, the harp, the sackbut and any other kind of musical instrument, you shall bow down and **worship the golden statue** that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ **Anyone who does not fall and worship** will immediately be thrown into the middle of the flaming fire of a furnace."

⁷ Therefore, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the lyre, the harp and every other kind of musical instrument, **all the people, the nations and language-groups** fell and worshipped the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁸ Therefore, at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and denounced the Jews. ⁹ They addressed King Nebuchadnezzar: "Your Majesty, live for ever! ¹⁰ Your Majesty, you have issued a command that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the lyre, the harp, the sackbut and every other kind of musical instrument shall fall and worship the golden image. ¹¹ Anyone who does not fall and worship will be thrown into the flaming fire of a furnace. ¹² There are certain Jews whom you have put in charge of the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Your Majesty, these men have not paid any attention to you. They were not serving your gods and were not worshipping the golden statue that you have set up."

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar was extremely angry. He commanded that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego should be brought to him. Then these men were brought before the king. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar asked them: "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego,

that you are not serving my gods or worshipping the golden statue that I have set up? ¹⁵ Now, if you are ready, when you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the lyre, the harp, the sackbut and any other kinds of musical instruments, to fall and worship the golden statue that I have made, well and good. However, if you do not worship it, you will immediately be thrown into the middle of the furnace of blazing fire. Then who is the god who will rescue you from my hands?"

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered the king: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to make a reply to you about this. ¹⁷ If this happens, our God, whom we serve, can rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire and will rescue us from your hand, Your Majesty. ¹⁸ However, if not, let it be known to you, Your Majesty, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden statue that you have set up!"

God's deliverance of the three men from the fiery furnace

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He reacted by ordering the furnace to be heated seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰ He ordered some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire.

²¹ Then these three men were tied up in their tunics, trousers, caps and their other clothes and were thrown into the middle of the furnace of blazing fire.

²² Because the king's order was so urgent and the furnace was so extremely hot, those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were themselves killed by the flames of the fire. ²³ Therefore, these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, fell, as they had been tied up, into the middle of the furnace of blazing fire.

²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar was amazed and quickly stood up. He asked his royal officials, "Did we not throw three men who were tied up into the middle of the fire?"

They replied to the king, "Certainly, Your Majesty."

²⁵ He said: "Look! I see four men walking untied in the middle of the fire, and they are unharmed. The fourth one also looks like a son of the gods."

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the opening of the furnace of blazing fire and said, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out and come here!"

Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the fire. ²⁷ The king's satraps, prefects, governors and royal officials gathered together and saw that the fire had had no effect on the bodies of these men. The hair on their heads had not been singed, their garments remained the same, and there was no smell of fire on them. ²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar said: "May the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be praised! He has sent His angel and has rescued His servants, who have

trusted in Him. They have defied the command of the king and have surrendered their bodies that they may not serve or worship any god except their own God.

²⁹ Therefore, I herewith give an order that any nation, tribe or language-group that says anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego will be cut into pieces, and their homes will be turned into piles of rubble. For there is no other god who can rescue like this.”

³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

4

A letter from Nebuchadnezzar about his insanity

¹ “From King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations and language-groups that live on the whole earth: May your prosperity increase! ² It has seemed good to me to tell about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. ³ How great are His miraculous signs! How mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and His dominion endures from generation to generation. ⁴ I, Nebuchadnezzar, was contented at my home and prosperous in my palace. ⁵ I had a dream that startled me. As I lay in bed the fantasies and the visions in my mind terrified me. ⁶ Therefore, I issued a command that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought in before me, that they might tell me what the dream meant. ⁷ Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans and the astrologers came in and I told them the dream. However, they could not tell me what it meant. ⁸ Finally, Daniel came in before me. He had been renamed ‘Beltshazzar’ after the name of my god. The spirit of the holy gods is in him. I told him the dream: ⁹ ‘Beltshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too difficult for you, tell me the visions that I saw in my dream, and explain to me what it means! ¹⁰ These are the visions in my head as I lay in bed: While I was looking, I saw a tree in the middle of the earth. It was very high. ¹¹ The tree grew large and became strong. Its top reached up to the sky, and it could be seen in the farthest parts of the whole world. ¹² Its leaves were beautiful, it had plenty of fruit, and there was enough food on it for everyone. The wild animals found shelter under it, **the birds of the sky lived in its branches**, and it fed every living creature.’

¹³ “While I was seeing the visions in my head as I was lying in bed, I saw a sentinel, a holy one, coming down from heaven. ¹⁴ He shouted loudly. This is what he said: ‘Cut the tree down and cut off its branches! Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit! The wild animals under it must run away, and the birds must leave its branches! ¹⁵ However, leave the stump and its roots in the ground, tied up with a band of iron and bronze in the grass of the open country! Let him become wet with the dew of the sky! Let him get his

share of the grass on the ground with the animals!

¹⁶ Let his mind be changed from that of a man, and let him be given the mind of an animal! Let him remain like this until seven periods of time pass over him!

¹⁷ The Decision has been made by the decree of the sentinels. The holy ones have announced this verdict that those who are living may know that the Most High has power over the kingdom of men, that He gives it to whomever He wishes and that He places the lowliest human beings in charge of it.”

¹⁸ “This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. You, Beltshazzar, must tell me what it means. For none of the wise men of my kingdom has been able to tell me what it means. However, you can. For the spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream about the large tree

¹⁹ “Then Daniel, whose name was Beltshazzar, was appalled for a while. What he was thinking frightened him. The king told him, ‘Beltshazzar, do not let the dream and what it means terrify you!’

“Beltshazzar answered, ‘My master, I wish that the dream were about those who hate you, and its meaning applied to your enemies! ²⁰ The tree that you saw, which grew large and became strong, so that its top reached up to the sky and so that it could be seen by the whole world, ²¹ which had beautiful leaves and plenty of fruit, which had enough food on it for everyone, under which the wild animals found shelter and **in the branches of which the birds of the sky lived**, ²² that tree is you, Your Majesty! You have grown great and become strong. Your greatness has grown and has reached up to the sky, and your dominion has reached the farthest parts of the world. ²³ Because the king saw a sentinel, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying: “Cut the tree down and destroy it but leave the stump and its roots in the ground, tied up with a band of iron and bronze in the grass of the open field, let him be wet with the dew of the sky and let him get his share with the wild animals until seven periods of time pass over him!” ²⁴ this is what it means, Your Majesty. It is a Decision of the Most High, which has been issued against my master, the king, ²⁵ People will drive you away from human beings so that you will live with wild animals. You will be made to eat grass like cattle. You will be wet with the dew of the sky. Seven periods of time will pass over you, until you acknowledge that the Most High has power over the kingdom of men and that He gives it to anyone He wishes. ²⁶ Moreover, since they commanded that the stump and the roots of the tree should be left, your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven is the ruler. ²⁷ Therefore, Your Majesty, let my advice be acceptable to you! Stop sinning, and do what is right! Cease committing your wrongs and show mercy to miserable people, that your prosperity may perhaps be prolonged!”

The humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar

²⁸ “All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹ Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ The king was prompted to say, ‘Is not this **the great Babylon**, which I myself have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the honour of my majesty?’”

³¹ “While the words were still in the king’s mouth, a voice came from heaven: ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, this is what you are told: “The kingdom has been taken from you. ³² You will be driven away from human beings and live with the wild animals. You will be made to eat grass like cattle. Seven periods of time will pass over you, until you acknowledge that the Most High has power over the kingdom of men, that He gives it to anyone He wishes.”’”

³³ “Immediately the prediction about Nebuchadnezzar came true. He was driven away from people and ate grass like cattle. Dew from the sky made his body wet until his hair grew as long as eagles’ feathers and his nails were like birds’ claws.

³⁴ “At the end of that time I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes to heaven, and my sanity came back to me. I blessed the Most High and praised and **glorified Him who lives for ever**. For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom lasts from generation to generation. ³⁵ All those who live on the earth are regarded as nothing, and He does whatever He pleases with the host of heaven and with those who live on the earth. No one can hold back His hand or ask Him, ‘What have you been doing?’”

³⁶ “At the same time my sanity came back to me. My majesty and splendour were also restored to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and my nobles came to me for help, my royal authority was established again for me, and I was made extraordinarily great. ³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and glorify the King of heaven. For everything that He does is true, and His Ways are just. He can humble those who act arrogantly.”

5

The handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar’s feast

¹ King Belshazzar made a large banquet for a thousand of his nobles and was drinking wine in their presence. ² When Belshazzar was under the influence of the wine, he commanded that the vessels of gold and of silver that his predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken from the Temple in Jerusalem should be brought, that the king, his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. ³ Then they brought in the golden vessels that had been taken out of the Temple, the house of God in Jerusalem. The king, his nobles, his wives and his concubines were drinking from them. ⁴ While they were drinking the wine, they praised **the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone**. ⁵ Suddenly, the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace, opposite the lampstand.

The king watched the back of the hand as it was writing. ⁶ Then the king became pale with fear, and his thoughts terrified him. His hip-joints lost their strength, and his knees knocked together. ⁷ The king called loudly for the enchanters, the Chaldeans and the astrologers to be brought in. The king told the wise men of Babylon: “Whoever reads this writing and tells me what it means will be clothed with purple cloth, will have a chain of gold around his neck and will be the third-highest ruler in the kingdom.”

⁸ Then all the king’s wise men came in but could not read the writing or tell the king what it meant. ⁹ Then King Belshazzar became very alarmed. His face turned pale, and his nobles were perplexed.

¹⁰ Because of the discussion between the king and his nobles, the queen came into the banquet hall. The queen said: “Your Majesty, live for ever! Do not let your thoughts alarm you and do not turn pale!

¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him. In the days of your predecessor, insight, understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods were found in him. Your predecessor, King Nebuchadnezzar, yes, your own predecessor, the king, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans and astrologers. ¹² For an outstanding spirit, knowledge and insight to tell the meaning of dreams, explain riddles and solve problems have been found in this Daniel. The king gave him the name ‘Belteshazzar.’ Now let Daniel be called! He will explain what it means.”

Daniel’s interpretation of the writing on the wall

¹³ Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king asked Daniel: “Are you Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, whom my predecessor, the king, brought from Judah? ¹⁴ I have heard about you, that you have the spirit of the gods in you and that insight, understanding and exceptional wisdom have been found in you. ¹⁵ Although the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and tell me what it means, they have not been able to explain what it means. ¹⁶ I have heard about you, that you can give interpretations and solve problems. If you can read the writing and explain to me what it means, you will be clothed with purple cloth, have a chain of gold around your neck and will be the third-highest ruler in the kingdom.”

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered the king: “Keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else! Nevertheless, I shall read the writing to the king and tell him what it means. ¹⁸ Your Majesty, the Most High God gave your predecessor, Nebuchadnezzar, kingship, greatness, honour and glory. ¹⁹ Because of the greatness that He had given him, all peoples, nations and language-groups used to tremble and be afraid in his presence. He used to kill whomever he wanted to kill and let live whomever he wanted to let live. He used to raise up whomever he wanted to raise up and used to humble whomever he wanted to hum-

ble. ²⁰ However, when he became arrogant and overbearing, so that he behaved presumptuously, he was deposed from his royal throne. His glory was taken away from him. ²¹ He was driven away from people and his mind became like an animal's. He lived with the wild donkeys. He was fed grass like cattle, and the dew from the sky wet his body, until he acknowledged that the Most High God has power over the kingdom of men and appoints over it anyone whom He wishes. ²² However, you, his successor, Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, although you have known all this. ²³ Rather, you have risen up against the Lord of heaven. The vessels of His Temple have also been brought here before you and you, your nobles, your wives and your concubines have been using them to drink wine. You have been praising the **gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood and stone**, which do not see, hear or understand, but have not honoured the God who holds in His hand the breath of your life and to whom all your ways belong.

²⁴ "Therefore, the part of a hand and this writing, which has been written, have been sent from His presence. ²⁵ This is what has been written: 'Mene, Mene, Tekel and Parsin.'¹⁵⁴ ²⁶ This is what these Words mean: 'Mene': God has numbered your kingdom and brought it to an end. ²⁷ 'Tekel', you have been weighed in the scales and found lacking. ²⁸ 'Peres', your kingdom has been divided and will be given to the Medes and Persians."

²⁹ Then Belshazzar ordered that Daniel should be clothed with purple cloth, that a chain of gold should be put around his neck and that a proclamation should be made about him, that he should be the third-highest ruler in the kingdom. ³⁰ That very night Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was killed. ³¹ Darius, the Mede, took over the kingdom when he was sixty-two years old.

6

Daniel's rescue from the lions' den

¹ Darius decided that it would be good to appoint one hundred and twenty satraps over the kingdom, to hold office throughout the kingdom. ² He also set three administrators over them, and Daniel was one of these. The satraps were to submit an account to them, that the king's interests might not be impaired. ³ Then this Daniel distinguished himself more than all the other administrators and satraps, because he had an exceptional spirit in him. The king planned to appoint him over the whole kingdom. ⁴ Then the other administrators and the satraps tried to find a legal basis for a charge against Daniel about the kingdom but could not find any legal basis for a charge or any other fault. For he was trustworthy. No negligence or fault was found in him. ⁵ Then these men said, "We shall not

find any basis for a legal charge against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the Law of his God."

⁶ Then these other administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and told him: "King Darius, live for ever! ⁷ All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects, the satraps, the state advisers and the governors have come to an agreement that the king shall issue a decree and enforce an injunction, that whoever makes a petition to any god or human being for thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the den of lions. ⁸ Now, Your Majesty, establish the injunction and put it in writing, that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be repealed!"

⁹ Therefore, King Darius signed the written injunction. ¹⁰ When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went to his house, where he had windows in his upper room that opened towards Jerusalem. He continued to get down on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks to his God, as he had been doing previously. ¹¹ Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying to his God and asking Him for help. ¹² Then they approached the king and spoke to him about the king's decree: "Your Majesty, did you not sign an injunction, that anyone who makes a petition to any god or human being for thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, should be thrown into the den of lions?"

The king answered, "The matter is well established, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed."

¹³ Then they answered the king: "Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, has not been paying any attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the injunction that you have signed. He continues to make his prayer three times a day."

¹⁴ When the king heard this, he was very distressed. He determined to rescue Daniel and kept trying to save him until the sun went down. ¹⁵ Then these men went to the king as a group and told him, "Realise, Your Majesty, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no injunction or edict that the king establishes can be changed."

¹⁶ Then the king gave an order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the den of lions. The king told Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve constantly, rescue you!"

¹⁷ A stone was brought and laid over the entrance to the den. The king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, to prevent any change being made in Daniel's situation. ¹⁸ Then the king went to his palace and spent the night without eating. Nothing was brought to him to entertain him, and he could not sleep. ¹⁹ Then, at the first light of dawn, the king got up and went quickly to the lions' den. ²⁰ When he came near the den where Daniel was,

¹⁵⁴ "Mene, Mene, Tekel and Parsin" means, "Numbered, Numbered, Weighed and Divided."

the king called to Daniel in an anguished voice: “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve constantly, been able to **save you from the lions?**”

²¹ Then Daniel replied to the king: “Your Majesty, may you live for ever! ²² My God has sent His angel and has shut the **lions’ mouths**, and they have not hurt me, because I have been found innocent before Him. Your Majesty, I have also not committed anything that you might consider a crime.”

²³ Then the king was very glad about him. He commanded that Daniel should be brought up out of the den. When Daniel had been brought up out of the den, he was found to be completely unharmed, because he had trusted in his God. ²⁴ Then the king commanded that those men who had laid charges against Daniel should be brought. They, their children and their wives were thrown into the den of lions. The lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones before they reached the bottom of the den. ²⁵ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and language-groups that were living all over the world: “May your prosperity increase! ²⁶ I have issued a command, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the **living God and endures for ever**. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and His dominion will last to the end. ²⁷ He rescues and saves. He performs miraculous signs and wonders in heaven and on earth. He has **rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.**”

²⁸ This man, Daniel, was successful during the reign of Darius and during the reign of Cyrus, the Persian.

7

Daniel’s vision about four kingdoms and the Son of Man

¹ In the first year of Belshazzar, the king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and had visions in his head while he was on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the main parts of it. ² Daniel began to speak: “In my visions at night I saw **the four winds** of the sky stirring up the Great Sea. ³ Four large **animals**, each one different from the others, **came up out of the sea.** ⁴ “The first was **like a lion** but it had the wings of an eagle. I kept watching until its wings were torn off and it was lifted up from the ground. It was made to stand on two feet like a human being and was given a human mind.

⁵ “Then I saw another different animal, **like a bear**. It was raised on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, ‘Get up and devour much meat!’

⁶ “After this I saw that there was another. It looked **like a leopard**. It had four wings of a bird on its back. The animal also had four heads and was given authority to rule.

⁷ “After this, I saw a fourth **animal** in the visions during the night. It was dreadful, terrifying and extremely strong. It had large iron teeth. It devoured, crushed

and tramped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the other animals that had been before it and **had ten horns**. ⁸ While I was thinking about the horns, I saw that another little horn came up among them. It plucked out three of the first horns. I saw that this horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and **a mouth that spoke boastful words**. ⁹ **I kept watching until thrones** were put in place, and the Ancient of Days **was seated**. His clothes were **as white as snow**, and **the hair on His head was like pure wool**. His throne was **flaming with fire**, and its wheels were **blazing with fire**. ¹⁰ A river of fire was flowing and was coming out in front of Him. **A thousand thousands** were attending Him. **Ten thousand times ten thousand** stood in front of Him. The law-court was seated, and **the books were opened**. ¹¹ I continued to watch then, because of **the sound of the boastful words** that the horn was speaking. I continued to watch until the animal was killed. Its body was destroyed and put into a blazing fire. ¹² The rest of the animals had their dominion taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. ¹³ When I continued to watch in visions during the night, I saw **Someone like the Son of Man coming among the clouds of heaven**. He approached the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. ¹⁴ Then **dominion, glory** and a kingdom were given to Him, that all **peoples, nations and language-groups** might serve Him. His dominion is an **everlasting** dominion, which will not pass away, and **His kingdom** is one that will not be destroyed.”

¹⁵ As for me, Daniel, my spirit inside me became distressed, and the visions in my head frightened me. ¹⁶ I went up to one of those who were standing there and asked him for the truth about all this. So, he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ “These four large animals are four kings who will arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ However, the holy people of the Most High God will receive the kingdom and **take possession of the kingdom** for ever, yes, **for ever and ever.**”

¹⁹ Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others. It was most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws. It devoured and crushed its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. ²⁰ I also wished to know about **the ten horns** that were on its head and about the other horn that came up, and before which three of them fell. That horn had eyes and **a mouth that spoke boastfully**. It seemed to be larger than the others.

²¹ As I continued to watch, this horn was **making war against the holy people and was defeating them**. ²² It did this until the Ancient of Days came, and a verdict was pronounced in favour of the holy people of the Most High. The time came when **the holy people took possession of the kingdom**. ²³ This is what he said: “The fourth animal will be the fourth king-

dom on the earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms. It will devour the whole earth, trample it down and crush it. ²⁴ **The ten horns are ten kings** that will arise out of this kingdom. Another king will arise after them. He will be different from the previous ones. He will subdue three kings. ²⁵ He will speak words against the Most High. He will wear down the holy people of the Most High. He will plan to change the sacred occasions and the Law. The holy people will be handed over to him for **a time and times and half a time**. ²⁶ Nevertheless, the judicial assembly will sit, and his dominion will be taken away. He will be consumed and permanently destroyed. ²⁷ The kingdom, the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people who are **the holy ones** of the Most High. His **kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom** and all dominions will serve and obey Him.”

²⁸ This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was greatly terrified by my thoughts. My face turned pale but I kept the information in my mind.

8

Daniel's vision about the ram and the goat

¹ In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, I, Daniel, saw a vision. It came after the one that had appeared to me on the previous occasion. ² I saw in the vision that, while I was looking, I was in the fortified palace at Susa, which is in the province of Elam. I also saw in the vision that I was beside the Ulai Canal. ³ When I looked up I suddenly saw a ram standing in front of the canal. It had two horns, and both horns were long. However, one was longer than the other, and the longer one had grown up later. ⁴ I saw the ram butting westwards, northwards and southwards. No other animals could stand in front of it and none could rescue from its power. He did whatever he pleased and became great. ⁵ While I was thinking about this, I saw that a male goat was coming from the west. It came across the whole world without touching the ground. The goat had a prominent horn between its eyes. ⁶ It came up to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing in front of the canal. It charged at the ram in its furious power. ⁷ I saw it coming closer to the ram. It became furious with the ram, butted it and broke its two horns. The ram did not have the strength to stand up against it. The goat threw it down to the ground and trampled on it. No one could rescue the ram from the goat's power. ⁸ Then the goat became very great. However, when it became powerful, the long horn was broken off. Four prominent horns grew in its place, pointing towards the four winds of the sky. ⁹ A little horn came out of one of them. It grew extremely large towards the south, towards the east and towards the Beautiful Land. ¹⁰ It grew as high as the starry host of the sky. It **threw some of the stars of the heavenly host down to the ground** and trampled on them. ¹¹ It became as

great as the Prince of the heavenly host. It took away the regular offering from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was violated. ¹² Because of this wrongdoing an army was being assigned to oppose the regular offering. It threw what was true down to the ground. It was successful when it did this. ¹³ Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one asked the one who was speaking: “How long will the vision last about the regular offering, the wrongdoing that causes devastation and the surrender of the Holy Place and the army to be trampled underfoot?”

¹⁴ He told me: “It will last two thousand, three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the Holy Place will be declared to be in its rightful state.”

Gabriel's interpretation of the vision

¹⁵ When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I tried to understand it. Then I saw someone who looked like a man standing in front of me. ¹⁶ I heard a man's voice above the middle of the Ulai. It called out, “Gabriel, explain the vision to that person!”

¹⁷ He came near the place where I was standing. When he came, I was terrified and fell face-down. However, he told me, “Son of man, understand that the vision refers to the time of the end.”

¹⁸ While he was speaking to me, I was stunned, with my face on the ground. However, he touched me and made me stand up. ¹⁹ He said: “Look! I shall tell you what will happen in the last time of anger. For it refers to the time fixed for the end. ²⁰ The ram that you saw with the two horns is the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹ The male goat is the king of Greece. The large horn between his eyes is the first king. ²² The horn that was broken off and the four others that came up to replace it mean that four kingdoms will emerge from that nation but will not be as powerful as it had been. ²³ At the end of their kingdom, when the wrongdoers have reached their full measure, a king with a defiant face, who has a good knowledge of intrigue, will arise. ²⁴ He will become very powerful but not by his own strength. He will cause astounding destruction and will be successful in what he does. He will destroy powerful men and the nation of the holy people. ²⁵ He will use his cunning to cause deceit to be successful and will consider himself superior. He will destroy many who thought that they were secure. He will stand up against the Prince of princes but will be broken, although not by human agency. ²⁶ The vision that has been told about the evenings and the mornings is true. However, you must seal up the vision! For it refers to the distant future.”

²⁷ I, Daniel, was exhausted and was overcome by sickness for some days. Then I got up and attended to the king's business. However, the vision amazed me, and I did not understand it.

9

Daniel's prayer about Jerusalem

¹ It was in the first year of Darius, the son of Xerxes,

who was descended from the Medes and who became ruler over the kingdom of Babylon. ² In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, learned from the Scriptures the number of years that had to elapse, according to the Word of the LORD to the prophet Jeremiah. The devastation of Jerusalem was going to last for seventy years. ³ Then I turned my face to the Lord God. I pleaded with Him, by prayer and pleas for mercy, with fasting and in sackcloth and ashes. ⁴ I prayed to the LORD, my God, and made a confession. I said: "Please, Lord, You great and awesome God! You keep Your Covenant and faithful love with those who love You and keep Your Commandments. ⁵ We have been sinning, doing wrong, making ourselves guilty and rebelling. We have been turning away from Your Commandments and Your Decisions. ⁶ We have not been listening to **Your servants, the prophets**, who have been speaking in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the common people. ⁷ Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but, as is so today, open shame belongs to us, to the men of Judah, to those who used to live in Jerusalem, to all Israel, to those who are near and to those who are far away, in all the lands where You have driven them, because they have been violating their obligations to You. ⁸ LORD, open shame belongs to us, to our kings, to our princes and to our fathers, because we have sinned against You. ⁹ Compassion and pardon belong to the Lord, our God. For we have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰ We have not been listening to the voice of the LORD, our God, and have not been living according to His Laws, which He set before us through **His servants, the prophets**. ¹¹ All Israel has been overstepping Your Law, turning away and refusing to listen to Your voice. Therefore, the sworn curse, which has been written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, has gushed out over us. For we have sinned against Him. ¹² He has confirmed His Words, which He has threatened against us and against our rulers, who governed us, by bringing a great calamity on us. For nothing has been done in the whole world like what has been done in Jerusalem. ¹³ As Scripture has said in the Law of Moses, this entire calamity has come on us. Nevertheless, we have not been trying to win the favour of the LORD, our God, by turning from our wrongs and by paying close attention to Your truth. ¹⁴ Therefore, the LORD has remained intent on the calamity and has brought it on us. For the LORD, our God, is righteous in all the works that He has done, but we have not been listening to His voice. ¹⁵ "Now, therefore, Lord, our God, although You have brought Your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as is so today, we have sinned and acted wickedly. ¹⁶ Lord, according to all Your righteous acts, please let Your anger and Your fury turn away from Your city, Jerusalem, Your holy mountain! For Jerusalem and Your

people are scorned by all who are around us because of our sins and the wrongdoings of our fathers. ¹⁷ Now therefore, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and his supplications for favour! For Your own sake, Lord, look favourably on Your Holy Place, which is lying in ruins! ¹⁸ O my God, bend Your ear towards us and listen! Open Your eyes and look at our desolate places and at the city that has Your name invoked over it! For we are not presenting our supplications for favour in Your presence because we rely on our own righteousness but because we rely on Your great compassion. ¹⁹ Lord, hear! Lord, forgive! Lord, listen attentively and act! My God, do not delay, for Your own sake! For Your name has been invoked over Your city and over Your people."

The answer to Daniel's prayer brought by Gabriel

²⁰ While I was still speaking, praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my plea for mercy for the holy mountain of my God before the LORD, my God, ²¹ while I was still saying the prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the earlier vision, reached me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. ²² He gave me an explanation and told me: "Daniel, I have now come out to give insight and understanding to you. ²³ When you began your pleas for mercy a Message went out, and I myself have come to tell it to you. For you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the Message and understand the vision! ²⁴ 'Seventy sets of seven time-periods have been determined for your people and your holy city, to bring the rebellion to an end, to put a stop to sin, to atone for wrongdoing, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to put a seal on vision and prophecy and to anoint the holy of holies. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand that, from the pronouncement of the Command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, a Prince, there will be seven sets of seven time-periods. For sixty-two sets of seven time-periods, it will be restored and rebuilt with squares and ditches but in times of distress. ²⁶ After the sixty-two sets of seven time-periods, the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the Holy Place. Its end will come with a flood, and until the end there will be war. Destructive things have been determined. ²⁷ He will make a strong covenant with many people for one set of seven time-periods. In the middle of the seven time-periods he will put an end to sacrifices and offerings. On the wing of **disgusting things** someone will come **who causes desolation** until the complete destruction. What has been determined will pour out on the **one who causes desolation.**'"

10

The arrival of an angel with a message for Daniel

¹ In the third year of Cyrus, the king of Persia, a Message was revealed to Daniel, who had been renamed

“Beltshazzar.” The Message was true. It was about a great war. He began to understand the Message and received insight during the vision. ² In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three full weeks. ³ I did not eat any tasty food. No meat or wine entered my mouth. I did not use any lotions at all until the full three weeks were over. ⁴ On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, I was on the bank of the great river, the Tigris. ⁵ When I looked up, I suddenly saw a **Man dressed** in linen, who **had a belt of fine gold** from Uphaz **around His waist**. ⁶ His body was like beryl. His face looked like lightning. **His eyes were like flaming torches**. His arms and the place where His feet were **gleamed like polished bronze**. **When He spoke**, His voice **sounded like** the roar of a crowd. ⁷ I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision. The men who were with me did not see the vision but began to tremble violently, ran away and hid themselves. ⁸ I was left alone when I saw this great vision. However, I had no strength left in me. My complexion turned deathly pale, and I lost all my strength. ⁹ Then I heard the sound of His Words. When I heard the sound of His Words, I fainted face-down on the ground. ¹⁰ Suddenly a hand touched me and set me trembling on my knees and on the palms of my hands. ¹¹ He said to me: “Daniel, highly esteemed man, understand the Words that I am speaking to you! Stand up where you are! For I have now been sent to you.” When he said this to me, I stood up trembling. ¹² He told me: “Do not be afraid, Daniel! For since the first day when you set your mind to understand and to humble yourself before your God, what you have been saying has been heard, and I myself have come because of what you have been saying. ¹³ The prince of the Persian kingdom kept opposing me for twenty one days, but then **Michael**, the first of the leading princes, came to help me, because I had remained behind there against the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, because the vision refers to times that are still to come.”

¹⁵ When he had told me these things, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was struck dumb.

¹⁶ When suddenly someone who looked like a human being touched my lips, I opened my mouth and began to speak. I told the one who was standing in front of me: “My master, my pains have overwhelmed me because of the vision, and I have no strength left.

¹⁷ How can I, my master’s servant, speak to you, my master? For now I have no strength remaining in me, and no breath is left in me.”

A prophecy of events in Persia, Greece, Egypt and Aram

¹⁸ The one who looked like a human being touched me again and gave me strength. ¹⁹ He said: “Do not be afraid! You are a highly esteemed man. Peace be with you! Be strong! Yes, be strong!”

While he was speaking to me, I became stronger. I

said: “Let my master speak! For you have strengthened me.”

²⁰ He asked: “Do you know why I have come to you? Now, however, I shall return to fight against the prince of Persia. Look! While I am out there, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹ However, I shall tell you what is recorded in the document of truth. No one is supporting me against these princes except Michael, the prince over your people.”

11

¹ “In the first year of Darius the Mede, I myself stood up to confirm and protect him.

A prediction that Greece will conquer Persia

² “Now I shall tell you the truth. Look! Three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth one will be much richer than all of the others have been. When he has become powerful through his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece. ³ Then a mighty king will appear, who will rule over a vast empire and do as he pleases. ⁴ When he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and divided in the direction of the four winds of the sky. It will not go to his descendants. It will not exercise the authority with which he ruled. For his kingdom will be uprooted and go to others besides these.

Prophecies about the Seleucid kings of Aram and the Ptolemies of Egypt

⁵ “Then the king of the south will become strong. Then one of his princes will be stronger than he. He will rule and have authority over a large kingdom.

⁶ After some years they will make an alliance. The daughter of the king of the south will go to the king of the north to make an alliance. However, she will not hold on to her power and authority. He and his power will not last. She, together with her attendants and the one who had fathered and protected her during those times will be handed over.

⁷ “Someone who is a branch from her roots will arise in his place. He will attack the army of the north and enter the stronghold of its king. When he assaults them he will be victorious. ⁸ He will also capture their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold and take them away to Egypt. For some years he will stay away from the king of the north. ⁹ Then the king of the north will invade the kingdom of the king of the south but retreat to his own land.

¹⁰ “Then his sons will prepare for war. They will assemble many large armies. They will keep on coming like a flood, pass through and again carry on the war as far as his stronghold. ¹¹ Then the king of the south will become furious, come out and fight against the king of the north. Although he will put a large army in position, it will be handed over to the southern king.

¹² When that large army has been cleared away, the southern king will become conceited. Although he brings tens of thousands to ruin, he will not continue to be strong. ¹³ The king of the north will set in posi-

tion a larger army than the first one. After some years have passed, he will come on with a large army and many supplies.

¹⁴ “In those times many people will rebel against the king of the south. Violent men among your own people will rise up, so that they will fulfil this vision but will fail. ¹⁵ Then the king of the north will come, heap up assault-ramps and capture a well-fortified city. The forces of the south will not be able to resist. Even their best troops will not be strong enough to resist. ¹⁶ He who is attacking him will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to stand firm against him. He will take his position in the Beautiful Land and will have the power to destroy it completely. ¹⁷ He will decide to invade with the might of his entire kingdom. He will bring the terms of an agreement and enforce them. He will give the king of the south a young woman in marriage to overthrow the kingdom. However, the plan will not succeed, and the kingdom will not become his. ¹⁸ Afterwards he will turn his attention to the coastlands and capture many of them. However, a commander will put an end to his insolence. Instead, he will turn his insolence back on him. ¹⁹ Then he will turn back towards the fortresses of his own land. However, he will stumble, fall and not be seen any longer.

²⁰ “Then another will arise in his place. He will send a tax collector through the Glorious Kingdom. However, he will be destroyed within a few days, although not in anger or in war.

A prophecy about Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 BC)

²¹ “A despicable person will arise in his place. Royal majesty will not be given to him. He will come in when people are unsuspecting and seize the kingship through intrigues. ²² Overwhelming forces will be swept away before him and smashed, including the prince of the Covenant. ²³ After an alliance has been made with him, he will act deceitfully and rise to power with only a few people. ²⁴ When no one expects him he will come into the richest parts of the province and will do what neither his fathers nor his fathers’ fathers have done. He will distribute plunder, spoil and wealth among them. He will invent his clever plans against fortifications, but it will be for only a little while. ²⁵ He will stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army. The king of the south will prepare for war with a great and extremely powerful army. However, he will not be able to stand, because clever schemes will be concocted against him. ²⁶ People who eat the king’s rich food will ruin him. His army will be overwhelmed, and many will die in battle. ²⁷ Both kings will plan to do evil. They will tell lies while they are at the same table. However, there will be no success, because the end will still come at the appointed time. ²⁸ He will return to his own land with great wealth. He will be determined to oppose the holy Covenant. When he has carried that out, he will return to his own country.

²⁹ “At the appointed time he will again invade the south, but the later time will be different from the first. ³⁰ When ships come against him from the coastlands, he will be afraid and withdraw. Then he will carry out his anger against the holy Covenant. When he returns, he will show favour to those who forsake the holy Covenant. ³¹ Forces sent by him will appear and desecrate the Holy Place, the stronghold. He will abolish the regular offering. People **will set up the abomination that causes devastation**. ³² He will use smooth words to corrupt those who violate the Covenant. However, the people who know their God will stand firm and take action. ³³ Those who have insight among the people will enable many people to understand. However, for some days the sword, flame, captivity and confiscation will bring them down. ³⁴ When they stumble, they will receive a little help, but many others who are not sincere will join them. ³⁵ Some of those who have insight will also be brought down, that these things may refine them, purify and make them white, until the time of the end. For the end is still waiting for the appointed time.

³⁶ “The king will do as he pleases. **He will lift himself up proudly** and boast **against every god**. He will speak amazing things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the indignation has come to an end. For what has been determined will be carried out. ³⁷ He will pay no attention to the gods of his fathers or to the one dearly loved by women. He will not pay attention to any god at all. For he will exalt himself against anything else. ³⁸ He will honour the god of fortresses instead of these. He will honour a god whom his fathers have not known with gold, silver, precious stones and other valuable things. ³⁹ He will attack secure fortifications with the help of a foreign god. He will highly honour those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and distribute land as a reward.

⁴⁰ “At the time of the end the king of the south will wage war against him. However, the king of the north will storm against him with chariots, horses and many ships. He will invade countries and sweep through them like a flood. ⁴¹ He will invade the Beautiful Land. Tens of thousands will be brought down. However, these will escape from him: Edom, Moab and the chief part of the Ammonites. ⁴² He will extend his power against various countries, and Egypt will not escape. ⁴³ He will gain control over the treasures of gold and of silver and all the other valuable things of Egypt. The Libyans and the Cushites will follow in his footsteps. ⁴⁴ However, rumours from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will go out with great fury to destroy and exterminate many people. ⁴⁵ He will pitch his royal tents between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain. Nevertheless, he will come to his end, and no one will help him.”

12

A prophecy about the time of the end

¹ “At that time **Michael, the great prince**, who stands to protect the descendants of your people, will rise up. **There will be a time of distress unlike any that has occurred since** there has been a nation **until that time**. Nevertheless, at that time each one of your people who is found written in the book will be rescued. ² Many of those who are asleep in the land of dust will wake up, **some to everlasting life** and **others** to shame and **everlasting** abhorrence. ³ Moreover, those who have insight **will shine like** the bright dome of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever.

The sealing up of the Words

⁴ “As for you, Daniel, keep the Words secret and **seal the book** until the time of the end. Many people will go here and there, and knowledge will increase.”

⁵ When I, Daniel, looked, I saw two others standing there. One was on this bank of the river, and the other was on the other bank of the river. ⁶ One of them asked the man who was dressed in linen clothes and who was above the water of the river, “How long will it be until the end of these wonderful events?”

⁷ Then I heard the Man clothed in linen, who was

above the water of the river. **He raised His right hand** and his left hand **towards heaven and swore by Him who lives for ever** that it would be **for a unit of time, units of time** and **half a unit of time** and that all these things would come to an end when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end.

⁸ Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I asked, “My master, what will be the outcome of these things?”

⁹ He replied: “Go your way, Daniel! For **the Words** have been kept secret and **sealed up** until the time of the end. ¹⁰ Many will be purified, made white and refined, but wicked people will act wickedly. None of the wicked people will understand, but those who have insight will understand. ¹¹ From the time when the regular offering is abolished and **the abomination that causes devastation** is set up there will be one thousand, two hundred and ninety days. ¹² **Blessed is he who is patient** and arrives at the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-five days! ¹³ You yourself, however, go your way until the end! You will rest and arise for your allotted inheritance at the end of the days.”

HOSEA

1

¹ This is the Word of the LORD that came to Hosea, the son of Beerī, at the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, were the kings of Judah and at the time when Jeroboam, the son of Joash, was the king of Israel.

The marriage of Hosea to a prostitute

² When the LORD began to speak through Hosea, the LORD told Hosea: “Go, marry a prostitute! Have children from a prostitute! For the land is certainly living as a prostitute by abandoning the LORD.”

³ So, Hosea went and married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim. She became pregnant and bore him a son.

⁴ Then the LORD told Hosea: “Name him ‘Jezreel!’^{*155} For in a little while I shall call the family of Jehu to account for the murders in Jezreel and put an end to the kingdom of the family of Israel. ⁵ On that day I shall break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel.”

⁶ Gomer became pregnant again and gave birth to a daughter. God told him: “Name her ‘**Lo Ruhamah!**’^{*156} For I shall **no longer have compassion on the family of Israel**, to forgive them at all. ⁷ Nevertheless, I shall have compassion on the family of Judah and save them through the LORD, their God. However, I shall not use a bow, a sword, a battle, horses or horsemen to save them.”

⁸ After Gomer had weaned Not-Having-Received-Compassion, she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. ⁹ God said: “Name him ‘**Lo-Ammi!**’^{*157} For you are **not My people**, and I shall have nothing to do with you. ¹⁰ **Nevertheless, the Israelites will become as numerous as the sand beside the sea**, which cannot be measured or counted. **In the place where they used to be called, ‘Not-My-people,’ they will be called, ‘The-Children-of-the-Living-God.’** ¹¹ The people of Judah and the people of Israel will assemble, appoint one leader for themselves and withdraw from the land. For the day of Jezreel will be great.

2

¹ “Name your brothers, ‘**Ammi!**’^{*158} and your sisters, ‘**Ruhamah!**’^{*159}

God’s declaration that Israel, His unfaithful wife, will be punished

² “Rebuke your mother! Rebuke her! For she is not My wife, and I am not her husband. She should get rid of the look of a prostitute on her face and should remove her marks of fornication from between her breasts!

³ Otherwise I shall strip her naked and make her bare, as she was on the day when she was born. I shall make her like a desert, make her like a dry land and kill her

with thirst. ⁴ I shall have no compassion on her children, because they are the children of prostitution. ⁵ For their mother has been committing fornication. She who was pregnant with them has been acting shamefully. For she has been saying, ‘I shall follow my lovers, who give me my food, my water, my wool, my linen, my olive-oil and my drinks.’

⁶ “Therefore, look! I shall obstruct your way with thorn-bushes. I shall block her off with a wall, to prevent her from finding her paths. ⁷ Although she chases her lovers, she will not catch up with them. Although she searches for them, she will not find them. Then she will say, ‘I shall leave and go back to my previous husband. For it was better for me then than it is now.’

⁸ “She did not recognise that I Myself had been giving her the grain, the new wine and the olive-oil. I had been generously supplying her with silver and gold, but people have been using them for Baal. ⁹ Therefore, I shall take back My grain when it is ripe and My new wine when it is in season. I shall take away My wool and My linen, which had been meant to cover her naked body. ¹⁰ Now therefore, I shall expose her genitals while her lovers are watching, and no one will rescue her from Me. ¹¹ I shall put an end to all her gaiety, her feasts, her celebrations of the New Moon, her Sabbaths, yes, all her appointed feasts. ¹² I shall lay waste her grapevines and her fig-trees. She had said about them, ‘These are my hire for prostitution, which my lovers have given me.’ I shall turn them into a thicket, and the wild animals will devour them. ¹³ I shall call her to account for the feast days of the Baals, when she used to burn offerings to them, when she adorned herself with her nose-ring and her jewellery, when she chased after her lovers and forgot Me,” declares the LORD.

A promise of mercy for Israel

¹⁴ “Therefore, look! I shall persuade her. I shall lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her. ¹⁵ There I shall give her vineyards to her. I shall make the Valley of Achor^{*160} a doorway of hope. There she will be responsive, as she was when she was young, as she was when she came up out of Egypt. ¹⁶ On that day,” declares the LORD, “you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ and you will not call Me ‘My Baal’^{*161} any longer. ¹⁷ I shall remove the names of the Baals from her mouth. They will not be remembered by their names any longer. ¹⁸ On that day I shall make a covenant for them with the wild animals, with the birds in the sky and with the creatures that crawl on the ground. I shall abolish bows, swords and war from the land and make them lie down in safety. ¹⁹ I shall betroth you to Myself for ever. I shall betroth you to Myself in righteousness, in justice, in faithful love and in compassion. ²⁰ I shall betroth you to Myself in faithfulness. Then

¹⁵⁵ Jezreel was one of the chief cities in the Northern Kingdom.

¹⁵⁶ “Lo Ruhamah” means: “Not Having Received Compassion” or “Unloved.”

¹⁵⁷ “Lo Ammi” means “Not my people.”

¹⁵⁸ “Ammi” means “My people.”

¹⁵⁹ “Ruhamah” means “Having Received Mercy,” or “Loved.”

¹⁶⁰ “Achor” means “trouble.”

¹⁶¹ “My Baal” means “My master.”

you will know the LORD.

²¹ “On that day I shall answer,” declares the LORD. “I shall respond willingly to the skies, and they will respond willingly to the earth. ²² The earth will respond willingly to the grain, the new wine and the olive-oil, and they will respond willingly to Jezreel. ²³ I shall sow her in the land for Myself. **I shall have compassion on Not Having Received Compassion. I shall name Not My People ‘You are My People.’** Then My people will say, ‘You are my God.’”

3

Hosea's renewal of love to his unfaithful wife

¹ The LORD told me: “Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and who is an adulteress, as the LORD loves the Israelites, although they keep turning to other gods and love sacred raisin-cakes.”

² Therefore, I bought her for myself for one hundred and eighty grams of silver and five hundred and ten litres of barley.

³ I told her: “You must stay at home as mine for a long time! You shall not be a prostitute or be intimate with any other man, and I shall be faithful to you. ⁴ For the Israelites shall stay at home for a long time without a king or a prince, without a sacrifice or a sacred stone, without an ephod or any household-gods! ⁵ After that, the Israelites will return and be intent on the LORD, their God and David, their king. They will come in fear to the LORD and to His blessings in the last days.”

4

God's legal case against Israel

¹ Listen to the Word of the LORD, Israelites! For the LORD has a lawsuit against the people who are living in the land. For there is no faithfulness, no faithful love and no knowledge of God in the land. ² There are cursing, lying, murdering, stealing and committing adultery. People have been acting violently, and one murder has been following another. ³ Therefore, the land is drying up, and everyone who is living in it is withering away. The wild animals, the birds of the sky and even the fish in the sea are declining. ⁴ Nevertheless, no one should bring a legal action! No one should rebuke anyone else! Your people are like those who are in conflict with a priest.

⁵ “You will stumble during the day. The prophet will also stumble with you during the night.

“I shall also destroy your mother. ⁶ My people have been destroyed because they lack knowledge. For you have rejected knowledge. I shall also reject you, so that you will not be My priest. You have forgotten the Law of your God. I Myself shall also forget your children.

⁷ The more numerous they have become, the more they have been sinning against Me. I shall change their glory into shame.” ⁸ They feed on the sin-offering of My people. They want them to keep on sinning. ⁹ The people and the priests will be alike. I shall call them to account for their behaviour and pay them back for what

they have been doing.”

¹⁰ Although they eat, they will not be satisfied. Although they have been committing fornication, they will not increase in numbers. For they have stopped paying attention to the LORD. ¹¹ Prostitution, wine and new wine are taking away their understanding. ¹² My people are consulting their pieces of wood. Their staffs are making predictions for them. For a spirit of prostitution has been leading them astray. They have been engaging in prostitution instead of adhering to their God. ¹³ They are sacrificing on the tops of the mountains and burning offerings on the hills, under oaks, poplars and terebinths, because they provide good shade. That is why your daughters are engaging in prostitution and your daughters-in-law are committing adultery.

¹⁴ “I shall not punish your daughters when they engage in prostitution or your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery.”

For the men themselves are going aside with prostitutes and offering sacrifices with shrine-prostitutes. A people that does not understand will come to ruin.

¹⁵ Israel, if you are engaging in prostitution, Judah should not become guilty. Do not go to Gilgal! Do not go up to Beth-Aven! Do not swear an oath using, “As surely as the LORD lives!” ¹⁶ Israel have been as stubborn as a stubborn cow. Will the LORD now shepherd them like lambs in a spacious pasture? ¹⁷ Ephraim have become allied with idols. Leave him¹⁶² alone! ¹⁸ When their drinks have run out, they have indulged in prostitution. Their rulers dearly love what is shameful. ¹⁹ A wind will wrap that country in its wings, and they will be ashamed because of their sacrifices.”

5

The announcement of a verdict against Israel

¹ “You priests, listen to this! Family of Israel, pay close attention! You royal family, use your ears! For the judgment concerns you. For you have been a trapping-net at Mizpah, and a net has been spread out on Tabor. ² Rebels have become deeply involved in slaughter, but I shall discipline all of them. ³ I Myself know Ephraim, and Israel has not been hidden from Me.”

For now, Ephraim, you have been practising prostitution. Israel has defiled himself. ⁴ What they are doing does not allow them to return to their God. For the spirit of prostitution is in their hearts, and they do not know the LORD. ⁵ The arrogance of Israel has been testifying against them. Israel and Ephraim stumble in their sin. Judah has also been stumbling with them. ⁶ Although they go to search for the LORD with their flocks and herds, they will not find Him. He has withdrawn from them. ⁷ They have been treating the LORD treacherously. For they have given birth to illegitimate children. Now the New Moon will devour them with their allot-

¹⁶² In the book of Hosea references to Israel, Ephraim and Judah vary from singular to plural.

ted portions.

An announcement that God will punish Israel and Judah for their sin

⁸ Blow the horn in Gibeah! Blow the trumpet in Ramah! Give a loud signal at Beth-Aven! Look out behind you, Benjamin! ⁹ Ephraim will become a wasteland on the day of punishment.

“I have made known what is certain among the tribes of Israel. ¹⁰ The princes of Judah have become like those who move boundary markers. “I shall pour out My wrath on them like water.” ¹¹ Ephraim has been oppressed and crushed in judgment, because he has been determined to pursue worthless idols.

¹² “However, I shall be like a clothes-moth to Ephraim. I shall be like decay to the family of Judah.”

¹³ When Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah saw his ulcer, Ephraim went to Assyria. He sent to the great king for help. However, he cannot cure you people or heal your ulcers.

¹⁴ “For I shall be like a lion to Ephraim and like a young lion to the family of Judah. I, yes, I, shall tear them to pieces and go away. I shall carry them off, and no one will rescue them. ¹⁵ I shall go back to My own place until they suffer for their guilt. Then they will be intent on My face, and, in their distress, they will earnestly search for Me.”

6

The insincere response of the people

¹ “Come! Let us return to the LORD! For, although He has torn us apart, He will heal us. Although He strikes us down, He will bandage our wounds. ² After two days He will revive us. On the third day He will raise us, that we may live in His presence. ³ Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD! He will come out as surely as the dawn. He will come to us like the rain, like the Spring-rain, which waters the land.”

God’s reply to the people

⁴ “What shall I do with you, Ephraim? What shall I do with you, Judah? Your faithful love is like a morning cloud and disappears like the early dew. ⁵ That is why I have used the prophets to cut them off. I have used the Words of My mouth to kill them. My Judgments against you go forth like the light. ⁶ For **I desire mercy and not sacrifice**, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Israel’s rejection of God’s Covenant

⁷ “However, like Adam, they have been breaking the Covenant. There they have been dealing treacherously with Me. ⁸ Gilead is a city of evildoers. It can be tracked by bloodshed. ⁹ As robbers lie in wait for a man, so priests band together. They commit murder on the road to Shechem. Indeed, they have been behaving shamefully. ¹⁰ I have seen something horrible in the family of Israel. Ephraim’s fornication is there. Israel has defiled himself. ¹¹ A harvest has been appointed for you also, Judah, when I bring My people back from captivity.”

7

¹ “When I want to heal Israel, the guilt of Ephraim and the wicked deeds of Samaria are exposed. For they practise deceit. Thieves break in, and bandits grasp plunder outside. ² However, they do not consider that I remember all their wickedness. Now what they have been doing is all around them and is right in front of Me.

The similarity between Israel and an oven

³ “They delight the king with their wickedness, the princes with their lies. ⁴ They are all adulterers. They are like an oven heated by a baker, who stops poking the fire from the time when the dough is kneaded until it is leavened. ⁵ On the day of our king’s festival the princes made him sick with the glow of wine. He joined hands with mockers. ⁶ For their minds were like an oven when they approached the king in their intrigue. Their baker was asleep all night long. In the morning their intrigue began to blaze like a flaming fire. ⁷ All of them become hot like an oven and consume those who govern them. All their kings have fallen. There is no one among them who calls on Me.”

A condemnation of the Israelites’ appeal to other nations for help

⁸ Ephraim mixes himself with the other nations. Ephraim has become a flat loaf that has not been turned over. ⁹ Although foreigners have been consuming his strength, he does not realise it. Although his hair has become dappled with grey, he does not realise it. ¹⁰ The arrogance of Israel has given evidence against him. Yet, despite all this, they have not returned to the LORD, their God, or looked to Him for help.

¹¹ “Ephraim has become like a gullible and senseless dove. They have been calling to Egypt. They have been going off to Assyria. ¹² When they go off, I shall spread My net over them. I shall bring them down like birds of the sky. I shall discipline them according to the Message that their congregation has heard. ¹³ How terrible it will be for them! For they have fled from Me. They will be destroyed. For they have rebelled against Me. Although I Myself was redeeming them, they told lies about Me. ¹⁴ They have not been crying out to Me from their hearts, although they wail on their beds. They live like foreigners for the sake of grain and new wine. They rebel against Me. ¹⁵ Although I Myself have taught them and made their arms strong, they plan evil against Me.”

¹⁶ Although they return, it is not to the Most High. They have become like a slack bow. Their princes will fall by the sword because they have been using their tongues to curse. They will be ridiculed for this in the land of Egypt.

8

A threat of punishment on Israel because of his rebellion

¹ “Put a horn to your mouth! Someone like an eagle is over the Temple of the LORD, because they have been breaking My covenant and have been rebelling against

My Law. ² Israel cry out to Me, ‘Our God, we know You!’ ³ Israel has rejected what is good. An enemy will pursue him. ⁴ Although they have been making kings, they have not done it at My direction. Although they have been installing officials, I have not known about it. They have been using their silver and gold to make idols for themselves, with the result that they will be exterminated. ⁵ My wrath has rejected your calf-idols, Samaria, and has become hot against them. How long will they be unable to be pure?”

⁶ For Israel has made Samaria’s calf. A skilled workman has made it, and it is not God. Indeed, the calf of Samaria will be broken into splinters. ⁷ For they sow the wind and will harvest the storm wind. The grain-crops will not sprout up. They will not produce any flour. If they were to produce anything, foreigners would swallow it. ⁸ Israel will be swallowed up. Among the other nations they have already become like a container in which no one takes any delight. ⁹ For they have been going up to Assyria, like a wild donkey wandering by itself. The people of Ephraim have been hiring themselves out to lovers. ¹⁰ Although they are hiring themselves out among the nations, I shall now gather them together. They will begin to diminish because of the tribute of the king of princes. ¹¹ Because Ephraim has made numerous altars for sin-offerings, they have become altars for committing sin for him. ¹² If I were to write ten thousand things in My Law for him, they would be regarded as foreign. ¹³ They sacrifice My sacrificial offerings as meat and have eaten them.”

However, the LORD has not been well disposed towards them. Now He will remember their wrongs and call their sins to account. They will go back to Egypt. ¹⁴ Israel has forgotten his Maker and has built palaces. Judah has built many fortified cities. “Therefore, I shall send a fire on their cities, and it will consume their fortified palaces.”

9

A prophecy that Israel will go into exile

¹ Israel, do not rejoice! Do not be joyful like the other nations! For you have been practising prostitution, forsaking your God. You have loved a prostitute’s wages on all threshing floors. ² Threshing floors and wine vats will not feed them and the new wine will not yield itself to her. ³ They will not remain in the land of the LORD. Ephraim will go back to Egypt. They will eat unclean food in Assyria. ⁴ They will not pour out drink-offerings of wine to the LORD, and their sacrifices will not please Him. Their sacrifices will be like the food that mourners eat. All who eat it will make themselves unclean. Their food will only satisfy their appetites. It will not come to the Temple of the LORD. ⁵ What will you do on the day appointed for an assembly and on the day of the feast of the LORD? ⁶ For look! Even if they avoid destruction, Egypt will gather them. Memphis

will bury them. Weeds will take possession of their silver valuables. Thorn-bushes will grow in their tents. ⁷ The days for punishment will come. The days of retribution will come. Israel will know it. The prophet is considered a fool, and the spiritual man is thought to be mad because your sins are so many and your animosity is so great. ⁸ Although a prophet is a watchman for my God over Ephraim, a fowler’s trap is laid on all his paths, and there is animosity in the Temple of his God. ⁹ They have deeply corrupted themselves as they once did at Gibeah. He will remember their wrongdoing. He will call their sins to account.

A declaration that the rottenness of Israel is like that of bad grapes or bad figs

¹⁰ “I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness. I saw your fathers like the first fruit on the fig-tree in its first season. When they arrived at Baal-Peor they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol. They became disgusting like the thing that they loved. ¹¹ Ephraim’s glory will fly away like a bird. There will be no birth, no pregnancy and no conception! ¹² Even if they bring up their children, I shall bereave them until none is left. Indeed, how terrible also for them when I stand aloof from them! ¹³ I have seen Ephraim, like Tyre, planted in a meadow. However, Ephraim must lead his children out to be killed.”

¹⁴ LORD, give them — What will You give them? Give them a womb that miscarries and withered breasts!

¹⁵ “All their wickedness was evident in Gilgal. For I hated them there. I shall drive them out of My house because of their evil deeds. I shall not love them any longer. All their princes are stubborn. ¹⁶ Ephraim has been struck down. Their roots have dried up. They will not produce any fruit. Even though they give birth, I shall put their dear babies to death.”

¹⁷ My God will reject them because they have not been listening to Him. They will wander among the nations.

10

A prophecy of captivity for Israel because of his sin

¹ Israel is a luxuriant vine that repeatedly yields ripe fruit for himself. The more his fruit used to increase, the more altars he built. As his country improved, he improved sacred pillars. ² Their hearts have been deceitful. Now they must bear their guilt. God will break down their altars and destroy their sacred pillars. ³ Indeed, now they are saying, “We have no king. For we do not fear the LORD. If we had a king, what could he do for us?” ⁴ They have been using empty talk. They have been concluding agreements by swearing to lies. Lawsuits have been sprouting up like poisonous weeds along the furrows of a field. ⁵ The residents of Samaria will be afraid because of the calves of Beth-Aven.*¹⁶³ For its people will mourn over it, and its priests will

¹⁶³ Beth-Aven means, “House of nothingness,” probably a deliberate corruption of Bethel (“House of God”) because of the idolatry there.

tremble because of it, because of its splendour. For it will depart from it. ⁶ Yes, the thing itself will be carried off to Assyria as a present to the great king. Ephraim will be disgraced, and Israel will be ashamed because of what he had been planning. ⁷ Samaria and its king will be destroyed like a twig on the surface of water. ⁸ The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, will be made unusable. Thorn-bushes and thistles will grow up over their altars, and **people will say, "Cover us!" to the mountains and, "Fall on us!" to the hills.**

⁹ "Israel, you have been sinning since the time of Gibeah. There they have continued. Will war not overtake the evildoers in Gibeah? ¹⁰ When I please I shall discipline them. Nations will be gathered against them when they are tied up because of their double wrongdoing.

A comparison of Israel to a heifer that threshes grain

¹¹ "Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh grain. I Myself had spared her beautiful neck. I shall place a yoke on Ephraim."

Judah will plough. Jacob will do his harrowing. ¹² Sow righteousness for yourselves! Harvest faithful love in full measure! Break up your virgin-soil! It is the time to look for the LORD, until He comes and rains righteousness on you. ¹³ You have been ploughing wickedness. You have been harvesting evil. You have been eating the fruit of lies. For you have been trusting in your own behaviour and in your many warriors. ¹⁴ The roar of battle will arise among your people, and all your fortresses will be destroyed, as Shalman destroyed Beth-Arbel on the day of battle. Mothers were dashed in pieces on top of their children. ¹⁵ This is what will be done to you, Bethel, because of your great wickedness. When the day breaks the king of Israel will be completely destroyed.

11

The comparison of Israel to a wayward son

¹ "When Israel was a child, I loved him and **called My son out of Egypt.** ² The more people called to them, the more they went away from them. They kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offerings to idols. ³ Nevertheless, I was the One who taught Ephraim to walk. I took him up by his arms, but they did not realise that it was I who had healed them. ⁴ I used to lead them with strings of leather, with ropes of love. I became for them like one who took away the yoke on their jawbones. I bent down to him and fed him. ⁵ He will not return to the land of Egypt. Instead, the Assyrian will be his king. For they have refused to return". ⁶ The sword will whirl around in his cities. It will put an end to his gate-bars and devour them, because of their own plans. ⁷ My people are determined to turn away from Me."

Although they call out together to the Most High, He will not lift them up.

God's love for Israel

⁸ "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I make you like Admah?

How can I treat you like Zeboim? My heart has altered inside Me. My compassion has all at once been aroused. ⁹ I shall not carry out My fierce anger. I shall not destroy Ephraim again. For I am God and not a man, the Holy One among you, and I shall not come in anger."

¹⁰ They will follow the LORD. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, His children will come with trembling from the west. ¹¹ They will come trembling like a bird from Egypt or like a dove from the land of Assyria.

"I shall settle them in their own homes," declares the LORD.

¹² "Ephraim has surrounded Me with lies and the family of Israel with deceit."

Judah has still been wandering with God, with the Holy One, who is faithful.

12

Israel's neglect of what God has done for him

¹ Ephraim feeds on the wind and chases after the east wind all day long. He tells many lies and commits much violence. They make a treaty with Assyria, and olive-oil is dispatched to Egypt. ² The LORD is bringing a lawsuit against Judah and will call Jacob to account, as his conduct has deserved. He will pay him back for what he has been doing. ³ In the womb Jacob grasped his brother by the heel and, when he grew strong, he struggled against God. ⁴ When he struggled against the Angel, he prevailed. He wept and begged for His favour. He found Him at Bethel and there He used to speak to us. ⁵ The LORD, the God of hosts, the LORD, is the name by which He is invoked. ⁶ However, you yourself should turn back to your God! Maintain faithful love and justice and wait constantly for your God!

⁷ He is a merchant who has fraudulent scales in his hands. He loves to defraud others. ⁸ Ephraim has been saying, "**I have certainly become rich. I have found wealth for myself.** People will not find me guilty of wrongdoing, which is sin, in any of my acquisitions."

A contrast between Jacob and his descendants in Israel

⁹ "I have been the LORD, your God, ever since the land of Egypt. I shall make you live in tents again, as in the days of your appointed feasts. ¹⁰ I have been speaking to the prophets. I Myself have been giving many visions. I used to tell parables through the prophets."

¹¹ If Gilead is wicked, they will certainly come to nothing. When they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal, even their altars will become like heaps of stones in the furrows of a field. ¹² Jacob fled to the territory of Aram. There Israel worked to acquire a wife. He watched sheep to acquire a wife. ¹³ The LORD used a prophet to bring Israel up from Egypt. He used a prophet to take care of him. ¹⁴ Ephraim has been causing bitter provocation. His Lord will leave his guilt for shedding blood on him and will pay him back for his scorn.

13

A prophecy that the people of Israel will be punished for their idolatry

¹ When Ephraim spoke, people used to tremble. Although he had lifted himself up in Israel, he incurred guilt through Baal and died. ² Now they keep on sinning increasingly. They have been using their silver to make metal images for themselves. The idols correspond to their own understanding. All of them are the work of craftsmen. People say about them: "Those who offer human sacrifices kiss calves!" ³ That is why they will be like morning mist, like the early dew, which disappears, like the chaff that swirls away from the threshing floor and like smoke out of a window.

⁴ "However, I have been the LORD, your God, ever since Egypt. You will not know any God but Me. There is no Saviour except Me. ⁵ I Myself took care of you in the wilderness, in the land of drought. ⁶ However, when they had finished grazing, they became satisfied and, when they were satisfied, their hearts became proud. That is why they have forgotten Me. ⁷ I have become like a lion to them. I shall lie in wait beside the road like a leopard. ⁸ I shall confront them like a bear robbed of her cubs. I shall tear open the cavities around their hearts. I shall devour them there like a lion, like a wild animal that tears them to pieces. ⁹ It has destroyed you, Israel. For you are against Me, against your Helper. ¹⁰ Where, then, is your king, that he should save you in all your cities? Where are your rulers, about whom you have been saying: 'Give us a king and princes!?' ¹¹ I used to give you a king when I was angry and used to take him away when I was furious."

¹² The wrongdoing of Ephraim has been wrapped up. His sin has been stored up. ¹³ When the labour-pains of a mother in childbirth come for him, he is a foolish son. For, when it is his time, he does not present himself at the opening of the cervix.

¹⁴ "I shall **ransom them from the power of Sheol**. I shall redeem them from **death**. **Death, where are your stings? Sheol, where is your destruction?** I shall not consider changing My mind."

¹⁵ Although he may flourish among his relatives, an east wind, the wind of the LORD, will come. It will come up from the wilderness. Then his spring will be-

come dry. His well will dry up. The east wind will plunder every precious article from his storehouse. ¹⁶ Samaria will suffer for her guilt. For she has rebelled against her God. They will fall by the sword. Their children will be dashed to pieces, and his pregnant women will be ripped open.

14

An offer of forgiveness and an encouragement to repent and return

¹ Israel, return to the LORD, your God! For you have stumbled because of your sin. ² Take words with you and return to the LORD! Tell Him: "Forgive all our wrong! Receive what is good, that we may use bulls to repay what our lips have promised!"

³ Assyria will not save us. We shall not ride on horses and no longer say, "Our gods," to what our own hands have made. For an orphan finds mercy in You.

⁴ "I shall heal their apostasy. I shall love them freely. For My anger has turned away from them. ⁵ I shall be like the dew to Israel."

He will blossom like the lily. He will strike his roots like the trees of Lebanon. ⁶ Their shoots will spread out. They will be as splendid as an olive-tree. They will be as fragrant as the cedars of Lebanon. ⁷ People will return and live under God's shadow. They will grow grain. They will shoot like a grapevine. He will be as famous as the wine of Lebanon.

⁸ "Ephraim, why should I be involved with idols any longer? I Myself have answered and shall look after him. I am like a leafy juniper tree. You find your fruit from Me."

⁹ Whoever is wise should also understand these things. Whoever is discerning should also know them. For **the Ways of the LORD are right**. Righteous people walk in them, but rebellious people stumble over them.

JOEL

1

¹ This is the Word of the LORD, which came to Joel, the son of Pethuel:

The locust-plague and the famine in Judah

² Listen to this, elders! Use your ears, all you who live in the land! Has this ever happened in your days or in the days of your fathers? ³ Tell your children about it! Let your children tell their children, and let their children tell the next generation! ⁴ The swarming locusts have eaten what the fully-grown young locusts have left. The creeping locusts have eaten what the swarming locusts have left. The destructive locusts have eaten what the creeping locusts have left. ⁵ Awake, drunkards, and weep! Howl, all you drinkers of wine, because of the sweet wine! For it has been kept out of your mouths. ⁶ For a nation has invaded my land. It is powerful and impossible to count. **They have teeth of lions.** They have fangs like a lioness. ⁷ They have laid waste my grapevines and splintered the stumps of my fig-trees. They have stripped them bare and thrown them down. Their branches have become white. ⁸ Wail like a virgin who is wearing sackcloth, mourning for the man whom she was going to marry when she was young! ⁹ The grain-offerings and the drink-offerings have failed to come to the Temple of the LORD. The priests, who minister to the LORD, have been mourning. ¹⁰ The fields have been ruined, and the ground has been mourning. For the grain has been ruined, the new wine has dried up, and the olive-oil has dwindled away. ¹¹ Be ashamed, you who work on farms! Wail, you who work in vineyards! Mourn for the wheat and the barley! For the harvest of the fields has been lost. ¹² The grapevines have dried up. The fig-trees have dwindled away. Pomegranates, palm-trees, apple trees, all the other trees of the fields have withered. Surely, the joy of human beings has been dried out.

A call for repentance

¹³ Put on sackcloth and mourn, priests! Wail, you who minister before the altar! Go inside! Spend the night in sackcloth, ministers of my God! For grain-offerings and drink-offerings have been withheld from the Temple of your God. ¹⁴ Announce a sacred period of fasting! Proclaim a solemn assembly! Gather the elders and all the others who live in the land, to the Temple of the LORD, your God, and cry out to the LORD! ¹⁵ How dreadful the day is! For the day of the LORD is near and will come like devastation from the Almighty. ¹⁶ Has the food not been cut off before our eyes? Have joy and rejoicing not been removed from the Temple of our God? ¹⁷ The seeds of grain have shrivelled under their husks. The storehouses have been deserted. The grain-silos have been torn down because the grain has dried up. ¹⁸ How the animals are groaning! The herds of cattle are wandering around in confusion. For there is no pasture for them. Even the flocks of sheep are suf-

fering punishment. ¹⁹ I am calling to You, LORD. For fire has devoured the grazing places in the wilderness. Flames have scorched all the trees in the fields. ²⁰ Even the wild animals are longing for You. For streams of water have dried up, and fire has devoured the grazing places in the wilderness.

2

The approach of judgment day

¹ “Blow a trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm on My holy mountain!”

Let all who live in the land tremble! For the day of the LORD is coming. Certainly, it is near. ² It is a dark and gloomy day, a day of clouds and thick darkness. It is like the first light of morning spreading over the mountains. A great and mighty “army” is coming. There has never been anything like them, and there will be no others again after them, to the years of many generations. ³ A fire has been devouring in front of them. Flames are setting ablaze behind them. The land is like the Garden of Eden in front of them but is a desolate wilderness behind them, and nothing has escaped from them at all. ⁴ **They look like horses and gallop like war-horses.** ⁵ **They rumble like chariots** as they leap about over the tops of the mountains. They crackle like a flame of fire consuming stubble. They are like a powerful army in battle formation. ⁶ Nations writhe in anguish before them. All faces have flushed red. ⁷ They charge like warriors. They scale walls like soldiers. Each one marches straight ahead. They do not swerve from their paths. ⁸ They do not jostle one another. Each marches in line. They burst through under a hail of missiles. They make no detours. ⁹ They charge against the city. They run along the walls. They climb up into the houses. They enter through the windows like thieves. ¹⁰ The earth has been trembling in front of them. The sky has been quaking. **The sun and the moon have become dark,** and **the stars** have withdrawn their brightness. ¹¹ The LORD has been raising His voice in front of His army. For His camp is very large; He who is carrying out His Command is powerful. For the **day** of the LORD is **great** and very awesome. **Who can endure it?**

An invitation from God to the people to return to Him

¹² “Nevertheless, even now,” declares the LORD, “return to Me with all your hearts, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning! ¹³ Tear your hearts and not your clothes!”

Return to the LORD, your God! For He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and relents from sending calamity. ¹⁴ Who knows whether He may turn back, relent and leave a blessing behind Him, a grain-offering and a drink-offering for the LORD, your God? ¹⁵ Blow a trumpet in Zion! Announce a holy fast! Call an assembly! ¹⁶ Gather the people! Consecrate the congregation! Assemble the

aged people! Gather the children, even the breast-fed infants! Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom, and let the bride leave her bridal chamber! ¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, weep between the Temple-porch and the altar! Let them say, “Look compassionately on Your people, O LORD! Do not make Your inheritance a disgrace and a byword among the nations! Why should people ask among the nations, ‘Where is their God?’”

God’s promise of earthly blessings to His people

¹⁸ Then the LORD became deeply devoted to His land and took pity on His people. ¹⁹ The LORD answered His people: “Look! I am sending you grain, new wine and olive-oil. They will satisfy you. I shall not make you an object of scorn among the nations any longer. ²⁰ I shall remove the northern army far away from you and force it out into a dry and desolate land. I shall drive its vanguard into the Eastern Sea and its rear-guard into the Western Sea.”

Its stench will come up and its smell will rise! For He has done great things!”

²¹ O land, do not be afraid! Be glad and rejoice! For the LORD has done great things. ²² Do not be afraid, wild animals! For the open pastures have turned green. For the trees have produced their fruit. The fig-trees and the grapevines have yielded their riches.

²³ People of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the LORD, your God! For He has given you the Autumn-rain for righteousness. He has sent abundant rain down for you, the early rain and the late rain as before. ²⁴ The threshing-floors will be full of grain, and the vats will overflow with new wine and olive-oil.

²⁵ “I shall compensate you for the years that the locusts have consumed, the locusts without wings, the cutting locusts and the mature locusts — My large army, which I have been sending among you.”

²⁶ You will have plenty to eat and be satisfied. You will praise the name of the LORD, your God, who has treated you in wonderful ways.

“My people will never be ashamed again. ²⁷ You will know that I am in the middle of Israel, that I am the LORD, your God, and that there is no one else. My people will never be ashamed again.”

God’s promise that He will pour His Spirit on all people

²⁸ “Afterwards **I shall pour out My Spirit on all people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will have dreams. Your young men will see visions.** ²⁹ In those days **I shall pour out My Spirit even on male servants and female servants.** ³⁰ **I shall put marvellous signs in the sky and blood, fire and columns of smoke on the earth.”**

³¹ **The sun will be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood before the great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.** ³² **Then everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.** For there will be rescue on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, as the LORD has promised. Among those who survive there will be

those whom the LORD calls.

3

A promise that God will rescue His people and judge the nations

¹ “For look! In those days and at that time, when I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, ² I shall gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.*¹⁶⁴ I shall put them on trial there, on behalf of My people, yes, My inheritance, Israel, whom people have scattered among the nations. They have also divided up My land. ³ They have cast lots for My people. They have traded boys for prostitutes. They have sold girls for wine and have drunk it.

⁴ “Besides, why should I be involved with you, Tyre, Sidon and all the districts of Philistia? Are you taking revenge on Me for something? If you are paying Me back, I shall very quickly return your repayment on your own heads. ⁵ For you have taken My silver and My gold and have carried off My finest treasures into your temples. ⁶ You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, so that you have removed them far away from their own territory. ⁷ Look! I shall stir them up to leave the place where you have sold them. I shall turn what you have done back on your own heads. ⁸ I shall sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of the people of Judah. They will sell them to the Sabeans, to a nation far away.” For the LORD has spoken.

⁹ Announce this among the nations: ‘Make yourselves holy for war! Stir up the warriors! Let all the men of war approach! Let them come up! ¹⁰ Hammer your ploughshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears! The weak person should say, “I am a warrior.”’

¹¹ Hurry and come from every direction, all you nations, and assemble! Station Your warriors there, LORD!

¹² “Let the nations rouse themselves and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat! For there I shall sit to judge all the surrounding nations.”

¹³ **Put in the sickle! For the harvest has become ripe.** Come in! Tread the grapes! For the winepress is full. The vats have been overflowing. For the wickedness of the nations is great. ¹⁴ There are enormous crowds in the Valley of Decision. For the day of the LORD is near in the Valley of Decision. ¹⁵ **The sun and the moon will become dark and the stars** will withdraw their brightness. ¹⁶ The Lord will roar from Zion and will raise His voice from Jerusalem. The heavens and the earth will quake. However, the LORD will be a Refuge for His people and a Fortress for the people of Israel.

A promise of a glorious future for Judah

¹⁷ “You will know that I am the LORD, your God, and that I reside on Zion, My holy mountain. Jerusalem will be holy and foreigners will not pass through it any longer.”

¹⁶⁴ Jehoshaphat means, “The LORD has judged.”

Joel

¹⁸ On that day the mountains will drip sweet wine, and the hills will flow with milk. All the streambeds of Judah will flow with **water**. A spring will **flow out** of the Temple of the LORD and water the Valley of Acacias.
¹⁹ Egypt will become a desolate waste, and Edom a desolate wilderness, because of the violence done to the

people of Judah. For they have murdered innocent people in their land. ²⁰ However, Judah will be inhabited for ever, and Jerusalem through all generations.

²¹ "I shall pardon their guilt for murder, which I had not pardoned."

For the LORD resides in Zion."

AMOS

1

¹ These are the Words of Amos, who was one of the shepherds from Tekoa. He saw as a seer the Words about Israel while Uzziah was the king of Judah and while Jeroboam, the son of Joash, was the king of Israel. It was two years before the earthquake. ² He said: "The LORD roars from Zion and raises His voice from Jerusalem. The pastures of the shepherds are mourning, and the top of Carmel is withering."

An announcement that the Arameans will be judged for their crimes

³ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of Damascus for three offences or for four, because they have threshed Gilead with iron threshing sledges. ⁴ I shall send a fire against the palace of Hazael, and it will devour the fortresses of Ben-Hadad. ⁵ I shall break the bars on the gates of Damascus. I shall cut off those who are living in the Valley of Aven and the one who holds the sceptre in Beth-Eden. The people of Aram will go into exile at Kir." This is what the LORD has said.

An announcement that the Philistines will be judged for their crimes

⁶ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of Gaza for three offences or for four, because they have deported an entire community and delivered them into exile in Edom. ⁷ I shall send fire against the wall of Gaza, and it will consume its fortresses. ⁸ I shall cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod and the one who holds the sceptre in Ashkelon. I shall make My hand pass against Ekron again, and the rest of the Philistines will be destroyed."

This is what the Lord GOD has said.

An announcement that Tyre will be judged for its crimes

⁹ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of Tyre for three offences or for four, because they have delivered an entire community into exile in Edom and have not kept in mind their obligations to relatives. ¹⁰ I shall send fire against the wall of Tyre, and it will consume its fortresses."

An announcement that Edom will be judged for its crimes

¹¹ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of Edom for three offences or for four, because they have used swords to pursue their relatives. They have stifled their compassion. In their anger they have been constantly tearing their prey. Their rage has persisted for ever. ¹² I shall send a fire against Teman, and it will consume the fortresses of Bozrah."

An announcement that the Ammonites will be judged for their crimes

¹³ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of the Ammonites for three offences or for four, because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead that they may enlarge their own territory.

¹⁴ I shall set a fire against the wall of Rabbah. It will consume its fortresses. There will be a war-cry on the day of battle, and a heavy gale on a stormy day.

¹⁵ Their king will be taken into exile together with his

princes." This is what the LORD has said.

2

An announcement that the Moabites will be judged for their crimes

¹ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of Moab for three offences or for four, because they have burnt the bones of the king of Edom to lime. ² I shall send a fire against Moab, and it will consume the fortresses of Kerioth. Moab will die in the roar of battle, amid war cries and with the blast of the trumpet. ³ I shall cut off the judge from among them and kill all its commanders with him." This is what the LORD has said.

An announcement that Judah will be judged for its crimes

⁴ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of Judah for three offences or for four, because they have rejected the Law of the LORD. They have not been keeping His Prescriptions. Their lies, which their fathers had been following, have been leading them astray. ⁵ I shall send a fire against Judah, and it will consume the fortresses of Jerusalem."

An announcement that Israel will be judged for its crimes

⁶ This is what the LORD has said: "I shall not cancel the punishment of Israel for three offences or for four, because they sell a righteous person for money and a poor person for the price of a pair of sandals. ⁷ They trample on the heads of poor people on the dust of the ground and deny just treatment to lowly people. A man and his father go to the same girl, so that they defile My holy name. ⁸ They spread themselves out beside every altar on garments that they have taken as security. In the temples of their gods they drink wine that they have levied in fines.

⁹ "Nevertheless, I Myself had destroyed the Amorites in front of them, who were as tall as cedars and who were as strong as oaks. I had destroyed their fruit above the ground and their roots below it. ¹⁰ I Myself had brought you up out of Egypt and had led you in the wilderness for forty years, so that you took possession of the land of the Amorites. ¹¹ I had appointed some of your sons as prophets and some of your young men as Nazirites. Is this not indeed so, people of Israel?" This is what the LORD declares.

¹² "However, you gave the Nazirites wine to drink. You commanded the prophets, 'You shall not prophesy!' ¹³ Look! I shall crush you in your places, as a wagon crushes when it is full of sheaves. ¹⁴ A fast runner will fail to flee to safety, a strong person will not muster his strength, and a warrior will not save his life. ¹⁵ One who handles a bow will not hold his ground, one who is swift-footed will not save himself and one who rides a horse will not save his life. ¹⁶ The most courageous among the warriors will run away naked on that day," declares the LORD.

3

An announcement that God will call Israel to account for its immoral behaviour

¹ Listen to this Message, which the LORD has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of Egypt: ² “I have taken care of no one else but you out of all the clans on the earth. That is why I shall call you to account for all your wrongdoings.”

³ Do two people walk together if they have not agreed to meet? ⁴ Does a lion roar in the thicket if it has no prey? Does a young lion growl from its den if it has not caught something? ⁵ Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground if no snare has been set for it? Does a bird-trap spring up from the ground if it catches nothing at all? ⁶ If a trumpet is blown in a city, will the people not tremble? If a calamity occurs in a city, has the LORD not caused it? ⁷ Certainly, the Lord GOD does not do anything unless He has **revealed His confidential conversation to His servants, the prophets**. ⁸ The lion has roared. Who will not be afraid? The Lord GOD has spoken. Who will fail to prophesy?

An announcement of calamity for Samaria

⁹ Make an announcement to the fortresses in Ashdod and to the fortresses in Egypt. Say: “Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria! See the great confusion in it and the oppressive acts inside it!”

¹⁰ “They do not know how to do what is right,” declares the LORD. “They store up violence and destruction in their fortresses.”

¹¹ Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD has said: “An enemy will surround the land, strip you of your fortifications and plunder your fortresses.”

¹² This is what the LORD has said: “The Israelites who live in Samaria will be rescued as a shepherd saves two lower legs or a tip of an ear from the mouth of a lion. They will escape with the side of a bed and some damask from a couch. ¹³ Listen and testify against the family of Jacob!” **declares the Lord GOD, the God of hosts**. ¹⁴ “For on the day when I punish Israel for their rebellious acts, I shall also punish the altars of Bethel. The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground. ¹⁵ I shall tear down the winter-houses along with the summerhouses. The houses decorated with ivory will be destroyed, and the mansions will come to an end,” declares the LORD.

4

An announcement that God will call the women of Samaria to account

¹ Listen to this Message, cows of Bashan, who are on Mount Samaria! You women oppress helpless people and mistreat poor people. You keep telling your husbands, “Bring us some drinks!” ² The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness that the days are indeed coming on you when people will use hooks to take you away. They will take the last of you away with fishhooks. ³ Each of you women will go out through the gaps in

the wall immediately in front of you. “You will be driven along towards Harmon,” declares the LORD.

⁴ “Come to Bethel and act rebelliously! Come to Gilgal and commit many more rebellious acts! Bring your sacrifices every morning and the tenth of your income every three days! ⁵ Use bread made with yeast to burn a sacrifice of thanksgiving! Proclaim freewill offerings! Make an announcement about them! For that is how you love to do it, Israelites,” declares the Lord GOD.

A report that Israel has not returned to God

⁶ “Although I on My part have given you nothing for your teeth to chew in all your cities and left you short of food in all your places, you have nevertheless not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.

⁷ “I Myself even held back the rain from you when it was still three months until the harvest. I used to send rain on one city and send no rain on another city. One field used to receive rain, and the field that received no rain used to wither. ⁸ Although two or three cities used to stagger to another city to get a drink of water and failed to get enough, you have nevertheless not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.

⁹ “Although I struck you down with a scorching wind and mildew, and, although the locusts were devouring many of your gardens, your vineyards, your fig-trees and your olive-trees, you have nevertheless not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.

¹⁰ “Although I sent plagues among you like those in Egypt, although I killed your young men with the sword when your horses were also captured, and, although I made the stench of your camps rise up into your noses, you have nevertheless not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.

¹¹ “Although I destroyed some of you as God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, and, although you were like a piece of burning wood **snatched from the fire**, you have nevertheless not returned to Me,” declares the LORD.

¹² “Therefore, this is what I shall do to you, Israel. Because I am going to do this to you, prepare to meet your God, Israel!”

¹³ For look! He who formed the mountains and created the wind, who reveals to human beings what He is thinking, who turns the dawn into darkness and who treads on the heights of the earth has “the LORD, the God of hosts” as His name.

5

A funeral song about Israel

¹ Listen to this Message, which I am beginning to sing about you as a funeral song, family of Israel: ² “The virgin Israel has fallen and will not rise again. She is lying abandoned on her land. There is no one to lift her up.”

³ For this is what the Lord GOD has said: “The city in the family of Israel that marches out a thousand strong will have only a hundred survivors, and the one that marches out with a hundred will have only ten survi-

vors.”

Admonitions to turn away from sin

⁴ For this is what the LORD has said to the family of Israel: “Be intent on Me and live! ⁵ However, do not try to reach Bethel! You shall not go to Gilgal or go across to Beer-Sheba! For Gilgal will certainly go into exile, and Bethel will come to nothing.”

⁶ Be intent on the LORD and live, that He may not break in like a fire among the family of Joseph and that it may not burn it down! Bethel will have no one to put it out. ⁷ They are the ones who turn justice into wormwood. They have thrown righteousness down to the ground. ⁸ He who made the Pleiades and Orion, who changes deep darkness into morning and darkens the day into night and who calls for the water of the sea and pours it out on the surface of the earth, has “the LORD” as His name. ⁹ He makes destruction come suddenly on what is strong, so that destruction comes on a fortress. ¹⁰ They hate a person who reproves another at the city-gate. They abhor a person who speaks sincerely. ¹¹ Therefore, because you have been trampling on a lowly person and, because you take a portion of his grain away from him, although you have built houses of hewn stone, you will nevertheless not live in them. Although you have planted pleasant vineyards, you will nevertheless not drink their wine. ¹² For I know that your wrongdoings are numerous and that your sins are great. You attack righteous people, you take bribes and have been depriving poor people of justice at the city-gate. ¹³ That is why a person who has insight will keep silent at this time. For this is an evil time. ¹⁴ Search for what is good and not what is evil, that you may live! Then the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have been claiming. ¹⁵ Hate what is evil, love what is good and make justice effective in the city-gate! It may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remainder of Joseph.

¹⁶ Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord, has said: “There will be wailing in all the city-squares, and in all the streets people will say, ‘Alas! Alas!’ They will summon the farm-workers to mourn and those who are skilled in lamentation to wail.

¹⁷ There will be wailing in all vineyards. For I shall pass through among you.” This is what the LORD has said.

A prophecy about the terrifying day of the Lord

¹⁸ How horrible it will be for you who are longing for the day of the LORD! Why would you have the day of the LORD? It will be darkness and not light. ¹⁹ It will be like a man who runs away from a lion, only to have a bear confront him. It will be like a man who goes home and rests his hand against a wall, only to have a snake bite him. ²⁰ Will not the day of the LORD be darkness, rather than light? Will it not be very dark, with nothing bright in it?

God’s rejection of Israel’s worship

²¹ “I hate your feasts and despise them. I cannot stand

the stench of your festive assemblies. ²² Although you offer burnt offerings and your grain-offerings to Me, I shall not accept them. I shall not accept favourably the peace-offerings of your fattened steers. ²³ Take away from Me the noise of your songs! I shall not listen to the music of your harps! ²⁴ Rather, let justice flow like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream!

²⁵ **“Did you present sacrifices and grain-offerings to Me during the forty years in the wilderness, family of Israel? ²⁶ You used to carry along Sikkuth as your king and Kaiwan, your images, your star-god, which you made for yourselves. ²⁷ I shall send you into exile on the other side of Damascus.”** This is what the LORD has said, whose name is the God of hosts.

6

A prophecy of the fall of Samaria

¹ How horrible it will be for those who are complacent in Zion, for those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria and for the notable men of the leading nations, to whom the family of Israel comes! ² Go across to Calneh and look! Go from there to the great Hamath! Then go down to Gath in Philistia! Are you better than these kingdoms? Or is their territory larger than your territory? ³ Although you imagine that a day of calamity is far away, you are bringing the throne of violence closer! ⁴ How horrible it will be for those who sleep on ivory beds, sprawl out on their couches and eat lambs from the flock and calves out of the stall! ⁵ How horrible it will be for those who improvise to the sound of a harp and who, like David, invent musical instruments for themselves! ⁶ How horrible it will be for those who drink from bowls of wine and smear the finest oils on themselves but who do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph! ⁷ Therefore, they will now be the first of the captives to go into exile, and the revelry of those sprawling people will end.

⁸ “The Lord GOD has sworn by His life,” declares the LORD, the God of hosts: “I abhor the pride of Jacob and hate his fortified residences. I shall surrender the city and everything in it. ⁹ If ten men are left in one house, they will die. ¹⁰ If someone’s close relative is anointing him for burial and lifts him up to take his bones out of the house and asks a person who is an inner room in the house, ‘Is anyone still with you?’ he will answer, ‘No.’ Then he will say, ‘Keep quiet! For we must not mention the name of the LORD.”

¹¹ For look! When the LORD gives a Command, He will smash the large house into fragments and the small house into rubble. ¹² Do horses run on cliffs? Does anyone plough there with oxen? However, you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood. ¹³ You rejoice over Lo-debar and ask, “Did we not use our own strength to capture Karnaim for ourselves?”

¹⁴ “For look! I shall raise a nation against you, family of Israel,” declares the LORD, the God of hosts. “They

will oppress you from Lebo-Hamath to the Brook of the Arabah.”

7

A threat to send locusts

¹ This is what the Lord GOD has shown me: I saw that He was forming a swarm of locusts when the late crop was beginning to sprout. I saw that it was the late crop, which followed what had been mown for the king. ² When they had finished eating the grass on the land, I said: “Lord GOD, please forgive! How can Jacob survive? For he is so small!”

³ The LORD changed His mind about this. The LORD said, “This will not happen.”

A threat to send fire

⁴ This is what the Lord GOD showed me: I saw that the Lord GOD was calling for a judgment by fire. The fire consumed the vast deep and would have consumed the plots of land. ⁵ Then I said: “Lord GOD, please stop! How can Jacob survive? For he is so small!”

⁶ The LORD changed His mind about this. The Lord GOD said, “This also will not happen.”

God's refusal to overlook Israel's sin

⁷ This is what He showed me: The Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb-line. He had the plumb-line in His hand. ⁸ The LORD asked me, “What do you see, Amos?”

I answered, “A plumb-line.”

Then the Lord said: “Look! I am putting a plumb-line among My people Israel. I shall not overlook them any longer. ⁹ The high places of Isaac will be made desolate, and the holy places of Israel will be in ruins. I shall use a sword to rise up against the family of Jeroboam.”

The opposition of Amaziah to Amos

¹⁰ Then Amaziah, the priest at Bethel, sent a message to Jeroboam, the king of Israel: “Amos has been conspiring against you in the middle of the family of Israel. The land cannot endure everything that he is saying.

¹¹ For this is what Amos has been saying: ‘Jeroboam will be killed with the sword, and Israel will certainly leave its own land to go into exile.’”

¹² Amaziah told Amos: “Go away, seer! Run off to the land of Judah! Earn your living over there and prophesy there! ¹³ You shall never prophesy at Bethel again! For Bethel is a royal sanctuary and is a temple of the kingdom.”

¹⁴ Amos answered Amaziah: “I had not been a prophet and had not been a disciple of a prophet. For I had been a herdsman and had also been taking care of sycamore-fig-trees. ¹⁵ However, the LORD took me away from following the flock and the LORD told me: ‘Go! Prophesy to My people Israel!’ ¹⁶ Now therefore, listen to the Word of the LORD! ‘You are saying, “You shall not prophesy against Israel and shall stop letting Words flow against the family of Isaac!”’”

¹⁷ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: “Your wife will be a prostitute in the city, and your sons and

daughters will fall by the sword. Your land will be divided up with a measuring-line. You yourself will die in an unclean country. Israel will certainly go into exile away from its own land.”

8

An announcement of bitter mourning for Israel

¹ This is what the Lord GOD showed me: I saw a basket of summer fruit. ² He asked, “What do you see, Amos?”

I answered, “A basket of summer fruit.”

The LORD told me: “The end has come upon My people Israel. I shall not spare them any longer. ³ The songs of the palace will become wailings on that day,” the Lord GOD declares. There will be many dead bodies. They will be thrown out everywhere! Be silent!

⁴ Listen to this, you who trample on a needy person and put an end to the oppressed people of the land! ⁵ You ask yourselves: “When will the New Moon be over, that we may sell grain? When will the Sabbath be over, that we may offer wheat for sale, that we may shrink the forty-litre corn-measure, make the twelve-gram money-weight large and cheat with fraudulent scales, ⁶ that we may buy helpless people with silver and a needy person for a pair of sandals, that we may sell the chaff-sweepings as wheat?”

⁷ The LORD has sworn by the Pride of Jacob: “I shall certainly never forget anything that they have done.”

⁸ Will not the country tremble because of this? Will not everyone living in it mourn? All of it will rise up like the Nile, be churned up and then subside, like the Nile of Egypt.

⁹ “On that day,” the Lord GOD declares, “I shall make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight. ¹⁰ I shall turn your feasts into a time of mourning and all your songs into a funeral song. I shall put sackcloth on every waist and make a bald patch on every head. I shall make it like mourning for an only child and the result of it like a bitter day.

¹¹ “Look! The days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I shall send a famine on the land, not hunger for food or thirst for water but a famine of hearing the Words of the LORD.” ¹² People will wander from sea to sea and run back and forth from the north to the east, searching for the Word of the LORD but will not find it.

¹³ On that day the beautiful virgins and the young men will become faint because of thirst. ¹⁴ Those who swear by the guilt of Samaria and who say, “As surely as your god lives, Dan,” and, “As surely as pilgrimage to Beer-Sheba continues,” will fall and will not get up again.

9

A vision of destruction that no one in Israel will escape

¹ I saw the Lord **standing beside the altar**, and He said: “Strike the capitals of the pillars that the thresh-olds may shake! Shatter them on the heads of all the people! I shall kill the rest of them with the sword.

Amos

None of them will flee away. None of their fugitives will escape. ² If they were to dig down into Sheol, My hand would get them up from there. If they were to climb up to heaven, I would bring them down from there. ³ If they were to hide themselves on the top of Carmel, I would track them down and take them from there. If they were to hide themselves from My sight at the bottom of the sea, I would command a sea snake, and it would bite them there. ⁴ If they were to go into captivity ahead of their enemies, I would command the sword, and it would kill them there. I would also fix My eyes on them for calamity and not for prosperity.”

⁵ The Lord GOD of hosts is the One who touches the earth, and it melts, and all who live on it mourn. All of it rises like the Nile and subsides again, like the Nile of Egypt. ⁶ He is the One who has built His stairs in the heavens and has established His vault on the earth. He is the One who has been summoning the water of the sea and pouring it out on the surface of the earth. His name is the LORD.

An announcement that God will sift Israel out of all the nations

⁷ “Are you not like the people of Cush to Me, people of Israel?” asks the LORD. “Have I not brought Israel up from Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?”

⁸ Look! The eyes of the Lord GOD are on this sinful kingdom.

“I shall destroy it from the surface of the earth, except

that I shall not completely destroy the family of Jacob,” declares the LORD.

⁹ “For look! I shall give the Command and shake the family of Israel among all the other nations as something is shaken around in a sieve. Not one pebble will fall to the ground. ¹⁰ All the sinners among My people, who are saying, ‘Calamity will not approach us or confront us’ will die by the sword.”

A promise of restoration for Israel

¹¹ “On that day **I shall raise up the hut of David, which has fallen. I shall repair the gaps in its walls and erect** its ruins again. I shall rebuild it as it was in the days of old, ¹² that they may take possession of the remnant in Edom and of **all the other nations over whom My name is called,**” declares the LORD, **who is doing this.**

¹³ “Look! The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the one who is ploughing will catch up with the one who is harvesting and the one who is treading grapes with the one who is sowing the seed. Sweet wine will drip from the mountains and will flow from all the hills. ¹⁴ I shall bring back My exiled people Israel. They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine. They will plant gardens and eat their fruit. ¹⁵ I shall plant them on their own land, and they will not be uprooted any longer out of the land that I have given them,” says the LORD, your God.

OBADIAH

A prophecy of the fall of Edom — Jeremiah 49:9, 14-16

¹ This is the vision of Obadiah. This is what the Lord GOD has said about Edom: We have heard a report from the LORD. A messenger has been sent among the nations to say: “Get up! Let us rise up against it for battle! ² Look! I shall make you insignificant among the other nations. Others will despise you very much. ³ Your proud heart has deceived you, although you are living in the crevices in the cliffs. They make their homes high up. They think, ‘Who will bring us down to the ground?’ ⁴ Although you fly high like an eagle, although your nest is set among the stars, I shall bring you down from there,” declares the LORD.

⁵ If thieves were to come to you, if plunderers were to come by night — how you will be destroyed! — would they not steal only enough for themselves? If grape-pickers were to come to you, would they not leave some gleanings behind? ⁶ How Esau will be ransacked! How his hidden treasures will be searched out! ⁷ All your allies will drive you to your borders. Those who are at peace with you will deceive you and overpower you. Those who eat your food will set traps under you. You will not detect them.

⁸ The LORD asks: “Shall I not on that day exterminate the wise men from Edom and remove insight from the hill-country of Esau? ⁹ Teman, your warriors will be terrified, so that every man from the hill-country of Esau will be cut down in the slaughter.

Edom’s violence against Israel, which is the reason why Edom will be destroyed

¹⁰ “You will be covered with shame and will be cut off for ever because of the violence that you have done to your brother Jacob. ¹¹ On the day when you were standing at a distance, on the day when strangers were carrying off his wealth, when foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them. ¹² However, do not gloat over the day of your brother on the day of his calamity! Do not rejoice over the people of Judah on the day when they are ruined!

Do not speak boastfully on the day when they are in distress! ¹³ Do not enter the city-gate of My people on the day of their calamity! You yourself should not gloat over his trouble on the day of his calamity! Do not lay your hands on his wealth in the day of his calamity! ¹⁴ Do not stand at the crossroads to cut off his refugees! Do not hand over his survivors in the day of distress!”

An announcement that the day of the Lord is near

¹⁵ For the day of the LORD is near for all the nations. “You will be treated as you have treated others. What you have done will rebound on your own head. ¹⁶ For all the nations will drink continually as you have been drinking on My holy mountain. They will drink and swallow. They will be as though they had never existed. ¹⁷ However, there will be deliverance on Mount Zion. It will be a holy area. The family of Jacob will take possession of their own property again. ¹⁸ The family of Jacob will be a fire, and the family of Joseph a flame. However, the family of Esau will become stubble. They will set them on fire and consume them. No one will survive from the family of Esau.” For the LORD has spoken.

A promise about God’s kingdom

¹⁹ People in the Negev will take possession of the hill-country of Esau. People from the foothills will take possession of Philistia. They will take possession of the territory of Ephraim, and the territory of Samaria and Benjamin will take possession of Gilead. ²⁰ The exiles of this host of the people of Israel will take possession of the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, and the exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will take possession of the cities in the Negev. ²¹ People who bring deliverance will go up on Mount Zion to rule over the hill-country of Esau, and the kingdom will belong to the LORD.

JONAH

The sending of a large fish to swallow Jonah — Matthew 12:39-41

17 The LORD sent a large fish to swallow Jonah, and **Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.**

2

Jonah's prayer from inside the fish

1 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD, his God, from the belly of the fish. 2 He said: "I have called to the LORD because of my distress, and He has answered me. I have called for help from the belly of Sheol. You have heard my voice. 3 You have thrown me into the deep water, into the heart of the seas. The sea-currents are flowing around me. All Your waves and breakers have been passing over me."

4 Then I said: "I have been driven away from Your sight. Yet I shall again look towards Your holy Temple.

5 The water has engulfed me, threatening my life. The deep is flowing around me. Seaweed has been wrapped around my head. 6 I have gone down to the lowest extremities of the mountains, to a world whose bars were behind me for ever. Yet You have brought my life up from the pit, O LORD, my God. 7 While my life was fainting inside me I remembered the LORD. My prayer came to You in Your holy Temple. 8 Those who cling to worthless idols are abandoning Him who is merciful to them. 9 However, I myself shall sacrifice to You with a song of thanksgiving. I shall pay what I have vowed. Salvation belongs to the LORD!"

10 When the LORD spoke to the fish, it vomited Jonah out on the dry land.

3

The repentance of the people of Nineveh for their wicked ways

1 The Word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time. He said: 2 "Leave at once for the large city of Nineveh! Announce to it the Message that I tell you!"

3 Jonah got up and went to Nineveh, as the LORD had told him. Nineveh was a large city before God. It took three days to walk through it. 4 **Jonah** began to enter the city and walked for one day. He **proclaimed**: "There are still forty days until Nineveh will be overthrown!"

5 The **people of Nineveh** believed God. They proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. 6 When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he got up from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. 7 He made a proclamation and published it through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let no human beings, animals, cattle or sheep, taste anything! They should not have food or drink any water!"

8 Human beings and domestic animals must be covered with sackcloth and they must call out vehemently to God! Everyone must turn away from his wicked conduct! Let them turn away from the violence that their

1

The attempt of Jonah to run away from God — 2 Kings 14:25

1 The Word of the LORD came to Jonah, the son of Amittai: 2 "Leave at once for the large city Nineveh! Cry out against it! For their wickedness has come up before Me."

3 However, Jonah set out to flee from the presence of the LORD to Tarshish. He went down to Joppa and found a ship that was going to Tarshish. He paid the fare and went on board, to go away with them to Tarshish, from the presence of the LORD. 4 However, the LORD hurled a strong wind on the sea. A violent gale came on the sea, so that the ship was in danger of being broken up. 5 Then the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his god. They dumped the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten the load. However, Jonah had gone down into the lowest part of the ship, lain down and fallen into a deep sleep. 6 The captain went to him and asked him: "What do you mean by being asleep? Get up! Call on your God! Perhaps your God will bear us in mind, that we may not drown!"

The throwing of Jonah into the sea

7 Then they said to one another: "Come! Let us cast lots, that we may know who is responsible for bringing this calamity on us!"

Therefore, they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.

8 They asked him: "Please, tell us on whose account this calamity has come on us! What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? From which people do you come?"

9 He told them, "I am a Hebrew and fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who has made the sea and the dry land."

10 Then the men were extremely afraid and asked him, "What is this that you have done?"

For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. 11 Then they asked him, "What should we do to you, that the sea that is against us may calm down?"

For the sea was growing increasingly turbulent. 12 He told them: "Pick me up and throw me into the sea, that the sea, which is against you, may calm down. For I know that it is my fault that this violent gale has come against you."

13 Nevertheless, the men rowed harder to get the ship back to dry land but could not do it. For the sea kept becoming rougher against them. 14 They called out to the LORD: "We implore You, LORD, please, let us not drown for taking this man's life! Do not hold us responsible for killing an innocent man! For You Yourself, LORD, have done as You have desired."

15 Then they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the raging sea became calm. 16 The men feared the LORD greatly, offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made solemn vows.

Jonah

hands are committing! ⁹ Who knows? God may relent, reconsider and turn away from His burning anger, that we may not be ruined.”

¹⁰ When God saw what they had done, that they had turned away from their wicked conduct, God relented from the calamity that He had threatened to send on them and did not do it.

4

Jonah's anger and God's reminder to Jonah about His mercy

¹ However, Jonah was extremely despondent and became angry. ² He prayed to the LORD: “Ah, LORD, was this not what I was saying while I was still in my own country? That was why I fled towards Tarshish in the first place. For I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to become angry and abundant in mercy and that You relent from sending calamity. ³ Now therefore, LORD, please take my life from me! For it is better for me to die than to live.”

⁴ The LORD asked, “Are you doing right to be angry?”

⁵ Jonah went out of the city and sat down on the eastern side of the city. He made a hut for himself there and sat under it in the shade, until he should see what would happen to the city. ⁶ The LORD God supplied a vine-

plant and made it grow up above Jonah to provide shade over his head, to give him relief from his discomfort. Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷ However, when morning dawned on the next day God provided a worm. It attacked the plant, and it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind. The sun beat down on Jonah's head, so that he became faint and wanted to die. He said, “It would be better for me to die than to live.”

⁹ Then God asked Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?”

Jonah answered, “It is right for me to be angry enough to die!”

¹⁰ The LORD said: “You yourself regarded the plant with compassion, although you had not worked for it. You did not make it grow up. It grew in one night and died in one night. ¹¹ Should I Myself not regard the large city of Nineveh with compassion? It has more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot tell their right hands from their left, as well as many animals.”

MICAH

1

The prophet Micah

¹ This is the Word of the LORD, which came to Micah from Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, the kings of Judah. He saw it as a vision about Samaria and Jerusalem.

An announcement that Samaria will be destroyed

² Listen, peoples, all of you! Pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it! Let the Lord GOD become a witness against you, the Lord, from His holy Temple! ³ For look! The LORD is coming out of His place. He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.

⁴ The mountains will melt under Him, and the valleys will split open like wax because of a fire, like water rushing down a steep place. ⁵ All this will happen because of the wrongdoing of Jacob and because of the sins of the family of Israel. What is the wrongdoing of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What are the high places of Judah? Are they not Jerusalem?

⁶ “Therefore, I shall turn Samaria into a heap of rubble in the open country, a place for planting vineyards. I shall pour down its stones into the valley and lay bare its foundations. ⁷ All its carved images will be smashed to pieces. All its wages for being a prostitute will be burnt up. I shall lay waste all its idols. For it has gathered them from the wages for being a prostitute.”

They will become like the pay for a prostitute again. ⁸ I shall mourn and howl because of this. I shall go about barefoot and naked. I shall mourn like jackals and moan like ostriches. ⁹ For its wounds are incurable. The news will come to Judah. It will reach the city-gate of my people at Jerusalem.

An announcement of calamity for Jerusalem and eleven other cities in Judah

¹⁰ Do not report it in Gath! Do not weep at all! I shall roll about in mourning in the dust in Beth-Le-Aphrah.

¹¹ Go past in nakedness and shame, you who live in Shaphir! Those who live in Zaanan will not come out. The mourning in Beth-Ezel will withdraw its support from you. ¹² For those who live at Maroth will writhe as they wait for relief, because calamity will come down from the LORD to the city-gate of Jerusalem.

¹³ Harness the teams of horses to the war-chariots, you who live at Lachish! This city was the first to lead the daughter of Zion into sin. For the rebellious acts of Israel have been found in you. ¹⁴ That is why you will give farewell gifts to Moresheth near Gath. The houses of Achzib will become deceitful to the kings of Israel.

¹⁵ “I shall bring another conqueror to you, inhabitants of Mareshah.”

He who is the Glory of Israel will come to Adullam.

¹⁶ Shave your heads and cut off your hair because of the children in whom you delight! Make your bald patch as large as that of a vulture! For they will leave you and go into exile.

2

A condemnation of the sins of Israel

¹ How terrible it will be for those who plan what is unjust and commit evil while they are on their beds! They carry it out when the morning dawns, because it is in their power to do it. ² They covet fields and seize them. They covet houses and take them. They exploit a man and his family, a man and his inheritance. ³ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: “Look! I am planning calamity against this family. You will not rescue your necks from it. You will not walk with your heads erect, because this will be a time of calamity. ⁴ On that day people will use a taunt against you. They will make a lamentation. They will say: ‘Ruin has certainly come.’” He is giving other people control over the assigned land of my people. How He is taking it away from me! He is allocating our fields to treacherous people.

⁵ Therefore, you will not have anyone in the assembly of the LORD to draw lots to apply the measuring-line.

⁶ Some men are preaching: “Do not preach! People must not preach about these things! Will disgrace not turn away?”

⁷ Should this be asked, family of Jacob: “Has the Spirit of the LORD become impatient? Does He do such things?”

“Do not My Words do good to the person who behaves uprightly? ⁸ However, My people have recently risen up as an enemy. You strip off the splendid coats from men who are free from worry and have no thought of war as they go past. ⁹ You drive the women of My people out of their comfortable houses and take My splendour away from their young children for ever.”

¹⁰ Get up and go away! For this is no place to rest. Because it has become unclean, it will cause ruin, and there will be distressing destruction. ¹¹ If a man were to go about uttering empty falsehoods, saying, ‘I shall preach to you about wine and strong drink,’ he would be the preacher for this people!

A promise of restoration for Israel

¹² “I shall certainly gather all of you, Jacob. I shall certainly gather the remnant of Israel. I shall put them together like sheep in an enclosure, like a flock in the middle of their pasture.”

They will make a noise because there will be many people. ¹³ The One who breaks through will go up in front of them. They will break through, pass through the city-gate and go out through it. Their King will go past in front of them. The LORD will be at their head.

3

A rebuke to Israel's sinful rulers, prophets and priests

¹ I said: “Listen, leaders of Jacob and rulers of the family of Israel! Is it not your duty to know what is right? ² You hate what is good and love what is evil. You tear the skin off the people and their flesh from

Micah

their bones. ³ You have been eating the flesh of my people and stripping their skin from them. You have been breaking their bones in pieces. You have been chopping them up like meat in a cooking-pot, like flesh in a pan. ⁴ When they call for help to the LORD, He will not answer them. He will hide His face from them at that time, because they have been acting wickedly.

⁵ This is what the LORD has said about the prophets who are leading my people astray, who proclaim, "Peace!" when they have something to bite with their teeth but who declare a holy war against the man who does not put anything in their mouths: ⁶ "Therefore, you will have night, without any visions."

You will have darkness, without any divination. The sun will go down on the prophets, and the day will grow dark over them. ⁷ The seers will be ashamed, and those who make predictions will be embarrassed. All of them will cover their lips, because God will not answer them.

⁸ However, I myself am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, with justice and strength, to tell Jacob about his wrongdoing and Israel about his sin.

A rebuke to the leaders for bringing ruin to Zion

⁹ Please listen to this, leaders of the family of Jacob, and you rulers of the family of Israel, you who detest justice and distort everything that is correct, ¹⁰ you who build Zion up with bloodshed and Jerusalem with injustice! ¹¹ Zion's leaders give judgment in return for a bribe. Its priests teach in return for payment. Its prophets make predictions in return for money. However, they depend on the LORD and say: "Is the LORD not among us? No calamity will happen to us."

¹² Therefore, Zion will be ploughed like a field because of you. Jerusalem will be heaps of rubble, and the mountain of the Temple will be a wooded hill.

4

A promise that God will teach the nations — Isaiah 2:2-4

¹ In the last days the mountain of the Temple of the LORD will be established as the highest of the mountains. It will be elevated above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. ² Then many peoples will come and say: "Come! Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the Temple of the God of Jacob! He will teach us His Ways, that we may walk in His paths!"

For the Teaching will go out from Zion, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ³ He will be the Judge between many peoples and will mediate for strong nations into the distant future. Then they will hammer their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning knives. No nation will take up a sword against another nation, and they will not learn war any longer.

⁴ Everyone will sit under his own grapevine and under his own fig-tree, and no one will make them afraid. For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

⁵ Although every other people lives by the name of its own gods, we shall live by the name of the LORD, our God, for ever and ever.

A promise that the exiles will be brought back to Zion

⁶ "On that day," declares the LORD, "I shall assemble the lame people and gather those who have been scattered and those whom I have injured. ⁷ I shall make the lame people into a remnant and make those who had been driven far away into a strong nation."

The LORD **will reign** over them on Mount Zion from now on and **for ever**.

⁸ As for you, tower of the flock, stronghold of the daughter of Zion, it will come to you. The former dominion will come back. The kingdom will return for the daughter of Jerusalem. ⁹ Why are you crying so loudly now? Do you not have a king with you? Has your adviser perished that pain should have seized you like a woman in labour? ¹⁰ Writhe **and give birth**, daughter of Zion, like a woman **in labour**! For now you will go out of the city and live in the open country. You will go to Babylon. There you will be rescued. There the LORD will redeem you from the hands of your enemies. ¹¹ Now many nations have banded together against you. They are saying, "Let Zion be defiled, and let our eyes gloat over her!"

¹² However, they do not know the purposes of the LORD. They have not understood His plan, that He has gathered them like sheaves on the threshing floor.

¹³ "Get up and thresh, daughter of Zion! For I shall turn your horn into iron. I shall turn your hoofs into bronze."

You will pulverise many peoples. You will dedicate their dishonest gain to the LORD, their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth.

5

¹ Now marshal your military divisions, warlike city! A siege has been laid against us. People will strike the judge of Israel on the cheek with a rod.

A promise that the Messiah will come from Bethlehem to rule

² However, **although you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, are too small** to be **among** the clans of **Judah**, yet **out of you One who will be the Ruler over Israel will come forth** for Me. His origins are from of old, from the days of eternity. ³ Therefore, He will give them up until the time when a woman in labour has a Child. Then the rest of His brothers will return to the people of Israel. ⁴ He will stand **and shepherd** His flock with the strength of the LORD, with the majesty of the name of the LORD, His God. They will live securely, for then His greatness will reach as far as the ends of the earth. ⁵ He will be a man of peace.

When the Assyrians come into our land and when they march into our fortresses, we shall raise against them seven shepherds, yes, eight leaders of men. ⁶ They will rule the land of Assyria with the sword and the land of Nimrod at its entrances. He will deliver us from the Assyrians when they come into our land and march into our territory.

A prediction of the deliverance of a remnant from among the nations

⁷ Then there will be a remnant of Jacob among many

peoples like dew from the LORD and like showers on the grass, which do not delay for a man or wait for human beings. ⁸ There will be a remnant of Jacob among the nations, among many peoples, like a lion among the animals in the thicket and like a young lion among flocks of sheep. When the lion goes through, it tramples down and tears in pieces, and there is no one to rescue them. ⁹ You will raise your hand high over your adversaries, and all your enemies will be cut off.

¹⁰ “On that day,” declares the LORD, “I shall get rid of your horses, which are among you, and destroy your war-chariots. ¹¹ I shall destroy the cities of your land and throw down all your fortresses. ¹² I shall cut off the acts of sorcery that you carry out, and you will have no more fortune-tellers. ¹³ I shall cut off your carved images and your sacred pillars, which are among you, and you will no longer bow down to what your hands have made. ¹⁴ I shall root out your Asherah-poles, which are among you, and destroy your cities. ¹⁵ I shall take revenge in anger and wrath on the nations that have not been listening.”

6

God's lawsuit against His people

¹ Please listen to what the LORD is saying: “Stand up! Plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear what you have to say!”

² Listen, mountains, to the lawsuit of the LORD! Listen, long-lasting foundations of the earth! For the LORD has a lawsuit against His people and will argue against Israel: ³ “My people, what have I done to you? How, then, have I made you weary? Give evidence against Me! ⁴ For I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you out of slave-quarters. I sent before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam. ⁵ My people, please remember what Balak, the king of Moab, had planned to do to you and how Balaam, the son of Beor, answered him! Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may acknowledge the righteous acts of the LORD!”

⁶ What should I bring when I come to meet the LORD and bow down before God on high? Shall I come to meet Him with burnt offerings, with one-year-old calves? ⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand rivers of olive-oil? Shall I give my first-born because of my crime, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? ⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good and what the LORD requires from you: only that you should act justly, love mercy and walk carefully with your God.

A rebuke to dishonest rich people

⁹ The voice of the LORD is calling out to the city — and with sound wisdom a person will see Your name — “Listen to the rod and to the One who has appointed it! ¹⁰ Are there still the treasures gained through wickedness in the house of the wicked person and the shortened grain measure, which is cursed? ¹¹ Shall I acquit a

person with dishonest scales and with a bag of inaccurate weights? ¹² For the rich people in the city are full of violence. Those who live in it have been telling lies and have deceitful tongues in their mouths. ¹³ Therefore, I on My part shall make you sick by striking you and by ruining you because of your sins. ¹⁴ Although you eat, you will not be satisfied. Your stomach will still be hungry. Although you store up, you will not preserve, and I shall deliver to the sword what you do preserve. ¹⁵ Although you sow, you will not harvest. Although you tread out olives, you will not anoint yourselves with olive-oil. Although you tread out grapes, you will not drink any wine. ¹⁶ They are keeping the statutes of Omri and all the practices of the family of Ahab. You have been following their customs. As a result, I shall make you a desolation and make those who live in the city an object of hissing. You will bear the reproach of My people.”

7

The people's confession of their sin

¹ How miserable I am! For I have become as when the summer fruit has been gathered and as when the grape-harvest has been gleaned. There is no bunch of grapes to eat and no early fig, for which I have been longing.

² The godly person has been removed from the earth, and there is no upright person among human beings. All of them lie in wait to commit murder. Each one is hunting for the other with a snare. ³ Their hands are busy at accomplishing evil and at doing it skilfully. The official and the judge ask for a bribe, and the great man himself dictates his capricious wishes. They have been twisting their schemes together. ⁴ The best of them is like a thorn-bush. The most upright of them is worse than a hedge of thorns. The day announced by Your watchmen, the day when You call people to account, has come. Now they will be confounded. ⁵ Do not trust a neighbour! Do not have any confidence in a close friend! Guard the doors of your mouth from the wife in your embrace! ⁶ For a son calls his father a fool. **A daughter rises up against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A person's enemies are the members of his own family.**

⁷ However, I myself shall be on the lookout for the LORD. I shall wait for God, who saves me. My God will hear me. ⁸ Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Although I have fallen, I shall rise. When I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light.

⁹ Because I have been sinning against Him, I shall bear the wrath of the LORD until He pleads my cause and carries out justice for me. He will bring me out to the light. I shall see His righteousness. ¹⁰ When she who is my enemy sees this, shame will cover her. She had asked me, “Where is the LORD, your God?” My own eyes will look at her. Now she will be trampled down like mud in the streets. ¹¹ That day will be a time to rebuild your walls. On that day the boundary will be far

Micah

extended. ¹² On that day people will come to you, from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, from Egypt to the Euphrates, from one sea to the next and from one mountain to the next. ¹³ However, the earth will be a desolate waste because of those who live on it, because of what their deeds have produced.

¹⁴ Use Your shepherd's staff to take care of Your people, the flock that You have inherited! They are living alone in a thicket in the middle of a fruit-garden. Let them graze in Bashan and Gilead, as they used to do long ago!

¹⁵ I shall show them miraculous deeds as in the days when you came out of Egypt. ¹⁶ When the nations see it they will be ashamed of all their strength. They will put their hands over their mouths. Their ears will be-

come deaf. ¹⁷ They will lick dust like a snake, like creatures that crawl on the ground. They will come out of their fortresses quaking with fear. They will approach the LORD, our God, in trepidation and will be afraid of You.

A declaration about God's faithful love and compassion

¹⁸ Who is a God like You? He forgives wrongdoing and passes over the transgression of the remnant of His inheritance. He has not retained His anger for ever, because He delights in mercy. ¹⁹ He will have compassion on us again. He will overcome our wrongdoings. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

²⁰ You will be faithful to Jacob and be **merciful to Abraham, as** You have been solemnly **promising to our fathers** from the days of old.

NAHUM

1

Nahum's vision about God's anger with Nineveh

¹ This is a pronouncement about Nineveh. This is the scroll of the vision of Nahum from Elkosh. ² The LORD is a jealous and avenging God. The LORD takes revenge and is full of anger. The LORD takes revenge on His adversaries and retains His anger against His enemies. ³ The LORD is slow to anger but has great strength. The Lord will certainly not let a guilty person go unpunished. His path is in the gale and the storm, and the clouds are the dust under His feet. ⁴ He rebukes the sea and makes it dry. He has dried up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel have withered. The flowers of Lebanon have withered. ⁵ The mountains have been quaking because of Him, and the hills have been melting away. The earth has been heaving before Him, the world and all who live in it. ⁶ Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the heat of His anger? His wrath has gushed out like fire, and He has shattered the rocks. ⁷ The LORD is good. He is a stronghold in the day of trouble. He cares for those who take refuge in Him. ⁸ However, He will bring about complete destruction of the place of the city with an overflowing flood. He will pursue His enemies into darkness. ⁹ What are you plotting against the LORD? He will bring about complete destruction. Trouble will not appear a second time. ¹⁰ For they will be like tangled thorns. They will be made drunk like their own drunkards. They will be consumed like very dry stubble. ¹¹ Someone who has been plotting evil against the LORD, one who gives wicked advice, has come out of you.

¹² This is what the LORD has said: "Although they are at full strength and numerous, they will be cut off and pass away. Although I have humiliated you, I shall not humiliate you any longer. ¹³ Now therefore, I shall break his yoke away from you and tear your chains to pieces."

¹⁴ The LORD will give an order about you: "None of your name will be perpetuated any longer. I shall cut off the carved image and the metal image from the temple of your gods. I shall prepare your grave. For you have become worthless."

¹⁵ Look! The feet of a messenger who is **bringing good news** is on the mountains. He is **announcing peace**. Celebrate your feasts, Judah! Fulfil your vows! For a worthless person will never pass through you again. He will be completely destroyed.

2

A prediction that an army will conquer Nineveh

¹ The one who will scatter will come up against you. Keep watch over the fortress! Keep a lookout on the road! Tie up your clothes for action! Marshal all your strength! ² For the Lord will restore the majesty of Ja-

cob as the majesty of Israel, although plunderers have laid them waste and have ruined the branches of their vines. ³ The shields of its warriors will be dyed red. Its brave soldiers will be dressed in crimson. The iron on the chariots will flash on the day when he makes them ready. The cypress spears will be brandished. ⁴ The chariots will charge madly through the streets. They will rush this way and that through the city-squares. They will look like torches. They will drive back and forth like flashes of lightning. ⁵ He will remember his officers. They will stumble as they advance. They will hurry to the city-wall. The protective structure will be firmly set up. ⁶ The river-gates will be opened. The palace will collapse.

The plunder of the treasures of Nineveh

⁷ It will be decreed. The city will be taken into exile and carried away. Its maid-servants will moan like doves and beat their breasts. ⁸ Nineveh has been like a pool of water from the time when it came into being. When the water is draining away and people cry, "Stop! Halt!" no one turns back. ⁹ "Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold!" There is no end of the supply or of the wealth of all the delightful articles. ¹⁰ The city will be emptied, laid waste and devastated. Hearts will melt and knees will stagger. All hips will tremble. The faces of them all will become pale. ¹¹ Where is the lions' den, the feeding place for the young lions, where the lion and lioness walked, where the lion's cubs were and where no one caused them fear? ¹² The lion used to tear enough for his cubs and used to strangle prey for his lionesses. He filled his lairs with prey and his dens with torn bodies.

¹³ "Look! I am against you," declares the LORD of hosts. "I shall reduce the city's chariots to cinders, and the sword will devour your young lions. I shall cut off your prey from the earth, and the voices of your messengers will not be heard any longer."

3

The punishment of Nineveh for its sin

¹ How terrible for the murderous city! All of it is full of lying and plunder. There is no end to the prey. ² The crack of the whip! The sound of rattling wheels! Horses gallop and chariots bound along. ³ Horses rear up! Swords flash! Spears glitter! Many are killed! Dead bodies pile up! There is no end to the corpses! People keep tripping over those corpses. ⁴ It is because of the numerous acts of prostitution of this prostitute, this very charming sorceress. She has been selling off nations for the price of her acts of prostitution and peoples through her sorceries.

⁵ "Look! I am against you," declares the LORD of hosts. "I shall lift your skirts up over your face. I shall show your naked body to the nations and your shame to the kingdoms. ⁶ I shall throw filth at you, treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. ⁷ All who look at

Nahum

you will run away from you and say, ‘Nineveh has been devastated. Who will show sympathy for her? Where shall I try to find any who may comfort you?’”

⁸ Are you better than Thebes, which belonged to Amun, and which used to sit beside the Nile, with water surrounding it? The river was its defence. The water was its wall. ⁹ Cush and Egypt were her limitless strength. Put and the Libyans were your allies. ¹⁰ Even it was taken away as a captive and went into exile. Its babies were dashed in pieces at every street corner. Lots were cast for its noblemen, and all its great men were tied up with chains. ¹¹ You also will become drunk. You will go into hiding. You, too, will try to find protection from the enemy. ¹² All your fortresses will be like fig-trees with the earliest figs. If they are shaken around they will fall on the mouth of the one who eats them. ¹³ Look! Your soldiers, who are inside you, are women. The city-gates of your country will be opened wide to your enemies. Fire will devour the bars of your gates.

A prophecy that the strength of Nineveh will not save it

¹⁴ Draw yourself water for the siege! Strengthen your fortifications! Go into the clay-pits! Tread on the mortar! Take hold of the brick-mould! ¹⁵ There the fire will devour you. The sword will cut you off. It will devour you like creeping locusts. Multiply like creeping locusts! Multiply like migratory locusts! ¹⁶ You have made your merchants more numerous than the stars in the sky. They are like a creeping locust, which has shed its skin and flown away. ¹⁷ Your courtiers are like migratory locusts. Your officials are like swarms of locusts settling on the stone-fences on a cold day. When the sun rises, they fly away. No one knows where they have gone. ¹⁸ King of Assyria, your shepherds have fallen asleep. Your nobles are slumbering. Your people have been scattered over the mountains, and no one will gather them. ¹⁹ There is no remedy for your wound. Your affliction is incurable. All who hear the news about you will clap their hands over you. For who has not suffered from your unceasing evil?

HABAKKUK

1

The vision of Habakkuk

¹ This is the pronouncement that the prophet Habakkuk saw in a vision.

Habakkuk's first question

² How long, LORD, shall I keep calling for help when You do not listen? I keep crying out to You, 'There is violence!' but You will not save. ³ Why do You make me look at wrongdoing? Why do You make me stare at trouble? Destruction and violence are in front of me. There is disputing, and quarrelling arises. ⁴ That is why the Law is paralysed and justice has no successful result. For wicked people surround righteous people. That is why, when justice is issued, it is distorted.

God's answer to Habakkuk's question

⁵ "You people **should look** among the nations and watch! **Be astonished** and horrified! **For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe if you were told about it.** ⁶ For look! I am going to rouse the Chaldeans, that grim and impetuous nation, which **marches through the whole earth** to take possession of dwellings that do not belong to them. ⁷ They are terrifying and dreaded. They determine their own kind of justice and majesty. ⁸ Their horses will be faster than leopards and quicker than wolves in the evening. Their horsemen will charge along. Their horsemen will come from far away. They will fly like eagles that swoop to devour. ⁹ They will all come to be violent. Their whole vanguard will be like the east wind. They will gather prisoners like sand. ¹⁰ They will make fun of kings and laugh at notable persons. They will laugh at every fortress. For they will pile up earth and capture it. ¹¹ Then they sweep through like the wind and go past. Nevertheless, they will suffer for their guilt because their own strength is their god."

Habakkuk's second question

¹² O LORD, my God, my Holy One, are You not from everlasting? We shall not die! O LORD, You have appointed them to bring judgment. O Rock, You have allocated them to bring a rebuke. ¹³ Your eyes are too pure to look at evil. You cannot look at harm. Why would You look at treacherous people? Why would You be silent when a wicked person swallows up someone who is more righteous than he is? ¹⁴ Why have You made human beings like the fish in the sea, like crawling creatures that have no ruler over them? ¹⁵ He will pull them all up with a fishhook. He will drag them away with his dragnet. He will gather them in his fishing net. That is why he rejoices and shouts for joy. ¹⁶ That is why he offers sacrifices to his dragnet and burns offerings to his fishing net. For it is by using them that he has a rich share of food and the choicest meals. ¹⁷ Is this the

reason why he should be emptying his dragnet and why he should be constantly killing nations without pity?

2

Habakkuk's waiting for the answer of God

¹ Let me stand in position at my guard post! Let me take my stand on the watchtower! Let me watch to see what He will say to me and what I shall reply about my complaint!

God's answer that the righteous person will live through his faith

² Then the LORD answered me: "Write down the revelation! Inscribe it distinctly on tablets, that whoever reads it may move fluently! ³ For the vision is waiting for its appointed time. It longs for the end and will not tell a lie. If it delays, wait for it! For it **will certainly come! It will not be late.** ⁴ Look! His soul is puffed up. It is not upright inside him. But **the righteous person will live by his faith.**"

A prediction of trouble for the oppressive Chaldeans

⁵ How much more treacherous he is than wine! The man is arrogant and will not rest. He has opened his throat as wide as Sheol. He is like death and is never satisfied. He has grasped all nations to himself and has collected all the peoples as his own. ⁶ Will not all these peoples use a taunt against him and use a mocking poem and a riddle for him? Will they not say, 'How terrible for the one who heaps up what is not his own and who loads himself with securities for loans!' How long will this go on? ⁷ Will not those who take interest from you suddenly rise up? Will not those who make you tremble wake up? Then they will plunder you. ⁸ Because you yourself have plundered many nations, all the peoples that are left will plunder you, because of your murder of human beings and the violence you have done to the land, to cities and to all who live in them.

⁹ How terrible for the man who makes profit wickedly for his family, to set his nest up high, to rescue himself from the clutches of calamity! ¹⁰ You have been planning shame for your family by causing the end of many peoples and forfeiting your own life.

¹¹ For a stone will cry out from a wall and a rafter will answer it from the woodwork.

¹² How terrible for him who uses murder to build a city and who uses injustice to found a city! ¹³ Look! Does it not come from the LORD of hosts that peoples labour only for the sake of fire and nations exhaust themselves for nothing? ¹⁴ For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁵ How terrible for him who gives drink to his neighbours! You pour out your poison and even make them drunk, to gaze at their sexual organs! ¹⁶ You will satisfy yourself with shame instead of glory. You also, drink and expose your uncircumcision! The cup

Habakkuk

in the right hand of the LORD will come around to you and disgrace will cover your glory. ¹⁷ For the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, as will the mistreatment of the animals, which shattered them, because of your murder of human beings and the violence you have done to the land, to cities and to all who live in them.

¹⁸ What benefit is there in a carved idol when its maker has carved it? It is a metal image, a teacher of lies. For the one who shapes it trusts in what he has shaped himself, with the result that he makes pagan gods, which cannot speak. ¹⁹ How terrible for him who says to a piece of wood, 'Wake up!' and to a dumb stone, 'Awake!' Can this teach anyone? Look! It is overlaid with gold and silver, but there is no breath inside it at all. ²⁰ Nevertheless, the LORD is in His holy Temple. Keep silent before Him, all the earth!

3

A psalm

¹ This is a prayer of the prophet Habakkuk, according to *Shigionoth*.

² LORD, I have heard about Your fame. I am afraid of Your actions. LORD, bring it back to life in the middle of the years! Make it known in the middle of the years! Although You have been angry, remember to be merciful!

³ God comes from Teman. The Holy One comes from Mount Paran. *Selah*.

His majesty has covered the heavens. His praise has filled the earth.

⁴ His brightness is like the light. Although He has had rays of light flashing from His hand, there He has veiled His power.

⁵ A plague goes ahead of Him and a pestilence follows at His heels.

⁶ He has been standing and shaking the earth. He has been looking at the nations and causing them to jump. The ancient mountains have been shattered. The everlasting hills have cowered down. Everlasting paths belong to Him.

⁷ I have seen the tents of Cushan suppressed by calamity. The tent-curtains of the land of Midian are trembling.

⁸ Was the LORD furious with the rivers? Were You angry with the rivers or were You raging against the sea when You were riding on Your horses, on Your chariot of salvation?

⁹ You were beginning to uncover Your bow. Arrows were oaths at Your Command. *Selah*.

You were dividing the earth with rivers.

¹⁰ When mountains saw You they began to writhe. A heavy rainstorm passed along. The deep ocean gave out its roar. It raised its hands up high.

¹¹ The sun and the moon stood still in their lofty dwellings. They began to vanish at the light of Your

arrows, at the flash of Your glittering spear.

¹² You were striding through the earth in indignation. You were trampling down the nations in anger.

¹³ You have gone out to save Your people, to save Your anointed one. You have smashed the leader away from the family of a wicked person. You have stripped his foundation bare up to his neck. *Selah*.

¹⁴ You have pierced the heads of his warriors with his own arrows. His warriors had been coming like a storm to scatter me. They were gloating like those who devour a poor person in secret.

Habakkuk

¹⁵ You have been walking through the sea with your horses, through the mighty, foaming waters.

¹⁶ When I heard it, my inner being trembled. My lips quivered at the sound. Decay began to enter my bones. I was trembling where I stood. For I must wait for the day of distress to come against the people who will attack us.

The prophet Habakkuk's joy in the Lord

¹⁷ Even if the fig-tree does not bud and there is no fruit on the vines, even if the produce of the olive-trees has failed and the fields have not yielded any

food, even if the flock has been cut off from the sheep pen and there are no cattle in the stalls, ¹⁸ **I myself shall be jubilant in the LORD. I shall rejoice in God, who saves me.**

¹⁹ The LORD God is my strength. He has made my feet like those of a deer. He causes me to walk on my high places.

To the director of music, on my stringed instruments.

ZEPHANIAH

1

¹ This is the Word of the LORD that came to Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, when Josiah, the son of Amon, was king of Judah.

A prophecy that God will judge the whole earth

² “**I shall completely bring everything** on the surface of **the earth to an end**,” declares the LORD. ³ “I shall put an end to human beings and animals. I shall put an end to the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea and the heaps of ruins together with the wicked people. I shall cut off mankind from the surface of the earth,” declares the LORD.

A prophecy that God will judge Judah

⁴ “I shall stretch out My hand against Judah and against all those who live in Jerusalem. I shall also cut off the last traces of Baal from this place and the names of the pagan priests along with the other priests. ⁵ I shall also cut off those who bow down on the flat roofs to the starry host of the sky and those who bow down and swear oaths to the LORD but also swear by Milcom. ⁶ I shall also cut off those who have turned away from following the LORD and those who have not been devoted to the LORD or asking Him for advice.”

⁷ Be silent in the presence of the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near. For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice. He has declared holy those whom He has invited.

⁸ “On the day of the sacrifice of the LORD I shall punish the princes, the king’s sons and all who dress in foreign clothing. ⁹ On that day I shall punish everyone who jumps over the threshold and all who fill their masters’ houses with violence and deception.

¹⁰ “On that day,” declares the LORD, “a loud screaming will come from the Fish-Gate, a howling from the Second Quarter and a loud crash from the hills.

¹¹ Howl, you who live in Maktesh! For all the merchant people will be destroyed. All who weigh out silver will be exterminated. ¹² At that time I shall search Jerusalem with lamps and punish the men who are becoming thick on their dregs of wine, those who are thinking, ‘The LORD will not do anything good or do anything evil.’ ¹³ Their wealth will be plundered, and their houses will become a sinister desolation. Although they build houses, they will not live in them. Although they plant vineyards, they will not drink their wine.”

An announcement that the great day of the Lord is near — Amos 5:18-20

¹⁴ The **great day of the LORD is near**. It is near and coming very quickly. Listen! The day of the LORD will be bitter. There the warrior will scream for help.

¹⁵ That day will be a **day of wrath**, a day of trouble and distress, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, ¹⁶ a day of trumpet-blowing and battle cries

against the fortified cities and against the high corner-towers.

¹⁷ “I shall bring such distress on human beings that they will walk like blind people, because they have sinned against the LORD.”

Their blood will be poured out like dust, and their intestines like pellets of dung. ¹⁸ Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to rescue them on the day of the wrath of the LORD. The fire of His jealousy will devour the whole earth. For He will bring complete destruction, yes, something dreadful, on all who are living on the earth.

2

A call to Judah to turn away from sin

¹ Assemble and stay together, shameless nation, ² before the appointed time arrives, before the day has gone past like chaff, before the burning anger of the LORD overtakes you, before the day of the anger of the LORD comes on you! ³ Be intent on the LORD, all you humble people of the earth, who have been carrying out His just Commands! Strive for righteousness! Strive for humility! Perhaps you may remain hidden on the day of the anger of the LORD.

A prediction that God will judge His people’s enemies

⁴ For Gaza will be abandoned, and Ashkelon will become a sinister ruin. Ashdod will be driven out at noon, and Ekron will be torn out by the roots. ⁵ How terrible for you who are living on the seacoast, nation of the Cherethites! The Word of the LORD is against you, Canaan, land of the Philistines.

“I shall exterminate you, so that no one will be living there.”

⁶ The seacoast will be a place for grazing, with meadows for shepherds and fenced-in places for sheep. ⁷ The seacoast will become the possession of the remnant of the family of Judah. They will graze their sheep there. In the evenings they will lie down in the houses of Ashkelon. For the LORD, their God, will take care of them and bring about a restoration.

A proclamation against Moab and Ammon

⁸ “I have heard the taunts of Moab and the scornful words of the Ammonites. They have been insulting My people and making boasts against their territory.

⁹ Therefore, as surely as I live,” declares the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “Moab will certainly become like Sodom, and the Ammonites like Gomorrah, ground full of weeds and salt pits and a permanent wasteland. The remnant of My people will plunder them, and the survivors of My nation will inherit them.”

¹⁰ This is what they will get in return for their pride. For they have been taunting the people of the LORD of hosts and boasting against them. ¹¹ The LORD will be awesome against them. For He will cause all the gods of the earth to vanish. All the coastlands of the nations

Zephaniah

will worship Him, each one from its own place.

¹² “You Cushites, you also will be slain by My sword.”

A proclamation against Assyria

¹³ He will stretch out His hand against the north and destroy Assyria. He will make Nineveh a sinister desolation, a dry region like the desert. ¹⁴ Herds will lie down in the middle of it and all kinds of wild animals. Even the desert-owl and the screech-owl will spend the night on the tops of its pillars. There will be sounds of hooting in the windows. There will be piles of rubble in the doorways. For He will expose its cedar panelling. ¹⁵ This is the exultant city that used to live in security. It used to think, “I am the only one, and there is no one else.” What a desolation it has become! It will be a place for wild animals to lie down. Everyone who goes past it will hiss and shake his fist.

3

A prediction that Jerusalem will be destroyed

¹ How terrible it will be for that rebellious, defiled and violent city! ² It has not been listening to any voice. It has not been accepting any discipline. It has not been trusting in the LORD. It has not come near to its God. ³ Its officials, who are inside it, are roaring lions. Its judges are like wolves in the evening, which do not leave anything for the morning. ⁴ Its prophets are undisciplined deceivers. Its priests have been profaning what is holy. They have been violating the Law. ⁵ The LORD, who is inside it, is righteous. He does not do anything unjust. He dispenses His justice every morning. At each new day He does not fail. However, the unjust person knows no shame.

⁶ “I shall cut off nations. Their corner-towers will be deserted. I shall reduce their streets to ruin so that no one will go past in them. Their cities will be made desolate. No one will be left. No one will live there. ⁷ I had thought, ‘Surely you will fear Me. You will accept discipline. Then its dwelling would not be cut off exactly as I had given instructions about it.’ Nevertheless, they have been all the more eager to behave corruptly in all their deeds.

⁸ “Therefore, wait for Me,” declares the LORD, “until the day when I rise up for plunder. For I have decided to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms and **to pour** out My indignation, all **My** burning **anger**, on them.

For the fire of My jealousy will devour **the** whole **earth**. ⁹ For at that time I shall restore a pure language for the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve Him with a single purpose.”

A prophecy of a humble remnant

¹⁰ “My worshippers, the daughters of My dispersed people, will bring My offering from beyond the rivers of Cush. ¹¹ On that day you will not be ashamed because of all your rebellious acts against Me. For then I shall remove your arrogant boasters from among you, and you will no longer be haughty on My holy mountain. ¹² However, I shall leave among you a humble and poor people.”

They will take refuge in the name of the LORD. ¹³ Those who are left in Israel will **not** act unjustly or tell **lies**. No deceitful tongues **will be found in their mouths**. For they will be grazing and lying down, and no one will make them afraid.

Israel's joyful song about a promise of future happiness

¹⁴ Cry out in jubilation, daughter Zion! Shout, Israel! Rejoice and triumph with all your heart, daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you. He has turned away your enemy. The King of Israel, the LORD, is among you. You will not fear calamity any longer. ¹⁶ On that day Jerusalem will be told, “Do not be afraid, Zion! Do not let your hands hang limp! ¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is among you. He is a Warrior, who saves. He will rejoice happily over you. He will reduce you to silence in His love. He will exult over you with shouts of joy.”

¹⁸ “I shall gather those who are grieving because of the festival. They have been absent from you. The burden on Zion has been disgrace. ¹⁹ Look! At that time, I shall deal with all who are oppressing you. I shall save those who are lame. I shall gather those who have been scattered. I shall change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰ At that time I shall bring you in, yes, at the time when I gather you together. For I shall make you famous and praised among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your eyes.” This is what the LORD has said.

HAGGAI

1

A call to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem — Ezra 5:1

¹ On the first day of the sixth month in the second year of king Darius, the Word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to the governor of Judah, Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, and to the High Priest, Joshua, the son of Jehozadak. He said: ² “This is what the LORD of hosts has said: ‘These people have been saying that the time has not come yet, the time for the Temple of the LORD to be rebuilt.’”

³ Then the Word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: ⁴ “Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins?”

⁵ Now, therefore, this is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Think carefully about your behaviour!

⁶ Although you have sown much, you have been harvesting little. Although you eat, you are not satisfied. Although you drink, you never have enough to drink. Although you clothe yourselves, no one is getting warm. The one who hiring himself out is earning wages only to put them into a bag with holes in it.”

⁷ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Think carefully about your behaviour! ⁸ Go up to the hill-country, bring timber and build the Temple, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified!” This is what the LORD has said.

⁹ “You have been beginning great projects, but look! They have come to little. When you brought anything home, I blew on it. Why?” asks the LORD of hosts. “It is because of My house, which is lying in ruins, while each of you is hurriedly attending to his own house.

¹⁰ That is why the sky over you has been holding back the dew and the earth has been holding back its yield.

¹¹ I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the olive-oil, on whatever else the ground produces, on human beings and animals and on everything for which your hands are toiling.”

The resumption of work on the Temple

¹² Then Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel and the High Priest, Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, with all the people who were left, obeyed what the LORD, their God, was saying and the Words of the prophet Haggai, since the LORD, their God, had sent him. The people feared the LORD. ¹³ Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, used the Message of the LORD in speaking to the people: “‘I am with you,’ declares the LORD.”

¹⁴ The LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, the spirit of the High Priest, Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, and the spirits of all the people who were left. They came and carried out work on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God.

¹⁵ It was on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius.

2

A promise that the new Temple will be greater than the old one

¹ On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the Word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai. He said, ² “Now, speak to Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to the Chief Priest Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, and to the remnant of the people. Ask: ³ ‘Who is there among you who is left who saw this house in its former glory? How, then, do you see it now? Does it not seem like nothing to you?’

⁴ “Now, however, Zerub-Babel, be strong!” declares the LORD. “Be strong, Joshua, the Chief Priest, the son of Jehozadak! Be strong, all you people of the land!” declares the LORD. “Work! For I am with you,” declares the LORD of hosts. ⁵ “This is the Promise that I made as a Covenant with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains among you. Do not be afraid!”

⁶ For this is what the LORD of hosts has said: “In a little while, **I shall once again shake the heavens, the earth, the sea and the dry land.** ⁷ I shall also shake all the nations, and they will come to the One whom all the nations desire. Then I shall fill this house with glory,” the LORD of hosts has said. ⁸ “The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,” declares the LORD of hosts. ⁹ “This latter house will be more splendid than the former one,” the LORD of hosts has said. “In this place I shall give peace,” declares the LORD of hosts.

A promise that God will bless the people despite their sin

¹⁰ On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the Word of the LORD came to the prophet Haggai. He said: ¹¹ “This is what the LORD of hosts has said: ‘Please ask the priests about the Law: ¹² “If someone uses the skirt of his garment to carry holy meat in it and, if his skirt touches bread, cooked food, wine, olive-oil or any other kind of food, does it become holy?’”

The priests replied by saying, “No.”

¹³ Then Haggai asked, “If someone who is ceremonially unclean through contact with a dead person touches any of these, does it become unclean?”

The priests answered, “It will be unclean.”

¹⁴ Then Haggai answered: “It is like that with this people and it is like that with this nation before Me,” declares the LORD, “and it is like that with everything that they do with their hands. Whatever they offer there is unclean. ¹⁵ Now therefore, please think carefully about this from this day on! Even before one stone was laid on another in the Temple of the LORD, ¹⁶ since that time, when anyone came to a heap of twenty measures of grain, there were only ten. When anyone came to a wine vat to draw out fifty measures, there were only twenty. ¹⁷ I have been striking you in everything that you have been doing with your hands with blight, with mildew and with hail. Nevertheless, you

Haggai

have not been willing to come back to Me,” declares the LORD. ¹⁸ “Please think carefully from this day on, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, since the day when the foundation of the Temple of the LORD was laid! Think about it carefully! ¹⁹ Is there seed in the granary any longer? Even the vine, the fig-tree, the pomegranate and the olive-tree have not yielded anything. However, from this day on I shall bless you.”

A promise to Zerub-Babel

²⁰ The Word of the LORD came to Haggai a second time, on the twenty-fourth day of the month. He said:

²¹ “Tell Zerub-Babel, the governor of Judah, ‘I am about to make the heavens and the earth quake. ²² I shall overthrow the thrones of kingdoms. I shall destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations. I shall overthrow the chariots and their riders. The horses and their riders will fall. They will kill one another with swords. ²³ On that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘I shall take you, Zerub-Babel, My servant, the son of Shealtiel,’ declares the LORD, ‘and make you like a signet ring. For I have chosen you,’” declares the LORD of hosts.

ZECHARIAH

1

An admonition to turn from evil ways

¹ In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the Word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo. He said: ² “The LORD was very angry with your ancestors. ³ Therefore, tell them, ‘This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Return to Me,” declares the LORD of hosts, “and I shall return to you!”’” This is what the LORD of hosts has said.

⁴ “Do not be like your ancestors! The earlier prophets proclaimed to them: ‘This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Please turn back from your evil behaviour and from your evil practices!” However, they did not listen or pay attention to Me,’” declares the LORD.

⁵ “Your fathers — where are they? The prophets, do they stay alive for ever? ⁶ Nevertheless, did My Words and My Prescriptions, which I commanded **My servants the prophets**, not overtake your fathers?” Then they repented and said, “The LORD of hosts has done to us as He had planned to do to us for our behaviour and our deeds.”

A vision of a horseman among myrtles in a ravine

⁷ On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the Word of the LORD came and spoke to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo. ⁸ During the night **I saw** a man riding on a **red horse**. He was standing among the myrtle trees that were in a ravine. There were also **red, light red and white** horses behind him. ⁹ I asked, “What are these, my master?”

The angel who was speaking to me told me, “I shall show you what these are.”

¹⁰ Then the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, “These are the ones that the LORD has sent to go throughout the earth.”

¹¹ Then they answered the Angel of the LORD, who was standing among the myrtle trees. They said, “We have been going throughout the earth and seen that the whole earth is still and quiet.”

¹² Then the Angel of the LORD asked: “LORD of hosts, how much longer will You withhold Your compassion from Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah? You have been angry with them for the past seventy years.”

¹³ The LORD used kind and comforting Words to answer the angel who was talking to me. ¹⁴ Then the angel who was talking to me told me: “Announce: ‘This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “I have been extremely jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion. ¹⁵ I am extremely angry with the nations that feel secure. For while I Myself was only a little angry, they made the calamity worse.”’”

¹⁶ Therefore, this is what the LORD has said: “I have

come back to Jerusalem to be compassionate. My Temple will be rebuilt in it,” declares the LORD of hosts, “and a measuring-line will be stretched out over Jerusalem.”

¹⁷ “Announce further: ‘This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “My cities will overflow with prosperity again. The LORD will comfort Zion again and choose Jerusalem again.”’”

A vision of four horns and four craftsmen

¹⁸ When I looked up, I suddenly saw four horns. ¹⁹ I asked the angel who was talking to me, “What are these?”

He told me, “These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.”

²⁰ Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. ²¹ I asked: “What are these coming to do?”

He said: “These are the horns that scattered Judah so much that no one raised his head. The craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations that used to lift up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it.”

2

A promise that God will choose Jerusalem and that Jerusalem will be without walls

¹ When I looked up I suddenly saw a man with a **measuring**-line in his hand. ² Then I asked, “Where are you going?”

He told me, “**To measure** Jerusalem, to see **how wide** and **how long** it is.”

³ Then I saw the angel who had been talking to me going out. Then another angel came out to meet him. ⁴ He told him: “Run! Tell that young man, ‘People will live in Jerusalem as people do in open country places, because it will have so many human beings and animals in it.’”

⁵ “I Myself shall be a wall of fire all around it,” declares the LORD, “and I shall be the glory inside it.”

An appeal to exiles to come to Zion

⁶ “Come! Come! Flee from the land of the north!” declares the LORD. “For I have dispersed you like the four winds of the sky,” declares the LORD.

⁷ Come! Escape to Zion, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon! ⁸ For this is what the LORD of hosts has said: “To obtain glory, He has sent Me to the nations who were plundering you.”

For anyone who touches you touches the pupil of His eye.

⁹ “For look! I shall shake My fist against them, and they will become plunder for those who used to serve them. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me.”

¹⁰ “Be glad and rejoice, daughter of Zion! For look! **I am** coming and **shall live among you**,” declares the LORD.

¹¹ “Many nations will join themselves to the LORD on that day and **be My people. I shall live among you**.”

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Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. ¹² The LORD will inherit Judah as His own portion in the Holy Land and will again choose Jerusalem.”

¹³ Be silent, all humankind, before the LORD! For He has roused Himself from His holy dwelling.

3

The cleansing of the High Priest and a promise that God will send His Servant, the Branch

¹ Then He showed me the High Priest, Joshua standing before the Angel of the LORD. Satan was standing at Joshua’s right hand to **accuse** him. ² The LORD told Satan: “**May the LORD rebuke you, Satan! May the LORD, who chooses Jerusalem, rebuke you!** Is not this a burning stick snatched from a fire?”

³ Joshua was wearing **filthy clothes** and was standing in front of the Angel. ⁴ The Angel told those who were standing in front of Him, “Remove the **filthy clothes** from him!”

Then He told Joshua, “Look! I have taken your guilt away from you and am dressing you in festival robes.”

⁵ Then I said, “Let them put a ceremonially clean headband on his head!”

They put a clean headband on his head and clothed him with garments while the Angel of the LORD was standing there. ⁶ The Angel of the LORD solemnly assured Joshua: ⁷ “This is what the LORD of hosts has said: ‘If you walk in My Ways and observe My Requirements, then you yourself will also rule My Temple and have charge of My courts. Then I shall give you free access among these who are standing here. ⁸ Please listen, O High Priest, Joshua, you and your companions who are sitting before you! For they are men who symbolise something wonderful. For look! I shall bring My Servant, the Branch. ⁹ For look at the stone that I have set before Joshua! See! On a single stone with seven eyes I shall engrave its inscription,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘and I shall remove the guilt of this land in a single day. ¹⁰ On that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘each one of you will invite his neighbour to come under his vine and under his fig-tree.’”

4

A vision of a lampstand and two olive-trees and a promise that the Temple will be rebuilt

¹ The angel who was speaking to me came again and woke me, like a man who is woken up out of his sleep.

² He asked me, “What do you see?”

I said: “I have suddenly seen a solid gold lampstand with a bowl on the top of it and seven lamps on it. There are also seven spouts for the lamps that are on the top of it. ³ There are **two olive-trees** beside it, one on the right, and the other on the left of the bowl.”

⁴ I asked the angel who was speaking to me, “What are these, my master?”

⁵ Then the angel who was speaking to me answered by asking me: “Do you not know what these are?”

I replied, “No, my master.”

⁶ Then he told me: “This is the Word of the LORD to Zerub-Babel: ‘Not by human strength and not by power but by My Spirit,’” is what the LORD of hosts has said.

⁷ “What are you, O high mountain? In front of Zerub-Babel you will become a plain. He will bring out the topmost stone while people shout, ‘Blessings, blessings be on it!’”

⁸ Then the Word of the LORD came to me. He said:

⁹ “The hands of Zerub-Babel have laid the foundation of this Temple. His hands will also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. ¹⁰ For whoever have despised the day of small things will rejoice and see the plumb-line in Zerub-Babel’s hand. These **seven** are the **eyes** of the LORD, which **roam about over the whole earth.**”

¹¹ Then I asked him, “What are these **two olive-trees** at the right and at the left of the lampstand?”

¹² I spoke a second time and asked him, “What are these two clusters of branches of the **olive-trees**, which are beside the two golden pipes, which are pouring out the golden oil from high up on them?”

¹³ He asked me, “Do you not know what these are?”

I said, “No, my master.”

¹⁴ Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones, **who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.**”

5

A vision of a flying scroll

¹ When I looked up again, I suddenly saw a flying scroll! ² He asked me, “What do you see?”

I answered: “I see a flying scroll. It is ten metres long and five metres wide.”

³ Then he told me: “This is the curse that is going out over the whole earth. For everyone who steals will be banished according to what is on the one side of the scroll, and everyone who takes an oath will be banished according to what is on the other side of it. ⁴ ‘I have sent it out,’ declares the LORD of hosts, “and it will enter the house of a thief and the house of one who uses My name to swear falsely. It will remain in his house and destroy it, both its timber and its stones.”

A prediction that wickedness will be removed from the land

⁵ Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and told me, “Please look up and see what this is that is appearing!”

⁶ I asked, “What is it?”

He said, “This is the measuring-basket, which is coming out.” He added, “This is the sin of people all over the earth.”

⁷ Then I saw that the lead-cover was being raised, and there was a woman sitting inside the basket! ⁸ He said, “This is Wickedness.”

Then he pushed her back inside the basket and pushed the slab of lead down over its opening.

⁹ When I looked up and took notice, I suddenly saw that two women were coming forward. The wind was

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in their wings. They had wings like those of a stork. They lifted the measuring-basket up between the earth and the sky. ¹⁰ Then I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "Where are they taking the measuring-basket?"

¹¹ He told me: "To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. When this has been prepared, the basket will be set down there on the place for it."

6

A vision of four chariots of God, which announce the victory of God throughout the earth

¹ When I looked up again and took notice, I saw four chariots coming out from between two mountains. The mountains were of bronze. ² The first chariot had **red horses**. The second had **black horses**. ³ The third chariot had **white horses**, and the fourth chariot had strong, spotted horses. ⁴ Then I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "What are these, my master?"

⁵ The angel answered me: "These are the **four winds** of heaven. They are going out after they have been standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

⁶ The chariot with the black horses is going out toward the north country, and the white horses have followed them. The spotted ones have gone out toward the south country."

⁷ When the strong horses came out, they were straining to leave and go throughout the earth. When he said, "Leave! Go throughout the earth!" they went throughout the earth. ⁸ Then He called out to me, "Look! The ones that were going out toward the north country have pacified My Spirit in the north country."

The making of a crown for Joshua and a prophecy of the Branch

⁹ Then the Word of the LORD came to me. He said:

¹⁰ "Receive a gift from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon! Then you yourself shall go on the same day to the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah! ¹¹ Receive silver and gold from them, make a crown and place it on the head of the **High Priest**, Joshua, the son of Jehozadak! ¹² Tell him, 'This is what the LORD of hosts has said: "Here is the Man whose name is 'Branch.' He will branch out from His place and build **the Temple of the LORD**."

¹³ He Himself will rebuild **the Temple of the LORD** and He Himself will bear majesty. He will sit on His throne and rule on it. He will also be **a priest** on His throne. Both of them will be planning peace. ¹⁴ The crown will be in the Temple of the LORD as a reminder to Helem,¹⁶⁵ Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen, the son of Zephaniah. ¹⁵ People who are far away will come and help to rebuild the Temple of the LORD. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. This will happen if you diligently listen to the voice of the LORD, your God."'"

7

A question about fasting and a rebuke for not listening to God's prophets

¹ In the fourth year of King Darius, the Word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislev. ² The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech with their men to ask for the favour of the LORD. ³ They asked the priests at the Temple of the LORD of hosts and the prophets, "Should we mourn and fast in the fifth month, as we have been doing for so many years now?"

⁴ Then the Word of the LORD of hosts came to me. He said: ⁵ "Ask all the people of the land and the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and the seventh months during these past seventy years, was it really on My own account that you fasted?' ⁶ When you were eating and when you were drinking, were you yourselves not eating and were you yourselves not drinking? ⁷ Were not these the same Words as the LORD proclaimed through the earlier prophets, when Jerusalem and its surrounding cities were inhabited and undisturbed and when the Negev and the western foothills were still inhabited?"

A call for genuine justice

⁸ Then the Word of the LORD came to Zechariah. He said: ⁹ "This is what the LORD of hosts has said: 'Administer genuine justice! Be merciful and compassionate to one another! ¹⁰ Do not oppress a widow, an orphan, a resident-foreigner or a poor person! **Do not think evil** in your hearts about one another!'"

¹¹ However, they refused to pay attention. They stubbornly turned their backs and blocked their ears to avoid listening. ¹² They made their hearts as hard as diamonds, so that they would not listen to the Law and the Words that the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the earlier prophets. Therefore, the LORD of hosts became very angry. ¹³ "When I called, they would not listen. So, when they call, I shall not listen." This is what the LORD of hosts has said.

¹⁴ "I also used a storm to blow them away among all the other nations, which they had not known. The land that they left behind was stripped of inhabitants, so that no one went through it or came back to it. They turned the pleasant land into a wasteland."

8

God's promise of peace and prosperity for Zion

¹ The Word of the LORD of hosts came. He said: ² "This is what the LORD of hosts has said: 'I am very jealous about Zion. I am burning with great jealousy about it.'"

³ This is what the LORD has said: "I have returned to Zion and shall live inside Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be called 'The City of Truth,' 'The Mountain of the LORD of Hosts,' and 'The Holy Mountain.'"

⁴ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: "Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem. They will all have walking sticks in their hands because they will be very old. ⁵ The streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in its open

¹⁶⁵ Helem is an alternative spelling for Heldai, v. 10.

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places.”

⁶ This is what the LORD of hosts has asked: “If the remnant of this people think that this is too difficult in those days, should I also think that it is too difficult?” declares the LORD of hosts.

⁷ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Look! I shall save My people from the land of the east and from the land of the west. ⁸ I shall bring them to live inside Jerusalem. **They will be My people, and I Myself shall be their God,** in truth and in righteousness.”

⁹ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Work courageously, you people who are currently listening to these Words from the mouths of the prophets who were present on the day when the foundation of the Temple of the LORD of hosts was laid, that the Temple might be rebuilt! ¹⁰ For before that time there were no wages for any person, and there was no money to hire an animal. There was no safety for anyone to go or come because of the enemy. I had turned every person against everyone else. ¹¹ However, now I shall not treat the remnant of this people as I did in the previous times,” declares the LORD of hosts. ¹² “For people will sow seed successfully. The vine will produce its fruit. The ground will yield its produce. The sky will give its dew. I shall cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things. ¹³ As you have been an expression to use in cursing among the nations, family of Judah and family of Israel, so I shall save you, and you will become an expression to use in blessing. Do not be afraid but work courageously!”

A promise of joyful fasting

¹⁴ For this is what the LORD of hosts has said: “As I planned to treat you badly when your fathers provoked Me to anger,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I did not relent, ¹⁵ so I have planned again in these days to treat Jerusalem and the family of Judah well. Do not be afraid! ¹⁶ These are the things that you shall do: **Speak the truth to one another!** Give verdicts at your city-gates that are true, just and beneficial! ¹⁷ **Do not think evil in your hearts** about one another! Do not enjoy false oaths! For all these are things that I hate,” declares the LORD.

A promise that many nations will join God's people

¹⁸ The Word of the LORD of hosts came to me. He said: ¹⁹ “This is what the LORD of hosts has said: ‘For the family of Judah the fast in the fourth month, the fast in the fifth month, the fast in the seventh month and the fast in the tenth month will be joyful and glad times and happy assemblies. Therefore, love truth and peace!’”

²⁰ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “Nations and people who live in many cities will still come.

²¹ People who live in one city will go to another and say, ‘Let us regularly go to ask for the favour of the LORD and to be intent on the LORD of hosts! We ourselves are also going.’ ²² Many peoples and powerful nations will come to be intent on the LORD of hosts at Jerusalem and to ask for the favour of the LORD.”

²³ This is what the LORD of hosts has said: “In those days ten men from every language among the nations will grasp the hem of the garment of a Jewish man and say, ‘Let us go with you! For we have heard that God is with you.’”

9

A judgment on Israel's enemies and a declaration that God will protect His Temple

¹ This is a pronouncement. “The Word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and will rest on Damascus.”

For the LORD has an eye on human beings and on all the tribes of Israel.

² “It is also on Hamath, which borders on it, and on Tyre and Sidon, although they are very shrewd. ³ Tyre has built itself a fortress and has been heaping up silver like dust and fine gold like mud on the streets.”

⁴ Look! The Lord will strip it of its possessions and throw its outer wall down into the sea, and it will itself be devoured by fire. ⁵ Ashkelon will see it and be afraid. Gaza will also see it and will writhe in anguish. Ekron will also writhe, because its hopes will be ruined. Gaza will lose its king. Ashkelon will be uninhabited.

⁶ “A mixed race will live in Ashdod, and I shall cut off the arrogance of the Philistines. ⁷ I shall remove the blood from their mouths and the disgusting kinds of food from between their teeth.”

It too will be left as a remnant that belongs to our God. It will be like a tribal chiefdom in Judah, and Ekron will be like the Jebusites. ⁸ “Then I shall camp in front of My house against an army, to prevent it from marching through and returning. No oppressor will march through against them again. For I have now been watching with My own eyes.”

A promise that God will send His humble Messianic King — Matthew 21:5, John 12:14-15

⁹ Rejoice greatly, **daughter of Zion!** Shout in triumph, daughter of Jerusalem! **Look! Your King is coming to you.** He is righteous and victorious. **He is humble and is riding on a donkey, yes, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**

¹⁰ “I shall cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem. The bow of battle will be eliminated.”

He will proclaim peace to the nations. His dominion will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

¹¹ “As for you also, because of the **blood** of your **Covenant**, I shall release your prisoners from the waterless cistern.”

A promise of salvation

¹² “Return to your fortress, prisoners who have hope! Even today I declare that I shall restore twice as much to you. ¹³ For I shall bend Judah as My bow. I shall make Ephraim its arrow. I shall stir up your sons, Zion, against your sons, Greece. I shall make you like the sword of a warrior.”

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¹⁴ Then the LORD will appear over them, and His arrow will go out like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet and will march out in the windstorms of the south. ¹⁵ The LORD of hosts will protect them. They will devour and will use sling-stones to subjugate. They will drink and roar as though with wine. They will be full, like a bowl that is used for pouring and drenched like the corners of the altar. ¹⁶ On that day the LORD, their God, will save them, as the flock of His people. Indeed, they will sparkle in His land like jewels in a crown. ¹⁷ Indeed, how attractive and how beautiful they will be! Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine will make the young women thrive.

10

A promise that God will gather His people

¹ Ask the LORD for rain in the season for the Spring-rain! The LORD makes the storm clouds and will give showers of rain to people and plants in the field to everyone. ² For the household-images have been telling what is false, and those who predict the future have been seeing illusory visions. They tell empty dreams and give futile comfort. That is why the people have been wandering on **like sheep. They are suffering because they lack a shepherd.**

³ “My anger has been burning against the shepherds, and I shall punish the leaders.”

For the LORD of hosts has been caring for His flock, the family of Judah, and will make them like His majestic war-horse. ⁴ From the family of Judah the cornerstone will come. From it will come the tent peg, from it the bow for the battle, from it every ruler — all of them together. ⁵ They will be like warriors who trample their enemies down in the mud of the streets in battle. They will fight because the LORD is with them, and those who ride on horses will be ashamed.

⁶ “I shall strengthen the family of Judah and save the family of Joseph. I shall bring them back because I have had compassion on them. They will be as though I had not rejected them. For I am the LORD, their God, and I shall answer them.”

⁷ Then the people of Ephraim will become like warriors. Their hearts will be merry as if with wine. When their children see it they will be glad. Their hearts **will rejoice in the LORD.**

⁸ “I shall whistle for them and gather them in. For I have redeemed them. They will become as numerous as they have been before. ⁹ Although I kept scattering them among the nations, they will remember Me in distant places. They will survive with their children and come back. ¹⁰ I shall bring them back from Egypt and gather them from Assyria. I shall bring them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon, and there will not be enough room for them.”

¹¹ He will pass through the sea of trouble and strike down the waves in the sea. All the depths of the Nile will dry up. The arrogance of Assyria will be brought

down, and the sceptre of Egypt will disappear.

¹² “I shall make them strong in the LORD. They will conduct themselves in His name,” declares the LORD.

11

The instruction to Zechariah to take care of the sheep

¹ Open your doors, Lebanon, that fire may devour your cedars! ² Wail, cypress trees! For the cedars have fallen. For the magnificent trees have been ruined. Wail, oaks of Bashan! For the dense forest has been cut down. ³ Listen! The shepherds are wailing, because their splendour has been ruined. Listen! The young lions are roaring, because the high thicket beside the Jordan has been ruined.

⁴ This is what the LORD, my God, said: “Be a shepherd of the flock that is about to be slaughtered!

⁵ Those who buy them slaughter them and go unpunished. Those who sell them say, ‘May the LORD be praised! I have become rich.’ Their shepherds do not pity them. ⁶ Indeed, I shall not pity those who live in this land any longer,” declares the LORD. “Look! I shall let each human being fall into the hands of his neighbour and each one into the hands of his king. They will crush the land, and I shall not rescue anyone from their hands.”

⁷ Therefore, I became the shepherd of the flock that was about to be slaughtered and especially of the wretched animals among the sheep. I chose two staffs. I named the one “Favour” and named the other one “Unity,” and I began to shepherd the sheep. ⁸ In one month I got rid of the three other shepherds. However, I had become impatient with the sheep, and they also despised me. ⁹ So, I said: “I shall not be your shepherd. Let what is dying die! Let what is being lost be lost! Let those who are left eat one another’s flesh!”

¹⁰ “I took my staff, Favour, and broke it, to break the covenant that I had made with all the nations.”

¹¹ So, it was revoked on that day, and the wretched animals among the sheep that were watching me knew that this was indeed the Word of the LORD. ¹² Then I told them: “If you think it is right, give me my wages! However, if you do not, decline!”

They weighed out thirty pieces of silver as my wages.

¹³ Then **the LORD told me**, “Throw them to the potter!”

It was a “fine” **price at which they valued Me!** So, **I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter at the Temple of the LORD.** ¹⁴ Then I broke my second staff, Unity, to annul the brotherly relationship between Judah and Israel.

¹⁵ Then the LORD told me, “Take up the equipment of a useless shepherd again! ¹⁶ For look! I am about to appoint a shepherd in the land who will not be concerned about those that are going astray, search for the young, heal the ones that have broken limbs or provide for the ones that can still stand. Rather, he will eat the meat of the fat ones and tear off their hoofs. ¹⁷ How

terrible for My worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! Let his arm wither completely! May his right eye become completely blind!”

12

A promise that God will save Jerusalem

¹ This is a revelation, the Word of the LORD about Israel: The LORD, who spreads out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth and forms the spirit of a human being in him, declares: ² “Look! I am about to make Jerusalem a cup that causes all the surrounding peoples to stagger. What happens to Jerusalem when it is besieged will also happen to Judah. ³ On that day I shall make Jerusalem a stone weight for all the peoples. All who lift it will severely injure themselves. All the nations of the earth will gather against it.

⁴ “On that day,” declares the LORD, “I shall strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness. However, I shall keep my eyes open for the sake of the family of Judah when I strike every horse of the other peoples with blindness. ⁵ Then the leaders of Judah will think: ‘Those who are living in Jerusalem are supporting us strongly because of the LORD of hosts, their God.’ ⁶ On that day I shall make the leaders of Judah like a fire-pot among pieces of wood and like a flaming torch among sheaves.”

They will devour all the surrounding peoples to the right and to the left, but Jerusalem will again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem. ⁷ The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, that the honour of the family of David and the honour of those who are living in Jerusalem may not surpass that of Judah. ⁸ On that day the LORD will give protection around those who are living in Jerusalem, so that the one who stumbles among them will be like David on that day, and the family of David will be like God, like the Angel of the LORD, in front of them.

A prophecy that the people in Jerusalem will look at the One whom they have pierced.

⁹ “On that day, I shall set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem. ¹⁰ I shall also pour out the Spirit of grace and of supplication for favour on the family of David and on those who are living in Jerusalem. **They will look at Me, the One whom they have pierced.**”

They will mourn over Him as people mourn over an only son and grieve bitterly for Him as people grieve for their first-born son. ¹¹ On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo. ¹² **The land will mourn**, each clan by itself, the clan of the family of David by itself, their wives by themselves, the clan of the family of Nathan by itself, their wives by themselves, ¹³ the clan of the family of Levi by itself, their wives by themselves, the clan of the descendants of Shimei by itself, their wives by themselves ¹⁴ and all the clans that are left will each mourn by itself and their wives by themselves.

13

¹ On that day a fountain against sin and uncleanness will be opened for the family of David and those who live in Jerusalem.

A threat that false prophets will be judged

² “On that day,” declares the LORD of hosts, “I shall cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they will not be remembered any longer. I shall also remove the prophets and the spirit of impurity from the land.”

³ If anyone prophesies again, his father and his mother, who gave birth to him, will tell him, “You shall not live! For you have told lies in the name of the LORD.” His father and mother, who gave birth to him, will pierce him through when he prophesies.

⁴ On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies. They will not put on garments made of hair to deceive. ⁵ However, he will say, “I am not a prophet. I till the soil, because a man bought me when I was a child.” ⁶ If someone asks him, “What are these wounds on your shoulders?” he will say, “They come from when I was beaten at the house of my friends.”

A prophecy that the Shepherd will be struck and the sheep will be scattered

⁷ “Awake, sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Associate,” declares the LORD of hosts. **“Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.** I shall also turn My hand against the little ones. ⁸ In the whole land,” declares the LORD, “two-thirds will be cut off and perish, but the one third will be left in it. ⁹ I shall bring this third into the fire and refine them as silver is refined. I shall test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I Myself shall answer them. I shall say, ‘**They are My people.**’ They will also say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”

14

A prophecy that God will fight the nations on the great coming day

¹ Look! A day is coming that will belong to the LORD, when your plunder will be divided among you.

² “I shall gather all the nations to Jerusalem for battle.” The city will be captured, the houses will be plundered and the women will be raped. Half of the city will go away into exile, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

³ Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as He fights in a day of battle. ⁴ On that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the eastern side. The Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west to form a very wide valley. One half of the mountain will move away towards the north and the other half toward the south.

⁵ “You will flee through the valley between My mountains.”

For the valley between the mountains will reach as far as Azal. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake at the time of Uzziah, the king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, **will come. All the holy ones will be**

Zechariah

with You. ⁶ On that day there will be no light. Precious things will congeal. ⁷ There will be one day, which is known to the LORD, **without** day or **night**. However, there will be light in the evening.

A promise of living water from Jerusalem

⁸ On that day **living water** will flow out from Jerusalem, half of it to the Eastern Sea and half of it to the Western Sea. It will continue in summer and in winter.

⁹ The LORD will be King over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one, and His name one. ¹⁰ The whole land from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will change, to be like the Arabah. However, Jerusalem will rise up high and remain in its place from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the Former-Gate, to the Corner-Gate and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's vineyards. ¹¹ People will live there. **There will be no ban of destruction any longer.** People will live in security in Jerusalem. ¹² This will be the plague that the LORD will use to strike all the peoples that have fought against Jerusalem: He will cause their flesh to rot while they are still standing on their feet. Their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. ¹³ On that day a great panic from the LORD will come among them, so that each one will seize the hand of another, and they will raise their hands against each other. ¹⁴ Judah will also fight in Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will

be gathered, a very large amount of gold, silver and clothes. ¹⁵ A similar plague will fall on the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys and all the other animals that are in those camps.

¹⁶ Everyone who is left from all the nations that had attacked Jerusalem will go up every year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷ If any of the clans of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. ¹⁸ If the clan of Egypt does not go up and enter, there will be no rain on them either. It will be the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁹ This will be the punishment for sin for Egypt and the punishment for sin for all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

²⁰ On that day "Holy to the LORD" will be inscribed on the bells of the horses. The cooking pots in the Temple of the LORD will be like the bowls used for pouring that are in front of the altar. ²¹ Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts. All who sacrifice will come in, take some of them and cook meat in them. On that day there will no longer be any merchant in the Temple of the LORD of hosts.

MALACHI

1

¹ This is a pronouncement, the Word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi. ^{*166}

God's love for Israel

² The Lord has said, "**I have loved you.**"

"However, you ask, 'How have You loved us?'"

"Was Esau not Jacob's brother?" the LORD asks. "Yet **I have loved Jacob, ³ but have hated Esau.** I made his hill-country a wasteland and left his inheritance to jackals in the desert.

⁴ "If Edom says, 'Although we have been shattered, we shall build the ruins up again,' the LORD of hosts has said: 'They may rebuild them, but I Myself shall demolish them.'"

They will be called "The-Wicked-Territory," and "The People Whom the LORD Has Cursed for Ever."

⁵ Your own eyes will see this, and you yourselves will say, "The LORD is great even outside the borders of Israel!"

A complaint that the priests are offering unacceptable sacrifices

⁶ "A son honours his father, and a servant his master. Then, if I am a father, where is the honour to Me? If I am a master, where is the respect for Me? This is what the LORD of hosts has asked you, priests, who despise My name." However, you ask, 'How have we despised Your name?'

⁷ "You are offering defiled food on My altar.

"However, you ask, 'How have we defiled You?'"

"By saying that **the table of the LORD** is despicable.

⁸ When you present blind animals to sacrifice them, is that not evil? When you present those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Please take them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you or be favourably disposed to you?" the LORD of hosts has asked.

⁹ Now therefore, please implore God to be favourable, that He may be gracious to us.

"When this has come from your hands, will He be favourably disposed to you?" the LORD of hosts has asked. ¹⁰ "I even wish that someone among you would shut the doors, to prevent you from lighting up My altar in vain! I am not pleased with you," the LORD of hosts has said, "and I shall not welcome an offering from your hands. ¹¹ For from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets **My name will be great among the nations.** In every place frankincense and ceremonially clean offerings will be presented to My name. For **My name will be great among the nations,**" the LORD of hosts has said.

A complaint about the breaking of marriage vows by the people

¹² However, you are profaning it when you say that **the table of the Lord** may be defiled and that its produce, its food, is despicable. ¹³ "You are saying, 'Look! What a nuisance this is!' and you are sniffing at it," the LORD of hosts has said. "You are bringing what has

been stolen, what is lame or what is sick. When you bring such things as your offerings, shall I gladly accept them from your hands?" the LORD has asked.

¹⁴ "May the person be cursed who acts deceptively, who has a male animal in his flock and vows to give it and who nevertheless sacrifices to the LORD one that is blemished! For I am a great King," the LORD of hosts has said, "and My name is to be feared among the nations."

2

A complaint that the priests are not teaching God's Word correctly

¹ "Now therefore, priests, this Commandment is for you. ² If you do not listen and, if you do not take it to heart to give honour to My name," the LORD of hosts has said, "then I shall send a curse among you and curse your blessings. Indeed, I have already been cursing them, because you are not taking this to heart.

³ Look! I am going to rebuke your offspring and shall spread dung on your faces, the dung from your feasts.

Someone will carry you away to it. ⁴ Then you will know that I have sent you this Commandment, that My Covenant with Levi may continue," the LORD of hosts has said. ⁵ "My Covenant with him was one of life and peace. I gave them to him that he might respect them.

He feared Me and stood in awe before My name. ⁶ True Instruction was in his mouth, and nothing unjust was found on his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness and turned many people away from sin."

⁷ For a priest's lips preserve knowledge. People try to receive instruction from his mouth! For he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. ⁸ However, you have departed from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the Covenant with Levi," the LORD of hosts has said.

⁹ "I Myself have also made you contemptible and of low standing in front of all the people, because you have not been observing My Ways but have been showing favouritism in your instruction."

¹⁰ Do we not all have one Father? Has not one God created us? Why do we act unfaithfully towards each other, so as to profane the covenant of our fathers?

¹¹ Judah has been unfaithful. A disgusting thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the Holy Place of the LORD, which He loves, and has married a woman who worships a foreign god. ¹² May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who does this, whether the man is one who provides protection or who is a partner in conversation, even though he presents an offering to the LORD of hosts!

¹³ Here is another thing you do: You cover the altar of the LORD with tears. You weep and groan because He does not turn His attention to your offering or accept it

¹⁶⁶ Malachi means, "My Messenger". Compare Mal 3:1.

from you with pleasure any longer.

¹⁴ However, you ask, “Why does He not?”

Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife you have had since you were young. You have been unfaithful to her, although she is your marriage-partner and your wife by a solemn agreement.

¹⁵ Did He not make them a unity, with a portion of the Spirit in it? What was the one God trying to find? Godly descendants. Therefore, you shall guard yourselves in your minds, and none of you should be unfaithful to the wife that you had when you were young!

¹⁶ “For I hate divorce,” the LORD, the God of Israel, has said. “Yes, he is one who has covered his garment with injustice,” the LORD of hosts has said.

Therefore, you shall guard yourselves in your spirit! You shall not be unfaithful!

¹⁷ You have been wearying the LORD with your words.

However, you ask, “How have we been wearying Him?”

By saying: “The LORD regards everyone who does evil as good and delights in them,” or by asking, “Where is the God of justice?”

3

A prophecy about the coming of the messenger of the Covenant, who will prepare His way.

¹ “**Look! I am sending My messenger**, and he will **make the way clear ahead of Me**. Then the Lord, for whom you are looking, will suddenly come to His Temple, yes, the Messenger of the covenant, whom you desire. Look! He is coming,” the LORD of hosts has said.

² However, **who will endure** the day of His coming? **Who can stand** on the day when He appears? For He will be like a refiner’s fire and like launderers’ soap.

³ He will sit down like a refiner and a purifier of silver, purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver. Then they will present an offering to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of long ago, as in former years.

⁵ “Then I shall come near to you to judge you. I shall be quick to testify against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear to a lie, against those who defraud hired men of their wages, against those who exploit widows and orphans, against those who take away the rights of resident-foreigners and do not fear Me,” the LORD of hosts has said. ⁶ “For I, the LORD, have not changed. That is why you, O children of Jacob, have not come to an end. ⁷ Since the times of your fathers you have been turning away from My Prescriptions and have not been keeping them. Return to Me, and I shall return to you!” the LORD of hosts has said.

A warning not to rob God

“However, you ask, ‘How shall we return?’

⁸ “Will a human being rob God? Yet you are robbing

Me.

“However, you ask, ‘How have we been robbing You?’

“In your tithes and contributions. ⁹ You have been placed under a curse. You, the whole nation of you, are robbing Me. ¹⁰ Bring the full tithes into the treasury, that there may be food in My house! Please test Me in this way!” the LORD of hosts has said, “whether I shall not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down a blessing for you until there is more than enough.

¹¹ Then I shall rebuke the devouring locusts for you, that they may not destroy what your soil produces. Then your vines in the fields will not fail to bear,” the LORD of hosts has said. ¹² “Then all the nations will call you blessed. For you will be a delightful country,” the LORD of hosts has said.

¹³ “You have been using harsh words against Me,” the LORD has said.

“However, you ask, ‘How have we been speaking against You to one another?’

¹⁴ “You have been saying, ‘It is useless to serve God. What gain has there been from keeping His Requirements and from walking about with a mournful expression before the LORD of hosts? ¹⁵ Now therefore, we call insolent people blessed. Even those who act wickedly prosper.’”

They have even been putting God to the test and have been escaping.

The writing of a book of remembrance

¹⁶ Then those who used to fear the LORD spoke to one another. The LORD paid attention and listened. A book of remembrance was written in His presence of those who feared the LORD and respected His name.

¹⁷ “They will be Mine,” the LORD of hosts has said, “in the day when I make up My personal property. I shall have compassion on them as a man has compassion on his own son, who serves him.”

¹⁸ Then you will again see the difference between a righteous person and a wicked person, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.

4

A prediction that the day of the Lord will bring judgment

¹ “For the day is certainly coming and will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant people and all the evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming will burn them up,” the LORD of hosts has said. “It will not leave them either a root or a branch. ² Nevertheless, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in His wings for you who fear My name. You will go out and frisk about like bull-calves from the stall.

³ “Then you will crush wicked people underfoot. For, on the day that I am preparing, they will be ashes under the soles of your feet,” the LORD of hosts has said.

An admonition to remember the Law of Moses and to expect the coming of the prophet Elijah

⁴ “Remember the Law of My servant Moses, the Prescriptions and the Decisions that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel! ⁵ Look! I am sending you the

Malachi

prophet **Elijah** before the great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will **turn the hearts of fathers to their children** and the hearts of children to their fa-

thers. Otherwise, I shall come and strike the land with a ban of destruction.”

NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW

1

Jesus' family-line and infancy (1:1-2:23)

Jesus' family-line — Luke 3:24-38

¹ The record of the family-history of Jesus Christ, a descendant of David and a descendant of Abraham:

² Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac was the father of Jacob, Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.

³ Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar.

Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron was the father of Ram,

⁴ Ram was the father of Aminadab, Aminadab was the father of Nahshon, Nahshon was the father of Salmon,

⁵ Salmon was the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab.

Boaz was the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth. Obed was the father of Jesse,

⁶ Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife.

⁷ Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam was the father of Abijah,

Abijah was the father of Asa,

⁸ Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram,

Joram was the father of Uzziah,

⁹ Uzziah was the father of Jotham,

Jotham was the father of Ahaz,

Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah,

¹⁰ Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh,

Manasseh was the father of Amon,

Amon was the father of Josiah,

¹¹ Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the Exile to Babylon.

¹² After the exile to Babylon, Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel.

Shealtiel was the father of Zerub-Babel,

¹³ Zerub-Babel was the father of Abiud,

Abiud was the father of Eliakim,

Eliakim was the father of Azor,

¹⁴ Azor was the father of Zadok,

Zadok was the father of Achim,

Achim was the father of Eliud,

¹⁵ Eliud was the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar was the father of Matthan,

Matthan was the father of Jacob,

¹⁶ Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.

She was the mother of Jesus, who is called "Christ."

¹⁷ So, there were in all fourteen generations from

Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the Babylonian Exile and fourteen generations from the Exile in Babylon to the Christ.

The announcement to Joseph of Jesus' birth

¹⁸ This is how Jesus Christ was born. His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph. However, before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Joseph, her husband, was an honourable man and, because he did not want to disgrace her, he intended to divorce her secretly. ²⁰ After Joseph had thought about it, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take your wife Mary home with you! For what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you shall name Him 'Jesus'! For He will save His people from their sins."

²² All this happened to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ **"Look! The virgin will become pregnant and have a son, and they will name Him 'Immanuel'"** (which is translated, **"God-With-Us"**).

²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did what the Lord's angel had commanded him. He took Mary home as his wife, ²⁵ but did not have relations with her until she gave birth to a Son. Joseph gave Him the name "Jesus."

2

The visit of the Magi

¹ After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judea during the time of King Herod, Wise Men arrived from the East at Jerusalem. ² They asked, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

³ When King Herod heard this, he was alarmed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ He called together all the Chief Priests and scribes of the people and tried to find out from them where the Christ would be born.

⁵ They told him, "At Bethlehem in Judea. For this is what Scripture has said through the prophet: ⁶ **'You, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means the least among the leading towns of Judah. For from you will come a Ruler, who will shepherd My people Israel.'**"

⁷ Then Herod secretly called the Wise Men and found out from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ When he sent them to Bethlehem, he said, "Go and search carefully for the Child and, when you find Him, report to me, that I too may go and worship Him!"

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their

way. There was the star that they had seen in the East! It kept leading them on until it stopped over the place where the Child was. ¹⁰ They were extremely happy when they saw the star. ¹¹ When they came into the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary. They knelt and worshipped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented gifts to Him, **gold, frankincense** and myrrh. ¹² When God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod, they went back to their country by another road.

The flight to Egypt and return

¹³ After the Wise Men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. He said, "Get up! Take the little Child and His mother and flee to Egypt! Stay there until I tell you! For Herod is going to search for the Child to kill Him." ¹⁴ Joseph got up, took the little Child and His mother by night and left for Egypt. ¹⁵ He stayed there until Herod died, so that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled: **"I have called My Son out of Egypt."**

¹⁶ When Herod saw that the Wise Men had tricked him, he became very angry. He sent some men, and they killed all the boys in Bethlehem and in all the districts around it who were two years old and under, according to the time that he had determined exactly from the Wise Men. ¹⁷ Then what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: ¹⁸ **"A voice was heard in Rama, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."**

¹⁹ However, after Herod had died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ and told him, "Get up! Take the little Child and His mother and go to the land of Israel! For those who were trying to kill the little Child are dead."

²¹ Joseph got up, took the little Child and His mother and came into the land of Israel. ²² However, when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Because God warned him in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³ He went and made his home in a city called "Nazareth," that what had been said through the prophets might be fulfilled: "He will be called a Nazarene."

3

First section (3:1-7:29)

The beginning of the Galilean ministry (3:1-4:25)

The preaching of John the Baptist — Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:1-18, John 1:19-28

¹ In those days John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the wilderness of Judea: ² "Repent! For the kingdom of heaven has come near."

³ He was the one about whom the prophet Isaiah spoke: **"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord! Make His paths straight!'"**

⁴ John himself used to wear clothes of camels' hair and had a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan kept going out to him. ⁶ They were baptised by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins. ⁷ When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he asked them: "You brood of poisonous snakes, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" ⁸ Therefore, produce fruit that is worthy of repentance! ⁹ Do not think that you can tell yourselves, 'Abraham is our father'! For I tell you that God can raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰ The axe has already been laid at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that does not produce good fruit is being cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ I baptise you with water to bring about a change of heart. However, the One who is coming after me is mightier than I am. I am not worthy to carry His sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing shovel is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean up His threshing floor. He will gather His wheat into the barn but will burn the chaff with a fire that cannot be put out."

The baptism of Jesus — Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, compare John 1:29-34

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptised by him. ¹⁴ However, John tried to prevent Him. He said, "I need to be baptised by You, and are You coming to Me?"

¹⁵ Jesus answered him, "Permit it to be so now! For that is how it is proper for us to fulfil all righteousness."

Then John allowed Him. ¹⁶ When Jesus had been baptised, He immediately came up from the water. At that moment the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming on Him. ¹⁷ Suddenly a voice came from heaven saying, **"This is My Son, whom I love and in whom I am well pleased."**

4

The temptation of Jesus — Mark 1:12-13, Luke 4:1-13

¹ Then the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil. ² He did not eat anything for forty days and forty nights and at the end of that time He was hungry.

³ The Tempter came to Him and said, "If You are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread!"

⁴ Jesus answered, "Scripture has said: **'A person does not live by bread alone but by every Word that comes out through the mouth of God.'**"

⁵ Then the Devil took Him into the Holy City and had Him stand on the ledge of the Temple. ⁶ He told Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down! For Scripture has said: **'He will command His angels concerning you. They will carry you in their hands**

that you may not strike your foot against a stone.”

⁷ Jesus answered him, “Again, Scripture has said, ‘**You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test!**’”

⁸ Again, the Devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ The Devil told Him, “I shall give You all this if You fall and worship me.”

¹⁰ Then Jesus answered him: “Go away, Satan! For Scripture has said: ‘**You shall worship the Lord, your God and shall serve Him alone!**’”

¹¹ Then the Devil left Him, and angels came and served Him.

Jesus’ stay at Capernaum and the first preaching in Galilee — Mark 1:14-15, Luke 4:14-15

¹² After Jesus had heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ “**Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, on one side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. ¹⁶ The people who used to dwell in darkness have seen a great Light, and a Light has dawned for those who used to dwell in the land and shadow of death.**”

¹⁷ From that time on, Jesus began to preach, “Repent! For the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Jesus’ call of His first disciples — Mark 1:14-20, and compare Luke 5:1-11, John 1:35-51

¹⁸ While He was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, who was called “Peter,” and his brother Andrew throwing a casting-net into the sea. For they were fishermen. ¹⁹ Jesus told them, “Come! Follow Me! I shall make you fishers of men.”

²⁰ They immediately left their nets and began to follow Him. ²¹ He went on from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of, Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and began to follow Him.

Jesus’ first preaching-journey in Galilee Mark 1:35-39, Luke 4:42-44

²³ Jesus began to go around everywhere in Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. ²⁴ The news about Him spread all over Syria, and people brought to Him all who were ill with various diseases, those who were suffering severe pain, demon-possessed people, epileptics and paralysed people, and He healed them.

²⁵ Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed Him.

5

The sermon on the mount (5:1-7:29)

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountainside. When He sat down, His disciples came

to Him. ² Then He began to speak and continued to teach them:

The beatitudes — Luke 6:20-23

³ “Blessed are those who are **poor in spirit!** For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are **those who mourn!** For they will be **comforted.**

⁵ “Blessed are **those who are meek!** For they will **inherit the earth.**

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness! For they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are **those who are merciful!** For **they will be treated mercifully.**

⁸ “Blessed are **those who are pure in heart!** For they will see God.

⁹ “Blessed are those who make peace! For they will be called ‘the children of God.’

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who have been persecuted because of righteousness! For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you, because of Me! ¹² Rejoice and be very glad! For your reward in heaven is great. For in this way people persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and light— compare with— Mark 4:21-23, Luke 11:33

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. However, if salt loses its saltiness, with what will it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled on by people. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city that has been set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ People also do not light a lamp and put it under a container but on the lamp-stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before other people, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father who is in heaven!

Jesus’ fulfilment of the Old Testament Scriptures

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets! I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. ¹⁸ For truly, I tell you, until the heaven and the earth pass away, one jot or one serif will certainly not pass away from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore, anyone who breaks one of the least of these Commandments and teaches other people in this way will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. However, anyone who practises and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness is much better than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus’ teaching about murder — Luke 12:57-59

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago: ‘**You shall not murder,** and whoever murders will be subject to the judgment.’ ²² However, I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to the judgment. Anyone who says to his brother, ‘You numbskull!’ will be subject to the Sanhedrin. However, anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will

be subject to hellfire.

Jesus' teaching about the need to be reconciled with an adversary — Luke 12:58-59

23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar! First go away and be reconciled with your brother and then come and offer your gift! 25 Agree quickly with the one who wants to sue you, while you are still with him on the road, lest your accuser should hand you over to the judge, and the judge should hand you over to the officer, and you should be thrown into prison! 26 Truly, I tell you, you will certainly not get out of there until you have paid the last cent.

Jesus' teaching about adultery — Mark 9:43-48

27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘**You shall not commit adultery!**’ 28 However, I tell you that everyone who looks at a woman to desire her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to stumble, take it out and throw it away from you! It is better for you that one of your members should be lost than that your whole body should be thrown into hell. 30 If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from you! It is better for you that one of your members should be lost than that your whole body should go into hell.

Jesus' teaching about divorce — Matthew 19:9, Mark 10:11-12, Luke 16:18

31 “It was said: ‘Whoever divorces his wife **must give her a certificate of divorce!**’ 32 However, I tell you that everyone who divorces his wife for any reason except sexual unfaithfulness causes her to be an adulteress, and whoever marries a woman so divorced commits adultery.

Jesus' teaching about swearing

33 “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago: ‘**You shall not swear falsely but shall perform your oaths to the Lord!**’ 34 However, I tell you not to swear at all, not **by heaven**, for **it is God's throne**, 35 and not by **the earth**, for **it is His footstool**, and not by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 Do not swear by your head either! For you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Rather, let your language be, ‘Yes, yes,’ ‘No, no!’ Anything more than these comes from the Evil One.

Jesus' teaching about retaliation

38 “You have heard that it was said: ‘**An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.**’ 39 However, I tell you, do not resist an evil person! Rather, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other one to him also! 40 If someone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat as well! 41 If anyone forces you to go two kilometres, go four kilometres with him! 42 Give to the person who asks you for something and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you!

Jesus' teaching about love of enemies — Luke 6:27-36

43 “You have heard that it was said: ‘**You shall love your neighbour** and hate your enemy!’ 44 However, I

tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who are persecuting you, 45 that you may be the children of your Father in heaven! For He makes His sun rise on evil people and on good people and sends rain on righteous people and unrighteous people. 46 For, if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? 47 If you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others are? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 Therefore, **you shall be perfect**, as your Father in heaven is perfect!

6

Jesus' teaching about giving to the poor

1 “Be careful not to perform your righteous deeds before other people, to be seen by them! If you do, you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be praised by other people! Truly, I tell you, they have their reward in full.

3 “When you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your giving may be in secret! Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Jesus' teaching about prayer

5 “When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites! For they love to stand praying in synagogues and on the street corners, to be seen by other people. Truly, I tell you, they have their reward in full. 6 However, when you pray, **go into your room, shut your door and pray** to your Father, who is in secret! Your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

7 “When you pray, do not babble like the Gentiles! For they think that they will be heard if they talk on and on. 8 Do not be like them! For your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

Jesus' teaching of Lord's Prayer — Luke 11:2-4

9 “This is how you should pray:

‘Our Father in heaven,

‘May Your name be kept holy!

10 ‘May Your kingdom come!

‘May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!

11 ‘Give us today our daily bread!

12 ‘Forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us!

13 ‘Do not lead us into temptation,
‘But deliver us from evil!’

14 “For, if you forgive the sins of others, your Father in heaven will forgive you also. 15 However, if you do not forgive the sins of others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Jesus' teaching about fasting

16 “When you fast, stop looking sombre, like the hypocrites! For they neglect their appearance, that they may appear to people to be fasting. Truly, I tell you, they have their reward in full. 17 However, when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 that

you may not appear to other people to be fasting, except to your Father, who is in secret! Your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

Jesus' teaching about treasures — Luke 12:33-34

19 “Stop storing up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal! 20 Rather, keep storing up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal! 21 For your heart will also be where your treasure is.

Jesus' teaching about the sound eye — Luke 11:34-36

22 “The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light. 23 However, if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. Therefore, if the light that is in you is darkness, how great that darkness is!

Jesus' teaching about serving two masters — Luke 16:13

24 “No one can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Jesus' teaching about worry — Luke 12:22-34

25 “Therefore, I tell you, stop worrying about your lives, what you are to eat or what you are to drink or about your bodies, what you are to put on! Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the sky! They do not sow, reap or gather into barns, but your Father in heaven keeps feeding them. Are you not worth more than they are? 27 Which of you can, by worrying, add a single hour to his length of life? 28 Why, then, do you worry about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow! They do not toil or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was clothed like one of these. 30 If God in this way clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and is thrown into an oven tomorrow, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore, do not begin to worry, saying, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’ 32 For the Gentiles try to get all these things. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 Rather, first be eager to have the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will also be given to you. 34 Therefore, do not begin to worry about tomorrow! For tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

7

Jesus' teaching about judging — Mark 4:24, Luke 6:37-42

1 “Stop judging, that you may not be judged! 2 For you will be judged with the judgment with which you judge, and it will be measured to you by the measure by which you measure. 3 Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and do not notice the plank in your own eye? 4 Or how will you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’

when, look! There is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye!

Jesus' teaching about throwing pearls to pigs

6 “Do not give what is holy to dogs or throw your pearls before pigs, that they may not trample them with their feet and turn and tear you to pieces!

Jesus' teaching about God's answer to prayer — Luke 11:5-13

7 “Ask, and it will be given to you! Search, and you will find! Knock, and it will be opened to you! 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who searches finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you whose son asks him for bread? Surely he will not give him a stone? 10 Or if he also asks for a fish — surely he will not give him a snake? 11 Therefore, if, although you are wicked, you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?

The golden rule — Luke 6:31

12 “Therefore, do to others everything that you want people to do to you! For this is the Law and the Prophets.

The narrow gate — Luke 13:23-24

13 “Enter through the narrow gate! For the gate is wide, and the road is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who are going in through it. 14 For the gate is narrow, and the road is confined that leads to life, and there are few who are finding it.

False prophets and the test of what is good — Luke 6:43-46, Matthew 12:33-35, Luke 6:43-45

15 “Beware of false prophets! They come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ferocious wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. People do not pick grapes from thorn-bushes or figs from thistles, do they? 17 In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, and a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore, you will know them by their fruits.

Jesus' warning against self-deception — Luke 13:26-27

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father, who is in heaven. 22 Many will ask Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not **prophesied in Your name**, in Your name driven out demons, and in Your name performed many miracles?’ 23 Then I shall tell them frankly, ‘I never knew you. **Depart from Me, you who do what is evil!**’

Jesus' teaching about hearing the Word and practising it — Luke 6:47-49

24 “Therefore, everyone who hears these Words of Mine and practises them is like a sensible man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the floods came, the winds blew, and they beat against that house. However, it did not fall, because its foundation was on the rock. 26 Everyone who hears these Words of Mine but does not practise them is like a

foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the floods came, the winds blew, and they struck that house. It fell, and its fall was great.”

The end of the sermon on the mount

²⁸ When Jesus finished speaking these Words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching. ²⁹ For He used to teach them as one who had authority and not like their scribes.

8

Second section (8:1-11:1)

Ten powerful miracles in Galilee (8:1-9:35)

Jesus' healing of a leper — Mark 1:40-44, Luke 5:12-16

¹ After Jesus had come down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him. ² There was a leper who went to Him and bowed down before Him. He said, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

³ Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him. He said, “I am willing. Be made clean!”

Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

⁴ Jesus told him, “Be careful that you do not tell anyone; but go, **show yourself to the priest** and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them!”

Jesus' healing of a centurion's servant — Luke 7:1-10

⁵ After Jesus had gone into Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, ⁶ “Lord, my slave is lying at home paralysed, suffering terribly.”

⁷ Jesus told him, “I shall come and heal him.”

⁸ The captain answered, “Lord, I do not deserve that You should come in under my roof. Instead, just say a word, and my slave will be healed! ⁹ For I myself am also a man under authority and I have soldiers under me. I tell this man, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and another man, ‘Come!’ and he comes, and my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.”

¹⁰ When Jesus heard this, He was astonished and told the people who were following Him, “Truly, I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith! ¹¹ I also tell you that many will come **from the east and the west** and will recline at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

¹² However, those who have been heirs of the kingdom will be thrown out into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

¹³ Jesus told the centurion, “Go! Let it be done to you as you have believed!”

His slave was healed in that same hour.

Jesus' healing of Peter's wife's mother — Mark 1:29-31, Luke 4:38-39

¹⁴ Jesus went into Peter's home and saw Peter's mother-in-law lying down with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her. She got up and began to wait on Him.

Jesus' healing of sick people one evening — Mark 1:32-34, Luke 4:40-41

¹⁶ When evening came, people brought to Him many who were possessed by demons. He cast out the spirits with a word and healed all those who were sick,

¹⁷ that what had been said through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “**He Himself took away our infirmities and carried our diseases.**”

Jesus' response to two claimants to discipleship — Luke 9:57-60

¹⁸ When Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. ¹⁹ A scribe came up to Him and told Him, “Teacher, I shall follow You wherever You go.”

²⁰ Jesus told him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man does not have anywhere to lay His head.”

²¹ Another of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, first permit me to go and bury my father!”

²² However, Jesus told him, “Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead!”

Jesus' stilling of a storm — Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25

²³ Then He got into the boat, and His disciples followed Him. ²⁴ Suddenly a severe storm came on the sea, so that the boat was being covered by the waves. However, Jesus was sleeping. ²⁵ They went to Him, woke Him up and said, “Lord, save us! We are drowning.”

²⁶ He asked them, “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?”

Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷ The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of Man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

Jesus' healing of two Gadarene demoniacs — Mark 5:1-20, Luke 8:26-39

²⁸ When Jesus had gone to the region of the Gadarenes on the other side, two men who were possessed by demons came out of the tombs and met Him. They were extremely violent, so that no one could go past on that road. ²⁹ Suddenly they shouted, “What do You want with us, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

³⁰ Far away from them a herd of many pigs was feeding. ³¹ The demons were begging Jesus, “If You cast us out, send us into the herd of pigs!”

³² He told them, “Go!”

They came out and went into the pigs. Then suddenly the whole herd rushed down the cliff into the sea and died in the water. ³³ Those who had been looking after them ran away and went into the city, where they reported everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ Then the whole city came out to meet Jesus. When they saw Him, they begged Him to leave their district.

9

Jesus' healing of a paralysed man — Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:17-26

¹ Jesus got into a boat, crossed over and came to His own city. ² There people were bringing to Him a paralysed man, who had been put on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, He told the paralysed man, “Son, have courage! Your sins are forgiven.”

³ At this, some of the scribes thought to themselves, “This Man is blaspheming.”

⁴ Jesus perceived what they were thinking and asked them, “Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?”

⁵ For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven

you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk!?'⁶ I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

Then He told the paralysed man, "Get up, take up your stretcher and go to your house!"

⁷ He got up and went away to his house. ⁸ When the crowds saw this, they were afraid and glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

Jesus' call of Matthew (Levi) — Mark 2:13-17, Luke 5:27-32

⁹ When Jesus went on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting in the tax-collector's booth. He told him, "Follow Me!"

Matthew got up and followed Him.

¹⁰ As Jesus was reclining at the table in Matthew's house, many tax-collectors and other disreputable people came and reclined at the table with Jesus and His disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?"

¹² When Jesus heard that, He said: "It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor but those who are sick. ¹³ Rather, go and learn what this means, '**I desire mercy and not sacrifice**'! For I have not come to call righteous people but sinners."

Jesus' response to a question about fasting — Mark 2:18-22, Luke 5:33-39

¹⁴ Then John's disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples not fast?"

¹⁵ Jesus asked them, "Surely the guests of the bridegroom cannot mourn while the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶ No one puts a patch made of a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. For the patch shrinks away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. ¹⁷ Neither do people put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wineskins burst, the wine is spilt and the wineskins are ruined. Rather, people put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

Jesus' healing of a woman who was continuously bleeding and His raising of the daughter of Jairus — Mark 5:21-43, Luke 8:40-56

¹⁸ While He was saying these things to them, an official came and bowed down before Him. He said, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her! Then she will live."

¹⁹ Jesus got up and followed him, and so did His disciples.

²⁰ Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years approached from behind Him and touched the hem of His cloak. ²¹ For she had been saying to herself, "If I only touch His cloak, I shall be made well."

²² Jesus turned around and, when He saw her, He said, "Take courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you."

The woman was made well from that hour.

²³ When Jesus came to the official's home and saw the flute players and the disorderly crowd, ²⁴ He said, "Move away! The little girl has not died but is sleep-

ing."

However, they ridiculed Him. ²⁵ When the crowd had been put outside, Jesus went in and took hold of her hand, and the little girl was raised. ²⁶ The news about this spread over that entire region.

Jesus' healing of two blind men — compare Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:35-43

²⁷ While Jesus was going away from there, two blind men followed Him, shouting, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

²⁸ When He had entered the house, the blind men came to Him, and Jesus asked them, "Do you believe that I can do this?"

They told Him, "Yes, Lord."

²⁹ Then He touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith, so let it be done to you!"

³⁰ Their eyes were opened, and Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one finds out about this!"

³¹ However, they went out and spread the news about Him all over that region.

Jesus' healing of a demon-possessed man who could not talk — Mark 3:22, Luke 11:14-15

³² While they were going out, people brought to Jesus a man who could not talk and was demon-possessed.

³³ However, when the demon had been cast out, the man who had been unable to talk began to speak. The crowds were amazed and said, "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel."

³⁴ However, the Pharisees kept saying, "He is casting out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

³⁵ Then Jesus travelled through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness.

Jesus' instructions to His disciples for their preaching in Galilee (9:36-11:1)

³⁶ When He saw the crowds, He felt sorry for them, because they were troubled and helpless, **like sheep without a shepherd**. ³⁷ Then He told His disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few.

³⁸ Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest!"

10

Jesus' choice of twelve apostles — Mark 3:13-19, Luke 6:13-16

¹ Jesus called His twelve disciples to Him and gave them authority to drive out unclean spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness.

² These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew;

³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax-collector, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thad-daeus, ⁴ Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

Jesus' sending out of the twelve — Mark 6:7-13, Luke 9:1-6

⁵ Jesus sent these Twelve out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any city of the Samaritans! ⁶ Go, rather, to the lost

sheep of the house of Israel! ⁷ As you go, preach: ‘The kingdom of heaven is near!’ ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers and drive out demons! You have received freely: give freely! ⁹ Do not get any gold, silver or copper money to put into your money-belts!

¹⁰ Do not take a bag for the road or two tunics or sandals or a staff! For a worker is worth his food.

¹¹ Whenever you go into any city or village, inquire who is worthy in it and stay there until you leave!

¹² When you go into the home, greet it! ¹³ If the home is deserving, let your peace come on it! However, if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you!

¹⁴ If anyone does not welcome you or listen to your words, go outside of that house or that city and shake off the dust from your feet! ¹⁵ Truly, I tell you, it will be more bearable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment than for that city. ¹⁶ You see, I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves!

The lot that disciples face — compare Mark 13:9-13, Luke 12:11-12

¹⁷ “Nevertheless, be on your guard against men! For they will hand you over to councils and will flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ You will be brought before governors and kings because of Me, to testify to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ However, when they hand you over, do not worry how you are to speak or what you are to say! For it will be given to you in that hour what you are to say. ²⁰ For you are not the ones who are speaking, but the Spirit of your Father, who is speaking in you. ²¹ One brother will betray another to death, and a father his child. Children will **rebel against** their parents and cause them to be put to death. ²² You will also be hated by all people because of My name. Nevertheless, he who endures to the end will be saved. ²³ When people persecute you in this city, flee to another! Truly, I tell you, you will certainly not finish the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. ²⁴ A disciple is not above his teacher or a slave above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the student to be like his teacher and for a slave to be like his master. If people have been calling the master of the house ‘Beelzebul,’ how much more the members of his household!

An exhortation to the disciples to confess fearlessly — Luke 12:2-9

²⁶ “Therefore, do not be afraid of them! For there is nothing covered that will not be uncovered, and nothing hidden that will not be known. ²⁷ Speak in the light what I tell you in the dark and proclaim on the housetops what you hear in your ears! ²⁸ Stop being afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul! Rather, be afraid of Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell! ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father. ³⁰ As for you, even the hairs on your head have all been numbered. ³¹ Therefore, stop being afraid! You are worth more than many sparrows. ³² I shall confess before My Father in heaven

whoever confesses Me before others. ³³ I shall also deny before My Father in heaven whoever denies Me before others.

A prediction of division in households — Luke 12:51-53

³⁴ “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth! I have not come to bring peace but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to turn **a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.** ³⁶ **A person’s enemies will be those in his own home.**

The conditions of discipleship — Luke 14:26-27

³⁷ “Anyone who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and anyone who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ The person who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ The one who has found his life will lose it, but the one who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

The end of the discourse to the twelve

⁴⁰ “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who has sent Me. ⁴¹ He who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward. He who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward. ⁴² Whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I tell you, will certainly not lose his reward.”

11

¹ After Jesus had finished giving His twelve disciples these Instructions, He went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

Third section (11:2-13:53)

The question of John the Baptist — Luke 7:18-35

² When John had heard in prison about what the Christ was doing, he sent a message through his disciples, ³ to ask Him, “Are You the One who is coming or are we to expect someone else?”

⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you are hearing and seeing: ⁵ **Blind people are receiving their sight** again, lame people are walking, lepers are being made clean, **deaf people are hearing**, the dead are being raised and **poor people are being told the Good News.** ⁶ Blessed is anyone who is not offended because of Me!”

Jesus’ testimony about John the Baptist — Luke 7:24-35

⁷ When John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to talk to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed driven back and forth by the wind? ⁸ What did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft robes? Look! Those who wear soft robes are in kings’ palaces. ⁹ What did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, even someone greater than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom Scripture has said: ‘**Look! I am sending My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way before You.**’ ¹¹ Truly, I tell you, no one among those born by women has appeared who is greater than John

the Baptist. Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has been advancing with triumphant force, and violent men are laying hold of it. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ If you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵ Let the one who has ears hear!

¹⁶ “To what shall I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷ ‘We have played the flute for you, and yet you have not been dancing. We have sung a funeral song, and yet you have not been mourning.’ ¹⁸ For, when John came, he was neither eating nor drinking, and people used to say, ‘He has a demon.’ ¹⁹ When the Son of Man came, He was eating and drinking, and people are saying, ‘Look at the glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is proved right by her actions.”

Jesus' woes on the cities of Galilee — Luke 10:13-15

²⁰ Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles had been performed, because they had not repented: ²¹ “How terrible for you, Chorazin! How terrible for you, Bethsaida! For, if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² However, I tell you: it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the Day of Judgment than for you. ²³ As for you, Capernaum, you **will not be lifted up to heaven**, will you? **You will go down to hell**. For, if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. ²⁴ However, I tell you that it will be more bearable for the land of Sodom on the Day of Judgment than for you.”

Jesus' thanksgiving to the Father — Luke 10:21-22

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from wise and intelligent people and have revealed them to infants. ²⁶ Yes, Father, I praise You that this is how You have graciously wanted it to be. ²⁷ All things have been committed to Me by My Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and the one to whom the Son wishes to reveal Him.

Jesus' offer of rest to the heavily-laden

²⁸ “Come to Me, all you who are working hard and carrying a heavy burden, **and I shall give you rest!** ²⁹ Take My yoke on you and learn from Me! For I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

12

The plucking of grain by Jesus' disciples on a Sabbath — Mark 2:23-28, Luke 6:1-5

¹ At that time Jesus went through the grain-fields on

the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick heads of grain and eat them. ² When the Pharisees saw this, they told Him, “Look! Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath.”

³ However, He asked them, “Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry: ⁴ how he went into the house of God and ate **the loaves that had been set out**, which it was not lawful for him or for his companions to eat but only for the priests? ⁵ Or have you not read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the Temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are blameless? ⁶ However, I tell you that Something greater than the Temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what this means: ‘**I desire mercy and not sacrifice**,’ you would not have condemned people who are blameless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”

Jesus' healing of a man with a shrivelled hand — Mark 3:1-6, Luke 6:6-11

⁹ He went on from there and entered their synagogue, ¹⁰ and a man with a shrivelled hand was there. They asked Jesus, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” that they might accuse Him.

¹¹ Jesus asked them, “What man is there among you who has one sheep and, if it falls into a pit on a Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? ¹² Therefore, how much more valuable is a human being than a sheep? Therefore, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”

¹³ Then He told the man, “Stretch out your hand!” He stretched it out, and it was completely restored, as healthy as the other one. ¹⁴ However, the Pharisees went outside and plotted against Jesus, that they might kill Him. ¹⁵ Because Jesus knew about this, He withdrew from there.

Jesus' healing of many people — Mark 3:7-12, Luke 6:17-19

Many crowds followed Him, and He healed them all, ¹⁶ but warned them that they should not make Him known. ¹⁷ This was to fulfil what had been said through Isaiah the prophet: ¹⁸ “**Here is My Servant, whom I have chosen, whom I love, and in whom My soul delights. I shall put My Spirit on Him, and He will announce justice to the nations. ¹⁹ He will not quarrel or shout, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. ²⁰ He will not break a bruised reed or snuff out a smouldering wick, until He brings justice forth to victory, ²¹ and in His name the nations will hope.**”

An accusation by the Pharisees and the controversy about Beelzebul — Mark 3:20-30, Luke 11:14-23

²² Then a man who had a demon, was blind and could not speak was brought to Jesus. He healed him, so that the dumb man could speak and see. ²³ All the crowds were amazed and were saying, “Can this Man possibly be the Son of David?”

²⁴ When the Pharisees heard this, they said, “This Man is not casting out demons except by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.”

²⁵ Jesus knew their thoughts and told them, “Every

kingdom that has been divided against itself is ruined. No city or family that has been divided against itself will stand. ²⁶ If Satan is driving out Satan, he has been divided against himself. How, then, will his kingdom stand? ²⁷ Moreover, if I am casting out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they themselves will be your judges. ²⁸ However, if I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come on you. ²⁹ Or how can anyone go into the strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? After that he will rob his house. ³⁰ He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who is not gathering with Me is scattering. ³¹ Therefore, I tell you, human beings will be forgiven every sin and slander, but slandering the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven either in this age or in the age to come. ³³ Either make the tree good and its fruit good or make the tree bad and its fruit bad! For a tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things when you are evil? For the mouth speaks what runs over from the heart. ³⁵ A good person brings good things out of his good treasure, and an evil person brings evil things out of his evil treasure. ³⁶ I also tell you that people will give an account on the Day of Judgment for every careless word that they say. ³⁷ For by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned."

A warning against trying to see miraculous signs — Mark 8:11-12, Luke 11:29-32

³⁸ Then some scribes and Pharisees answered Him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from You."

³⁹ He answered them, "A wicked and adulterous generation demands a miraculous sign, and a miraculous sign will not be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For, as **Jonah was in the belly of the huge fish for three days and three nights**, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, but, look! Something greater than Jonah is here. ⁴² The **queen** from the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because she **came** from the ends of the earth to **hear the wisdom of Solomon** and look! Something greater than Solomon is here!

The return of the evil spirit — Luke 11:24-26

⁴³ "When an unclean spirit is cast out of a person, it goes through dry places, looking for a place to rest and does not find any. ⁴⁴ Then it says, 'I shall return to my house, from which I have come out.' When it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then it goes and takes with itself seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there.

Then the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation."

Jesus' declaration about His real brothers — Mark 3:31-35, Luke 8:19-21

⁴⁶ While He was still talking to the crowds, people noticed His mother and brothers standing outside, wanting to speak to Him. ⁴⁷ Someone told Him, "Look! Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to You."

⁴⁸ Jesus asked the man who told Him, "Who is My mother, and who are My brothers?" ⁴⁹ He stretched out His hand towards His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of My Father, who is in heaven, is My brother and sister and mother."

13

A collection of Jesus' Words: seven parables about the kingdom of God (13:1-53)

Jesus' parable about the sower — Mark 4:1-9, Luke 8:4-8

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat down beside the sea. ² However, such large crowds gathered around Him that He got into a boat and sat in it, while the entire crowd was standing on the shore.

³ Then He told them many things in parables. He said, "Look! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ While he was sowing, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵ Other seeds fell on the stony places, where they did not have much soil. Because their soil was not deep, the seeds came up quickly. ⁶ However, when the sun rose, they were scorched and, because they had no root, they withered. ⁷ Other seeds fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them. ⁸ However, other seeds fell on the good soil and produced grain, some a hundred, some sixty and some thirty times as much. ⁹ Let the one who has ears listen!"

¹⁰ The disciples came to Him and asked Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

Jesus' reason for speaking in parables — Mark 4:10-12, Luke 8:9-10

¹¹ He answered, "It has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. ¹² For more will be given to the one who has, and he will be given plenty. However, if anyone does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables, because, although they see, they do not see and, although they hear, they do not hear or understand.

¹⁴ In them Isaiah's prophecy is being fulfilled: **'You will hear clearly but will certainly not understand; and you will see clearly but will certainly not see.**

¹⁵ **For the hearts of this people have become dull, their ears have been hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand in their hearts and turn, that I might heal them.'**

Jesus' declaration about the blessedness of the disciples — Luke 10:23-24

¹⁶ "Nevertheless, blessed are your eyes! For they see,

and your ears! For they hear. ¹⁷ For truly, I tell you, many prophets and righteous people have longed to see the things that you are seeing and yet have not seen them and to hear the things that you are hearing and yet have not heard them.

The interpretation of the parable of the sower — Mark 4:13-20, Luke 8:11-15

¹⁸ “Therefore, hear the parable of the sower! ¹⁹ When anyone hears the Word of the kingdom but does not understand it, the Evil One comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This one is he who has been sown along the path. ²⁰ The one who has been sown on the stony places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ but does not have root in himself. He lasts for only a short time and, when trouble or persecution comes because of the Word, he immediately falls away. ²² The person who has been sown among thorns is one who hears the Word, but the worry of the world and the seduction that comes from riches choke the Word, and it does not produce anything. ²³ However, the person who has been sown on the good soil is the one who hears the Word and understands it, and so produces and yields, sometimes a hundred, sometimes sixty and sometimes thirty times as much.”

Jesus' parable about the weeds in the wheat

²⁴ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ However, while people were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat came up and formed grains, then the weeds also showed up. ²⁷ The owner's slaves came to him and asked him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?’

²⁸ “He told them, ‘An enemy has done this.’

“The slaves asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them out?’

²⁹ “He said, ‘No. If you pull out the weeds, you may pull up the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest! When the grain is cut, I shall tell the reapers, ‘Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles to be burnt but bring the wheat into my barn!’”

Jesus' parable about the mustard seed — Mark 4:30-32, Luke 13:18-19

³¹ He put another parable before them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³² It is a very small seed among all the seeds, but, when it has grown, it is the largest of the garden plants. It becomes a tree, so that **the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches.**”

Jesus' parable about yeast — Luke 13:20-21

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and put into three measures of flour until it was all leavened.”

³⁴ Jesus told all these things to the crowds in parables. He did not tell them anything without a parable, ³⁵ that what had been said through the prophet might

be fulfilled: “**I shall open My mouth in parables. I shall utter things that have been hidden since the foundation of the world.**”

Jesus' interpretation of the parable about the weeds in the wheat

³⁶ When Jesus had dismissed the crowds, He went into the house. His disciples came to Him and said, “Explain the parable of the weeds in the field to us!”

³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world. The good seeds are the people who belong to the kingdom. The weeds are the people who belong to the Evil One. ³⁹ The enemy who sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore, as the weeds are gathered and burnt with fire, it will be like that at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send His angels, they will gather out of His kingdom **all the things that cause sin and the people who continue to do evil,** ⁴² and they will throw them into the fiery furnace. There people will weep and grind their teeth. ⁴³ Then **righteous people will shine forth like** the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let the one who has ears listen!

Jesus' parable about the hidden treasure

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again and, because he was glad, he went and sold everything that he had and bought that field.

Jesus' parable about the valuable pearl

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dealer looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found one very expensive pearl, he went away, sold everything that he had and bought it.

Jesus' parable about the dragnet

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was thrown into the sea and gathered all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸ When it was full, they pulled it up onto the shore, sat down and collected the good ones into containers but threw the bad ones away. ⁴⁹ It will be like that at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate wicked people from righteous people ⁵⁰ and throw them into the fiery furnace. There they will weep and grind their teeth.

The end of the seven parables

⁵¹ Have you understood all these things?”

They answered, “Yes.”

⁵² He told them, “Therefore, every scribe who has been instructed for the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings new and old things out of his treasure.”

⁵³ When Jesus had finished these parables, He moved on from there.

Fourth section (13:54-18:35)

The rejection of Jesus at Nazareth — Mark 6:1-6, Luke 4:16-30

⁵⁴ He went to His hometown and began teaching the people in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and asked, “From where has He obtained this wisdom and these miracles? ⁵⁵ Is He not the carpenter's son? Is His mother not called ‘Mary,’ and are not His brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ Are

not all His sisters also here with us? From where, then, has this Man obtained all these things?"

⁵⁷ They took offence at Him. However, Jesus told them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own home town and in his family."

⁵⁸ He did not perform many miracles there because of their unbelief.

14

Herod's opinion about Jesus — Mark 6:14-16, Luke 9:7-9

¹ At that time Herod the Tetrarch heard the news about Jesus. ² He told his servants, "This is John the Baptist! He has risen from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in Him."

The death of John the Baptist — Mark 6:17-29, Luke 9:7-9

³ For Herod had arrested John, bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, ⁴ For John kept telling him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."

⁵ Although Herod wanted to kill him, he was afraid of the crowd, because they used to regard John as a prophet. ⁶ When Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before the guests and pleased Herod so much ⁷ that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked for. ⁸ Because she had been instructed by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist!"

⁹ Although the king felt sorry, yet, because of his oaths and because of the guests at the table, he commanded that it should be granted. ¹⁰ He sent someone and had John beheaded in the prison. ¹¹ His head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she carried it to her mother. ¹² John's disciples came, took his body away and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

Jesus' feeding of five thousand men — Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-14

¹³ When Jesus heard what had happened, He withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place to be alone. The crowds heard about it and followed Him on foot from the cities. ¹⁴ When Jesus came out of the boat, He saw a large crowd. His heart was filled with pity for them, and He healed their sick. ¹⁵ In the evening His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and it is already late. Send the crowds away, that they may go into the villages to buy some food for themselves!"

¹⁶ Jesus answered them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat!"

¹⁷ They told Him, "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish."

¹⁸ He said, "Bring them here to Me!"

¹⁹ He ordered the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, said a blessing and broke the loaves. He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ All of them had enough to eat. They took up what was left over of the broken pieces,

twelve baskets full. ²¹ The number of men who had eaten was about five thousand, not counting the women and children.

Jesus' walking on the water — Mark 6:45-52, John 6:15-21

²² Jesus immediately made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowds. ²³ After He had dismissed them, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone. ²⁴ The boat was already a considerable distance from the shore and was being buffeted by the waves, because there was a headwind. ²⁵ During the fourth watch of the night Jesus came towards them, walking on the sea.

²⁶ When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified. They said, "It is a ghost!" and cried out in fear.

²⁷ Immediately Jesus spoke to them. "Take courage! It is I. Stop being afraid!"

²⁸ Peter answered Him, "Lord, if it is You, order me to come to You on the water!"

²⁹ Jesus said, "Come!"

When Peter had got down out of the boat, he began to walk on the water and went toward Jesus. ³⁰ However, when he saw that the wind was strong, he was afraid, and, when he began to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

³¹ Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him. He asked him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

³² When they came into the boat, the wind died down.

³³ Those who were in the boat bowed down before Him and said, "Truly, You are the Son of God."

Jesus' healings at Gennesaret — Mark 6:53-56

³⁴ They crossed over and came to the shore at Gennesaret. ³⁵ The men of that place recognised Jesus and sent messengers to all that surrounding area. People brought all those who were sick to Him, ³⁶ and begged Him to let the sick touch just the edge of His garment, and all who touched it were made perfectly well.

15

Jesus' comments about the tradition of the elders — Mark 7:1-23

¹ Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem. They asked, ² "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

³ Jesus answered them, "Why do you also transgress the Commandment of God because of your tradition?"

⁴ For God has said: '**Honour your father and your mother!**' and '**The person who speaks evil of father or mother must be put to death!**' ⁵ However, you say, 'Whoever tells his father or mother, "Whatever help you might have received from me is a gift,"

⁶ shall certainly not "honour his father!"' So, you have nullified the Word of God because of your tradition.

⁷ You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied

sied about you: ⁸ **“This people honours Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me.**

⁹ **They are worshipping Me in vain, since they are teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”**

¹⁰ Then He called the crowd to Him and told them: “Listen and understand! ¹¹ It is not what enters into a man’s mouth that defiles him, but it is what comes out of a man’s mouth that defiles him.”

¹² Then the disciples came to Him and asked Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees took offence when they heard this saying?”

¹³ He answered, “Every plant that My Father in heaven has not planted will be pulled out by the roots.

¹⁴ Let them go! They are blind leaders of the blind. If a blind man leads another blind man, both will fall into a pit.”

¹⁵ Peter answered Him, “Explain this parable to us!”

¹⁶ Jesus asked, “Are you also still devoid of understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not know that everything that enters the mouth goes into the stomach and passes into the toilet? ¹⁸ However, the things that come out of the mouth come out of the heart and those things defile a man. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, thefts, false testimonies and slanders. ²⁰ These are the things that defile a man, but eating with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”

The healing of the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman — Mark 7:24-30

²¹ Then Jesus went out from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A Canaanite woman of that territory came out and began to shout: “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.”

²³ However, He did not answer her a word. Then His disciples came to Him and urged Him, “Send her away! For she keeps shouting after us.”

²⁴ He answered, “I have been sent only to the lost sheep of the family of Israel.”

²⁵ Then she came, bowed down before Him and said, “Lord, help me!”

²⁶ He answered, “It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the pet dogs.”

²⁷ She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the pet dogs eat some of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters.”

²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “O woman, your faith is great! Let it be done for you as you wish!”

From that hour her daughter was made well.

Jesus’ healing of many sick people

²⁹ Jesus left from there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then He went up on the hill-country and sat down there.

³⁰ Large crowds came to Him, bringing with them lame people, blind people, crippled people, those who could not talk and many others and laid them down at His feet, and He healed them. ³¹ As a result, the

crowd marvelled when they saw those who could not talk speaking, crippled people being made sound, lame people walking and blind people seeing, and glorified the God of Israel.

Jesus’ feeding of the four thousand — Mark 8:1-9

³² Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, “I have compassion for the crowd. For they have already been staying with Me for three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, that they may not become exhausted on the way.”

³³ His disciples asked Him, “From where can we get so much bread in a remote place to satisfy such a large crowd?”

³⁴ Jesus asked them, “How many loaves do you have?”

They said, “Seven and a few small fish.”

³⁵ He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground.

³⁶ Then He took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks, broke them and kept giving them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ³⁷ All of them had enough to eat. They took up seven large baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over.

³⁸ Those who were eating were four thousand men, besides women and children. ³⁹ After Jesus had dismissed the crowds, He got into the boat and came to the vicinity of Magadan.

16

The Pharisees’ attempt to see a miraculous sign — Mark 8:10-12

¹ The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and, to test Him, they asked Him to show them a miraculous sign from heaven.

² He answered them, “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fine weather. For the sky is red’; ³ and in the morning, ‘There will be a storm today. For the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to judge the appearance of the sky but cannot judge the signs of the times. ⁴ A wicked and adulterous generation demands a miraculous sign, and a sign will not be given to it except the sign of Jonah.”

Then Jesus left them and went away.

Jesus’ warning about the yeast of the Pharisees — Mark 8:13b-21

⁵ When the disciples had gone to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. ⁶ Jesus told them, “Be on guard and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!”

⁷ They began to discuss this among themselves. They said, “It is because we have not brought any bread.”

⁸ Jesus knew it and asked, “Why are you discussing among yourselves, O you of little faith, about having no bread? ⁹ Do you not understand yet and do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand and how many baskets you took up? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves for the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up? ¹¹ How is it that you do not understand that I have not spoken to you about bread? Instead, beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!”

12 Then they understood that He had not said that they should beware of the yeast that is used in bread but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi — Mark 8:27-30, Luke 9:18-21

13 When Jesus came to the district of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

14 They answered, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

15 He asked them, “You, however, who do you say I am?”

16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

17 Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah! For flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but My Father, who is in heaven. 18 I also tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I shall build My church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. 19 I shall give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you tie up on earth will be tied up in heaven, and whatever you untie on earth will be untied in heaven.”

20 Then He warned the disciples not to tell anyone that He was the Christ.

Jesus' first explicit prediction of His passion — Mark 8:31-33, Luke 9:22

21 From that time on, Jesus began to show His disciples that He had to go to Jerusalem, suffer greatly at the hands of the elders, Chief Priests and scribes, be killed and be raised on the third day.

22 However, Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, “May God in His mercy spare You this, Lord! This will certainly not happen to You.”

23 However, Jesus turned and told Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me, because you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of human beings.”

The conditions of discipleship — Mark 8:34-9:1, Luke 9:23-27

24 Then Jesus told His disciples, “If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me! 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what good will it do a person if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a person give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels and then **He will repay each person according to what he has done.** 28 Truly, I tell you that there are some of those who are standing here who will certainly not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

17

Jesus' transfiguration — Mark 9:2-13, Luke 9:28-36

1 After six days Jesus took with Him Peter, James and his brother John and led them up onto a high mountain by themselves. 2 Jesus was transfigured before them.

His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. 3 Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them and began to talk with Jesus. 4 Peter reacted by saying to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You wish, I shall make three tents here, one for You, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed them, and a voice out of the cloud said: “This is **My Son**, whom I love. **With Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!**”

6 When the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were very afraid. 7 However, Jesus came and touched them and said, “Get up and stop being afraid!”

8 Then they looked up and saw no one except Jesus.

Jesus' explanation about the predicted coming of Elijah — Mark 9:9-13, Luke 7:27

9 While they were coming down from the mountain Jesus commanded them, “Do not tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead!”

10 The disciples asked Him, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

11 Jesus answered, “**Elijah** does come and **will restore** all things. 12 However, I tell you that Elijah has already come, and people have not recognised him but have done to him whatever they have wanted to. In the same way the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.”

13 Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

Jesus' healing of an epileptic boy who had a demon — Mark 9:14-29, Luke 9:37-43a

14 When they had come to the crowd, a man came to Jesus and knelt before Him. 15 He said, “Lord, have mercy on my son! For he is an epileptic and is suffering greatly. For he often falls into the fire and often into the water. 16 I took him to Your disciples, and they could not heal him.”

17 Jesus answered, “O you unbelieving and perverted generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me!”

18 Jesus rebuked the demon. It came out of the boy, and he was healed from that hour.

19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked, “Why could we not cast it out?”

20 He told them, “Because of your little faith. For truly, I tell you, if you have faith like a mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, ‘Move from here to there!’ It will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.”*¹⁶⁷

Jesus' second explicit prediction of His passion — Mark 9:30-32, Luke 9:43b-45

22 While they were coming together in Galilee, Jesus told them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men, 23 and they will kill Him, but on the third day He will be raised.” Then they became

¹⁶⁷ For 17:21 in some manuscripts, see Mark 9:29.

very sad.

Peter's finding of a coin in a fish's mouth for the Temple tax

²⁴ After they had arrived at Capernaum, those who were collecting the two-drachma tax approached Peter and asked, "Does your Teacher not pay the Temple tax?"

²⁵ Peter answered, "Yes."

He went into the house, but Jesus anticipated him, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs duties or tax, from their children or from strangers?"

²⁶ When he answered, "From strangers," Jesus told him: "Then at least the children are exempt; ²⁷ but that we may not give offence to them, go to the sea and throw in a hook. Take the first fish that comes up and open its mouth! You will find a four-drachma coin. Take that and pay it to them for Me and for you."

18

A section about Jesus' Words: rules for the new people of God (18:1-35)

A dispute among the disciples about greatness — Mark 9:33-37, Luke 9:46-48

¹ At that hour the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

² He called a little child to Him and set him among them. ³ He said, "Truly, I tell you, unless you are converted and become like little children, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, ⁵ and whoever welcomes one child like this in My name welcomes Me.

Jesus' warning about causing others to stumble — Mark 9:42-48, Luke 17:1-2

⁶ "Nevertheless, if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him that a large millstone were hung around his neck and that he were drowned in the deepest part of the sea. ⁷ How terrible for the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Things that cause people to sin must come, but how terrible for the person through whom the cause for others to sin comes! ⁸ If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from yourself! It is better for you to go into life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹ If your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away from yourself! It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell-fire. ¹⁰ Be careful that you do not despise one of these little ones! For I tell you that their angels in heaven are always looking at the face of My Father, who is in heaven. *168

Jesus' parable about the lost sheep — Luke 15:1-7

¹² "What do you think? If a man acquires a hundred

sheep, and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that is going astray? ¹³ If he happens to find it, truly, I tell you that he rejoices more about it than about the ninety-nine that have not gone astray. ¹⁴ In the same way your Father in heaven does not want one of these little ones to be lost.

Jesus' admonition to reprove one's brother

¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go and point out his sin to him when you are alone with him! If he listens to you, you have won your brother. ¹⁶ However, if he will not listen, take one or two others with you so that you **have two or three witnesses to verify every word!** ¹⁷ If he will not listen to them, tell it to the church! However, if he will not listen even to the church, treat him like a heathen and a tax-collector! ¹⁸ Truly, I tell you, whatever you tie up on earth will be tied up in heaven, and whatever you untie on earth will be untied in heaven.

Jesus' instruction about agreement in prayer

¹⁹ "Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree about anything at all that they ask, My Father in heaven will do it for them. ²⁰ For where two or three have come together in My name, there I am among them."

Jesus' answer to a question about forgiveness

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked Him, "Lord, how often shall I forgive my brother when he keeps sinning against me? Up to seven times?"

²² Jesus answered him, "I tell you, not up to seven times but up to seventy times seven.

Jesus' parable about the unmerciful servant

²³ "That is why the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he had begun to settle accounts, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵ Since this slave could not pay the debt, the master ordered that he should be sold, with his wife, children and all that he had, and that payment should be made. ²⁶ Therefore, the slave fell on his knees, bowed low before him and asked: 'Be patient with me! I shall pay everything back to you.' ²⁷ The master of that slave felt compassion for him, freed him and forgave him his debt.

²⁸ "However, when that slave had gone out, he found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii. He took hold of him and began to choke him. He said, 'Pay what you owe!' ²⁹ Therefore, his fellow slave fell and begged him, 'Be patient with me! I shall pay you back.' ³⁰ However, he refused. Instead, he went off and put him into prison until he should pay back what he owed. ³¹ Therefore, when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were very sad and went and told their own master everything that had happened. ³² Then his master sent for him and said to him: 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. ³³ Should you not also have pitied your fellow slave as I had also pitied you?'

³⁴ His master was angry and handed him over to the

¹⁶⁸ For 18:11 in some manuscripts, see Luke 19:10.

torturers until he should pay back all that he owed.

³⁵ “That is also what My Father in heaven will do to you if each of you does not forgive his brother from his heart.”

19

Fifth section (19:1-25:46)

Jesus' ministry in Perea and Judea (19:1-22:46)

Jesus' instruction about marriage and divorce — Mark 10:1-12, Luke 16:18 — compare Matthew 5:31-32

¹ When Jesus had finished saying these things, He left Galilee and went to the region of Judea on the other side of the Jordan. ² Large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there. ³ Some Pharisees came to Him to test Him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?”

⁴ Jesus replied, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning **‘made them male and female,’** ⁵ and said: **‘That is why a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?** ⁶ So, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, let no one separate what God has joined together!”

⁷ They asked Him, “Why, then, did Moses command to **give a certificate of divorce and divorce her?**”

⁸ Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. However, from the beginning it was not like that. ⁹ I also tell you, if anyone divorces his wife, except for adultery and marries another, he is living in adultery.”

¹⁰ The disciples said to Him, “If this is the situation between the husband and his wife, it is better not to marry.”

¹¹ He answered them, “Not all can accept this saying, but it is only for those to whom it has been given.

¹² For there are eunuchs who were born like that from their mother’s wombs, there are eunuchs who were mutilated by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.”

Jesus' reception of little children — Mark 10:13-16, Luke 18:15-17

¹³ Then little children were brought to Jesus that He might lay His hands on them and pray. However, the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

¹⁴ Nevertheless, Jesus said, “Permit the little children to come to Me and stop hindering them! For the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

¹⁵ When He had laid His hands on them, He went away from there.

Jesus' answer to a rich young leader's question — Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30

¹⁶ Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

¹⁷ Jesus asked him, “Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is One who is good. However, if you want to enter life, keep the Commandments!”

¹⁸ He asked Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “**You**

shall not murder!’ **‘You shall not commit adultery!’** **‘You shall not steal!’** **‘You shall not bear false witness!’** ¹⁹ **‘Honour your father and your mother!’** and **‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself!’**”

²⁰ The young man told Him, “I have been keeping all these. What do I still lack?”

²¹ Jesus told him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor! You will have treasure in heaven. Then come here and follow Me!”

²² When the young man heard this saying, he went away sadly because he had great wealth.

²³ Jesus told His disciples, “Truly, I tell you, it will be difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁵ When the disciples heard this, they were extremely astonished and asked, “Who, then, can be saved?”

²⁶ Jesus looked straight at them and said: “With men this is impossible, but **with God all things are possible.**”

²⁷ Then Peter answered Him: “Look! We have left everything and followed You. What, then, shall we get?”

²⁸ Jesus told them, “Truly, I tell you, in the renewed world, when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne, you also, who have followed Me, will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for the sake of My name will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰ However, many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

20

Jesus' parable about the labourers in the vineyard

¹ “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. ² He agreed with the workers to pay them a denarius a day and sent them into his vineyard.

³ About the third hour he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴ He told them, ‘You also go into the vineyard! I shall pay you whatever is right.’ ⁵ So, they went.

“He went out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour and did the same thing. ⁶ About the eleventh hour he went out and found some others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why are you standing here all day long doing nothing?’

⁷ “They answered him, ‘Because nobody has hired us.’

“He told them, ‘You also go into the vineyard!’

⁸ “When evening came, the owner of the vineyard told his manager, ‘Call the workmen and give them their pay! Begin with the last and go on to the first!’

⁹ “Those who began working about the eleventh hour

came and each received a denarius. ¹⁰ When the first ones came, they expected that they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius.

¹¹ Although they took it, they began to grumble against the landowner. ¹² They said, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have endured the burden and the heat of the day.’

¹³ ‘He answered one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. You agreed with me on a denarius, did you not? ¹⁴ Take what is yours and go! I want to give this last man as much as I have given you. ¹⁵ Or do I not have the right to do what I please with what is mine? Or are you envious because I am generous?’

¹⁶ ‘In this way the last will be first, and the first last.’

Jesus’ third explicit prediction of His passion — Mark 10:32-34, Luke 18:31-34

¹⁷ When Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the Twelve by themselves and told them on the way:

¹⁸ ‘Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the Chief Priests and scribes. They will condemn Him to die ¹⁹ and hand Him over to the Gentiles to be made fun of, whipped and crucified, but on the third day He will be raised.’

The request of the sons of Zebedee for prominent positions in Jesus’ kingdom — Mark 10:35-45

²⁰ Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Jesus with her sons and bowed before Him to make a request of Him.

²¹ He asked her, ‘What do you want?’

She told Him, ‘Promise that one of my two sons will sit at Your right, and the other at Your left in Your kingdom!’

²² Jesus answered, ‘You do not realise what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?’

They told Him, ‘We can.’

²³ He told them, ‘You will drink My cup, but to sit at My right and at My left I can grant only to those for whom My Father has prepared these positions.’

²⁴ When the other ten heard about it, they became angry with the two brothers. ²⁵ Jesus called them and said: ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles are lords over them, and their great men are tyrants over them. ²⁶ However, it is not like that among you. Let anyone who wants to become great among you be your servant, ²⁷ and anyone who wants to be first among you should be your slave, ²⁸ just as the Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many.’

The healing of Bartimaeus and another blind man — Mark 10:46-52, Luke 18:35-43

²⁹ While they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. ³⁰ There were two blind men sitting beside the road. When they heard that Jesus was going past, they shouted: ‘Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!’

³¹ The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet,

but they shouted even more: ‘Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!’

³² Jesus stood still, called them and asked, ‘What do you want Me to do for you?’

³³ They told Him, ‘Lord, we want our eyes to be opened.’

³⁴ Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes, and immediately their sight was restored, and they began to follow Him.

21

Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem — Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-38, John 12:12-19

¹ When they had approached Jerusalem and reached Bethphage, on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples. ² He told them, ‘Go to the village ahead of you! At once you will find a donkey tied up and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to Me! ³ If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord needs them,’ and he will send them immediately.’

⁴ This happened that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: ⁵ ‘**Tell the daughter of Zion: ‘Look! Your King is coming to you, meek and riding on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’**’

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt and laid their garments on them, and Jesus sat on them. ⁸ The very large crowd spread their garments on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of Him and that followed Him were shouting: ‘**Hosanna** to the Son of David! **Blessed is He who is coming in the name of the Lord!** Hosanna in the highest heavens!’

¹⁰ When He had entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, ‘Who is this?’

¹¹ The crowds answered, ‘This is the Prophet Jesus, who is from Nazareth in Galilee.’

Jesus’ clearing of the Temple — Mark 11:15-19, Luke 19:45-46

¹² Then Jesus went into the Temple and drove out all those who were selling and buying in the Temple and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the chairs of those who were selling doves. ¹³ He told them, ‘Scripture has said, ‘**My house will be called a house of prayer,**’ but you are making it ‘**a den of robbers.**’

¹⁴ Blind and lame people came to Him in the Temple, and He healed them. ¹⁵ When the Chief Priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things He did and the children shouting ‘**Hosanna** to the Son of David!’ in the Temple, they were indignant. ¹⁶ They asked Him, ‘Do You hear what these are saying?’

Jesus replied to them, ‘Yes. Have you never read: ‘**Out of the mouths of infants and breast-fed babies You have prepared praise for Yourself**’?’

Jesus’ return to Bethany — Luke 11:11

¹⁷ He left them, went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

Jesus' cursing of the fig tree — Mark 11:12-14

¹⁸ Early in the morning, while Jesus was going back to the city, He became hungry. ¹⁹ When He saw a fig tree beside the road, He went up to it and found nothing on it but leaves. He said to it, “May no fruit ever grow on you again!” Immediately the fig tree withered.

The meaning of the withered fig tree — Mark 11:20-26

²⁰ When the disciples saw this, they were astonished. They asked, “How has the fig tree withered so quickly?”

²¹ Jesus answered them, “Truly, I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has been done to the fig tree but also, if you tell this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and be thrown into the sea,’ it will be done. ²² If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

Jesus' response to a question about His authority — Mark 11:27-33, Luke 20:1-8

²³ When He had come to the Temple, the Chief Priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching. They asked, “By what authority are You doing these things?” and “Who has given You this authority?”

²⁴ Jesus answered them, “I also shall ask you one thing. If you tell it to Me, I too shall tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁵ From where did the baptism of John come? Was it from heaven or from men?”

They discussed it among themselves: “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will ask us, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ ²⁶ However, if we say, ‘From men,’ — we are afraid of the crowd. For they all regard John as a prophet.”

²⁷ They answered Jesus, “We do not know.”

Then He also told them, “Neither do I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

Jesus' parable about the two sons

²⁸ “What do you think of this? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today!’

²⁹ “He answered, ‘I do not want to.’ Later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰ “The father went to the other one and told him the same thing. He answered, ‘I shall, sir,’ but did not go.

³¹ “Which of the two did what the father wanted?”

They answered, “The first.”

Jesus told them, “Truly, I tell you, tax-collectors and prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you teaching you the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. The tax-collectors and prostitutes believed him. However, even when you had seen that, you did not later change your minds and believe him.

Jesus' parable about the wicked tenant-farmers — Mark 12:1-12, Luke 20:9-19

³³ “Listen to another parable! There was a landowner who **planted a vineyard**. He **put a wall around it**, **dug a winepress in it** and **built a watchtower**. Then

he rented the vineyard out to some farmers and went away on a journey. ³⁴ When the vintage time approached, he sent his servants to the tenant-farmers to get his fruit. ³⁵ The tenant-farmers seized his servants, beat one, killed another and stoned a third. ³⁶ Then he sent other servants, more than the first, and the tenant-farmers treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸ However, when the tenant-farmers saw his son, they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and let us get his inheritance!’ ³⁹ They took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

⁴⁰ “Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenant-farmers?”

⁴¹ They answered, “He will make those scoundrels die a miserable death and rent out the vineyard to other tenant-farmers, who will give him the fruit due to him at its right time.”

⁴² Jesus asked them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: **‘The Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone. The Lord has done this, and it is marvellous for us to see’?**”

⁴³ “Therefore, I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation that continues to produce its fruit. ⁴⁴ Anyone who falls on this Stone will be dashed in pieces and, if It falls on anyone, It will crush him.”

⁴⁵ When the Chief Priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they knew that He was talking about them.

⁴⁶ Although they wanted to arrest Him, they were afraid of the crowds, because they regarded Him as a prophet.

22

Jesus' parable about the marriage-feast

¹ Again Jesus used parables in speaking to them. He said: ² “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding for his son. ³ He sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding, but they refused to come. ⁴ Then he sent other servants and said to them, ‘Tell the people who have been invited, “Look here! I have prepared my dinner. My bulls and fattened calves have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding!”’”

⁵ “However, they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, another to his business; ⁶ and the rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them.

⁷ The king became angry. He sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

⁸ “Then he told his servants: ‘The wedding is ready, but the people who have been invited have not deserved to come. ⁹ Therefore, go where the highways leave the city and invite everyone you find to the wedding!’”

¹⁰ “Those servants went out on the highways and brought in all the people whom they found, both bad

and good. Then the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 “When the king came in to observe the guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing a wedding garment. 12 He asked him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ The man could not say a thing. 13 Then the king told the servants, ‘Tie him hand and foot and throw him out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!’

14 “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

Jesus’ answer to a question about paying tax to Caesar — Mark 12:13-17, Luke 20:20-26

15 Then the Pharisees went away and plotted how to trap Him in His Words. 16 They sent their disciples to Him with Herod’s supporters to say to Him: “Teacher, we know that You are honest, that You teach the Way of God in truth. You pay no attention to who people are, since You do not show favouritism. 17 Therefore, tell us: What do You think? Is it right to pay a tax to Caesar or not?”

18 Jesus recognised their evil intent and asked, “Why are you testing Me, hypocrites? 19 Show Me the coin used for paying the tax!”

They brought Him a denarius. 20 He asked them, “Whose portrait is this, and whose inscription?”

21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.”

Then He told them, “Therefore, pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s!”

22 They were astonished when they heard this. Then they let Him alone and went away.

Jesus’ answer to a question of the Sadducees about the resurrection — Mark 12:18-27, Luke 20:27-40

23 On that day Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him:

24 “Teacher, Moses said: ‘**If anyone dies without any children, his brother should, as next of kin, marry his widow and have children for his brother.**’

25 There were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died and, since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. 26 Likewise the second brother also, and the third and down to the seventh. 27 Last of all, the woman died. 28 In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be, since they had all married her?”

29 Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection people do not marry, nor are they given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven. 31 However, concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what has been spoken to you by God: 32 ‘**I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob**’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

33 When the crowds were hearing this, they were astonished at His teaching.

Jesus’ response about the greatest commandments, love of God and of the

neighbour — Mark 12:28-34

34 When the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

35 One of them, an expert in the Law, asked Him a question, to test Him, 36 “Teacher, which is the greatest Commandment in the Law?”

37 Jesus answered him, “**You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind!**” 38 This is the greatest and the first Commandment. 39 The second is like it: ‘**You shall love your neighbour as yourself!**’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two Commandments.”

Jesus’ question to the Pharisees about David’s Son — Mark 12:35-37a, Luke 20:41-44

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is He?”

They said to Him, “The son of David.”

43 He asked them, “How, then, does David, by the Spirit, call Him ‘Lord’? For he says, 44 ‘**The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I put Your enemies under Your feet!”**’” 45 Therefore, if David calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?”

46 No one could answer Him a word and from that day on no one dared to ask Him any more questions.

23

A selection of Jesus’ Words: seven woes and predictions about the last things (23:1-25:46)

Jesus’ woes against the Pharisees — Mark 12:37b-40, Luke 20:45-47

1 Then Jesus told the crowds and His disciples: 2 “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. 3 Therefore, do all the things that they tell you and keep them; but do not do as they do! For they tell others but do not practise it. 4 They tie up loads that are heavy and hard to carry and lay them on other people’s shoulders but they themselves are not willing to move them with one of their fingers. 5 They do everything that they do that other people may see them. For they make their prayer-strips broad and the tassels on their garments long. 6 They love the places of honour at dinners and the most important seats in synagogues. 7 They love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by other people. 8 However, you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’! For you have only one Teacher, and you are all brothers. 9 Do not call anyone on earth ‘Father’! For you have only one Father, He who is in heaven. 10 Do not be called ‘teachers’! For you have only one Teacher, the Christ. 11 He who is the greatest among you shall be your servant! 12 He who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Jesus’ woes and warnings about the scribes and Pharisees — Luke 11:37-54

13 “How terrible for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are locking up the kingdom of heaven against other people. For you are not going in yourselves and you are not allowing those who are trying

to enter to go in. ¹⁶⁹ ¹⁵ How terrible for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You travel around the sea and the dry land to make one convert and when, he becomes one, you make him twice as fit for hell as you are. ¹⁶ How terrible for you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the Temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold in the Temple, he is bound by his oath.’ ¹⁷ You blind and foolish people! For which is greater, the gold or the Temple that has made the gold holy? ¹⁸ You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but, if anyone swears by the gift that is on it, he is bound by his oath.’ ¹⁹ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy? ²⁰ Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by all the things that are on it. ²¹ He who swears by the Temple swears by it and by the One who dwells in it. ²² He who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by the One who is sitting on it. ²³ How terrible for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay a tenth of mint, dill and cumin but have neglected the weightier matters of the Law: justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have done the latter things without neglecting the former! ²⁴ Blind guides! You strain out the gnat but swallow the camel. ²⁵ How terrible for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and of the dish that the outside also may be clean. ²⁷ How terrible for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed graves, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean. ²⁸ So, you also on the outside appear righteous to other people but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. ²⁹ How terrible for you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of those who were righteous, ³⁰ and you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ ³¹ Therefore, you are witnesses against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers! ³³ You snakes! You brood of vipers! How are you to escape being condemned to hell? ³⁴ Therefore, now, I am sending to you prophets, wise men and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify. Others of them you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, ³⁵ that all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth may come on you, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. ³⁶ Truly, I tell you, all these things will come

on this generation.

Jesus’ lament over Jerusalem — compare Luke 13:34-35

³⁷ “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who have murdered the prophets and stoned those who have been sent to you, how often I have wanted to bring your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you have not been willing! ³⁸ Now your **house will be left to you a deserted place.** ³⁹ For I tell you, you will never see Me again until you say, ‘**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**’”

24

Jesus’ prediction of the destruction of the Temple — Mark 13:1-4, Luke 21:5-7

¹ When Jesus left the Temple and was walking away, His disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the Temple. ² Jesus told them, “You see all these things, do you not? Truly, I tell you, one stone will certainly not be left on another here. Each one will be thrown down.”

³ While Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him privately and said, “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what the sign of Your coming will be and of the end of the age?”

The signs of the kingdom — Mark 13:5-8, Luke 21:8-11

⁴ Jesus answered them, “Beware that no one deceives you! ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. ⁶ You are going to hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you do not become alarmed! For these things **must happen**, but the end is still to come. ⁷ For one **nation will rise against another nation**, and one **kingdom against another kingdom**, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ However, all these are the beginning of birth-pains. ⁹ Then they will hand you over to be afflicted and will kill you, and all nations will hate you because of My name. ¹⁰ **Then many will be offended** and will betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ Many false prophets will arise and deceive many people. ¹² Because lawlessness will increase, the love of most people will also grow cold. ¹³ However, the one who endures to the end will be saved.

The spread of the Gospel before the end — Mark 13:9-13, Luke 21:12-19

¹⁴ “This Good News of the kingdom will also be preached in the whole world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

A prediction about the devastating abomination — Mark 13:14-20, Luke 21:20-24

¹⁵ “Daniel the prophet spoke about **the devastating abomination**, which would stand **in the Holy Place**. When you see it — let the reader take note — ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains! ¹⁷ He who is on the roof should not come down to take things out of his house! ¹⁸ He who is in the field should not turn back to get his coat!

¹⁹ “How terrible for the women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing babies in those days!

²⁰ Pray that it may not be winter or a Sabbath when

¹⁶⁹ For 23:14 in some manuscripts, see Mark 12:40 and Luke 20:47.

you flee! ²¹ For it will be a time of great **misery, such as has not happened from the beginning** of the world **until now** — and surely will never happen again. ²² Moreover, if that time had not been cut short, no one would be saved. However, that time will be cut short for the sake of those whom He has chosen.

The culmination of the troubles — Luke 13:21-23, Luke 17:21

²³ “At that time if anyone tells you, ‘Look! Here is Christ!’ or ‘There He is!’ do not believe it! ²⁴ For false christ and false **prophets will come and work great miraculous signs and wonders** to deceive, if possible, even those whom God has chosen. ²⁵ You see, I have told you this before it happens.

The day of the Son of Man — Luke 17:23-24, 37

²⁶ “So, when you are told, ‘There He is in the wilderness!’ do not go out or ‘Here He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it! ²⁷ For the coming of the Son of Man will be like the lightning, which starts in the east and flashes across the whole sky, to the west. ²⁸ Where the dead body is, there the vultures will gather.

The coming of the Son of Man — Mark 13:24-27, Luke 21:25-28

²⁹ “Immediately after the tribulation of those days **the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light**, the stars will fall from the sky, and **the powers of the heavens** will be shaken. ³⁰ Then the miraculous sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then **all the tribes of the earth will mourn**. They will see **the Son of Man coming on the clouds in the sky** with power and great glory. ³¹ He will send His angels **with a loud trumpet call**, and they **will gather** His elect from the four winds, **from one end of the heavens to the other**.

Jesus’ parable about the fig tree — Mark 13:28-29, Luke 21:29-31

³² “Learn this parable from the fig tree! When its branch has already become tender and it sprouts its leaves, you know summer is near. ³³ So you also, when you see all these things, you know that He is near, at the doors.

The certainty of Jesus’ Words and the time of His coming — Mark 13:30-32, Luke 21:32-33

³⁴ “Truly, I tell you, that this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things happen. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Words will certainly not pass away.

The need for watchfulness — compare Mark 13:32-37, Luke 21:34-36

³⁶ “No one knows about that day and hour, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

³⁷ For the coming of the Son of Man will be like what happened in the days of Noah. ³⁸ For in those days before the flood people were eating and drinking and marrying and being married, until the day when **Noah went into the ark**. ³⁹ They knew nothing until **the flood came** and swept them all away. That is what the coming of the Son of Man will also be like. ⁴⁰ At that time two men will be in the field. One will be taken, and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill. One will be taken, and the other left.

Jesus’ parable about the watchful householder — Luke 12:39-40

⁴² “Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know at which hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ However, be aware of this! If the householder had known at which time of the night the burglar was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore, you also, be ready! For the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him.

Jesus’ parable about the faithful and wise servant — Luke 12:42-46

⁴⁵ “Who then is the faithful and prudent servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the right time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master finds doing this when he comes! ⁴⁷ Truly, I tell you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸ However, if that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away for a long time,’ ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with the drunkards, ⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not expecting him and at an hour of which he is not aware. ⁵¹ His master will cut him in two and assign his place with the hypocrites. There they will weep and gnash their teeth.

25

Jesus’ parable about the ten virgins

¹ “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³ For, when those who were foolish brought their lamps, they did not bring any olive-oil with them. ⁴ Those who were wise, however, brought olive-oil in their jars with their lamps. ⁵ When the bridegroom took a long time, they all became drowsy and began to sleep. ⁶ At midnight there was a shout: ‘The bridegroom is here! Come out to meet him!’ ⁷ Then all those virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ Those who were foolish asked those who were wise, ‘Give us some of your olive-oil! For our lamps are going out.’ ⁹ However, those who were wise answered, ‘No, otherwise there will certainly not be enough for us and for you. Rather, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves!’ ¹⁰ While they were going away to buy it, the bridegroom came. The ones who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. ¹¹ Later the other virgins also came and said, ‘Lord, lord, open the door for us!’ ¹² However, he answered them, ‘Truly, I tell you, I do not know you.’

¹³ “Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know the day or the hour.”

Jesus’ parable about three kinds of workers and their talents — compare the parable of the minas, Luke 19:12-27

¹⁴ “For it is like a man going on a journey. He called his servants and entrusted his property to them. ¹⁵ He gave one man five talents, another two talents and another one talent, each according to his ability and he immediately went on his journey. ¹⁶ The one who had

received the five talents went and put them to work and gained five more. ¹⁷ In the same way the one who had received the two talents gained two more. ¹⁸ However, the one who had received the one talent went away, dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ After a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The one who had received the five talents came and brought five more talents. He said, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. Look! I have gained five more talents.'

²¹ "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things. I shall put you in charge of many things. Enter your master's joy!'

²² "The one who had received the two talents came and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. Look! I have gained two more talents.'

²³ "His master told him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things. I shall put you in charge of many things. Enter your master's joy!'

²⁴ "When the one who had received the one talent also came, he said, 'Master, I knew that you were a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering from where you have not scattered. ²⁵ I was afraid. So, I went away and hid your talent in the ground. Look! Here you have what is yours.'

²⁶ "His master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! So, did you know that I harvest where I have not sown and gather from where I have not scattered?'

²⁷ Therefore, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and, when I returned, I would have received my own back with interest. ²⁸ Therefore, take the talent away from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents! ²⁹ For everyone who has something will be given more and have plenty. However, he who has nothing will have even what he has taken away from him. ³⁰ So, throw the useless servant out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!'"

The last judgment

³¹ "When the Son of Man **comes** in His glory, and **all the angels with Him**, He will sit on His glorious throne. ³² All nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them from one another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will have the sheep stand at His right but the goats at His left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those at His right, 'Come, you whom My Father has blessed! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the time when the world was created! ³⁵ For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave Me a drink. I was a stranger, and you took Me into your homes, ³⁶ naked, and you gave Me something to wear, sick, and you looked after Me, in prison, and you visited Me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous ones will ask Him, 'Lord,

when did we see You hungry and feed You or thirsty and give You a drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take You into our homes or naked and give You something to wear? ³⁹ When did we see You sick or in prison and visit You?'

⁴⁰ "Then the King will answer them, 'Truly, I tell you, anything you have done for one of My brothers here, even the least important of them, you have done for Me.'

⁴¹ "Then He will say to those at His left, 'Go away from Me, cursed ones, into the everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels! ⁴² For I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat, thirsty, and you did not give Me a drink, ⁴³ a stranger, and you did not take Me into your homes, naked, and you did not give Me anything to wear, sick and in prison, and you did not look after Me.'

⁴⁴ "Then they also will ask, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not help You?'

⁴⁵ "Then He will answer them, 'Truly, I tell you, anything you have not done for one of these, even the least important of them, you have not done for Me.'

⁴⁶ "Then **these** will go away **to everlasting** punishment, but the righteous ones **to everlasting life.**"

26

Jesus' passion, death and resurrection (26:1-28:20)

The plot of the Jews to put Jesus to death — Mark 14:1-2, Luke 22:1-2, John 11:45-57

¹ When Jesus finished saying all these things, He told His disciples, ² "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

³ Then the Chief Priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the Chief Priest, whose name was Caiaphas. ⁴ They plotted to arrest Jesus in an underhanded way and kill Him. ⁵ However, they said, "Not during the festival! Or there may be a riot among the people."

Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany — Mark 14:3-9, John 12:1-8

⁶ When Jesus was at Bethany in the home of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to Him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume and poured it on His head while He was reclining at the table. ⁸ When the disciples saw it they were indignant. They asked, "Why this waste? ⁹ For this perfume could have been sold for a high price, and the money given to the poor."

¹⁰ Since He was aware of it, Jesus asked them, "Why are you bothering the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to Me. ¹¹ For you always have the poor with you but do not always have Me. ¹² For she has put this perfume on My body to prepare Me for burial. ¹³ Truly, I tell you, wherever this Good News is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told in memory of her."

Judas' plan to betray Jesus — Mark 14:10-11, Luke 22:3-6

14 Then one of the Twelve, the one called ‘Judas Iscariot,’ went to the Chief Priests.

15 He asked, “What are you willing to pay me if I hand Him over to you?”

They offered him **thirty pieces of silver**. 16 From then on Judas kept looking for an opportunity to betray Him.

The preparation for the Passover — Mark 14:12-16, Luke 22:7-13

17 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”

18 He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says, “My appointed time is near. I shall celebrate the Passover at your house with My disciples”!’”

19 The disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover. 20 When evening had come, He was reclining at the table with the Twelve.

Jesus’ prediction of His betrayal — Mark 14:17-21, Luke 22:14, 21-23, John 13:21-30

21 While they were eating, He said, “Truly, I tell you that one of you will betray Me.”

22 They were very sad, and each one of them began to ask Him, “I am not the one, am I, Lord?”

23 Jesus answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the bowl with Me is the one who will betray Me.

24 The Son of Man is going as the Scriptures have said about Him, but how terrible for that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born.”

25 Then Judas, who was betraying Him, asked, “I am not the one, am I, Rabbi?”

Jesus told him, “You have said that.”

The institution of the Lord’s Supper — Mark 14:22-26, Luke 22:18-20, I Corinthians 11:23-25

26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread and gave thanks. He broke it, gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat! This is My body.”

27 He took a cup, gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you! 28 For this is My **blood of the Covenant**, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 For I tell you, I shall certainly not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it with you anew in My Father’s kingdom.”

The way to Gethsemane and prophecy of Peter’s denials — Mark 14:28-31, Luke 22:30-34, John 13:36-38

30 After they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

31 Then Jesus told them, “All of you will take offence at Me this night. For Scripture has said, ‘I shall **strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered**.’ 32 However, after I have been raised, I shall go ahead of you to Galilee.”

33 Peter answered Him, “If they are all going to take offence at You, I shall never take offence.”

34 Jesus told him, “Truly, I tell you that tonight, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”

35 Peter told Him, “Even if I must die with You, I

shall certainly not deny You.”

All the other disciples said something similar.

Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane — Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:39-46, John 18:1

36 Then Jesus went with the disciples to a place called “Gethsemane,” and told them, “Sit down here while I go over there and pray!”

37 He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and distressed.

38 Then He told them, “**My soul is very sorrowful**, to the point of death. Stay here and be watchful with Me!”

39 He went ahead a little, fell with His face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from Me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will!”

40 When He came back to the disciples, He found them sleeping. He asked Peter, “So, could you men not be watchful with Me for one hour? 41 Be watchful and pray, that you may not begin to be tempted! The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass by unless I drink it, let Your will be done!”

43 He came again and found them sleeping, because their eyes had been weighed down. 44 He left them again and went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then He came to the disciples and asked them, “Are you still sleeping on and resting? Look! The hour has come, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Get up! Let us go! Look! The one who is betraying Me is at hand.”

The arrest of Jesus — Mark 14:43-52, Luke 22:47-54a, John 18:1-14

47 While Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd from the Chief Priests and elders of the people. They were carrying swords and clubs. 48 The betrayer had given them a signal. He said, “The One whom I kiss is the Man. Arrest Him!”

49 Judas at once went up to Jesus, said, “Greetings, Rabbi,” and kissed Him.

50 Jesus told him, “Friend, do what you have come for!”

Then the men came forward, took hold of Jesus and arrested Him. 51 Suddenly, one of Jesus’ companions stretched out his hand and drew his sword. He struck the Chief Priest’s slave and cut off his ear. 52 Then Jesus told him, “Put your sword back in its place! For all who take the sword will die by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot call on My Father, so that He will at once provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How, then, are the Scriptures to be fulfilled, which say that it must happen in this way?”

55 At that time Jesus asked the crowd, “Have you come out to arrest Me with swords and clubs as if I were a robber? Every day I have been sitting and teaching in the Temple, and you have not arrested Me.

⁵⁶ However, all this has happened that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled.”

Then all His disciples deserted Him and ran away.

Jesus' first trial before the Jewish court — Mark 14:53-72, Luke 22:54-71

⁵⁷ Those who had arrested Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the Chief Priest, where the scribes and the elders had been called together. ⁵⁸ Peter followed Him at a distance right up to the Chief Priest's courtyard. He went inside and sat down with the servants to see how this would end.

⁵⁹ The Chief Priests and the whole Jewish council kept on looking for false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death. ⁶⁰ However, they did not find any, although many false witnesses came forward. Later two men came forward, ⁶¹ and said, “This fellow said, ‘I can destroy the Temple of God and build it in three days.’”

⁶² The Chief Priest stood up and asked Jesus, “Are You making no reply? What is it that these men are testifying against You?”

⁶³ However, Jesus remained silent. Then the Chief Priest said to Him, “I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God!”

⁶⁴ Jesus answered him, “It is as you have said, but I tell you all, from now on you will see **the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.**”

⁶⁵ Then the Chief Priest tore his robes and said, “He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look! Now you have heard the blasphemy.

⁶⁶ What do you think?”

They answered, “He is guilty and deserves to die.”

⁶⁷ Then they spat in His face and struck Him with their fists, and others slapped Him, ⁶⁸ saying, “Prophecy to us, You Christ! Who is the one who has hit You?”

Peter's denials of Jesus — Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:54b-62, John 18:15-18, 25-27

⁶⁹ Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came to him, saying, “You too were with Jesus of Galilee.”

⁷⁰ However, he denied it in front of them all. He said, “I do not know what you are talking about.”

⁷¹ While he was going out to the gateway, another servant girl saw him. She told those who were there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁷² He denied it again, with an oath: “I do not know the Man.”

⁷³ After a little while, those who were standing there approached Peter and said, “Surely you are also one of them. For your accent gives you away.”

⁷⁴ Then he began to curse and swear, “I do not know the Man.”

Immediately a rooster crowed, ⁷⁵ and Peter remembered the statement that Jesus had made, “Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”

He went outside and wept bitterly.

27

The death of Judas

¹ When morning came, all the Chief Priests and elders of the people came to a decision against Jesus, to put Him to death. ² They bound Him, led Him away and handed Him over to Pilate, the governor. ³ When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus had been condemned, he was filled with remorse and took the thirty silver coins back to the Chief Priests and elders. ⁴ He said, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.”

However, they said, “What is that to us? You should see to it!”

⁵ He threw down the pieces of silver into the Temple and departed. Then he went away and hanged himself.

⁶ The Chief Priests took the pieces of silver and said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are the price of blood.”

⁷ They made the decision to use them to buy the Potter's Field, as a burial place for foreigners.

⁸ Therefore, that field has been called “the Field of Blood” to this day. ⁹ Then what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, “**I took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him who had been valued, whom those of the children of Israel had valued, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord had commanded me.**”

Jesus' trial before Pilate — Mark 15:1-5, Luke 23:1-5, John 18:28-38

¹¹ Jesus stood before the governor. The governor asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered, “It is as you say.”

¹² While the Chief Priests and elders were accusing Him, He did not answer at all. ¹³ Then Pilate asked Him, “Do You not hear how much testimony they are bringing against You?”

¹⁴ However, Jesus made no reply to him, even about a single statement, so that the governor was very amazed.

The choice between Jesus and Barabbas and the sentencing of Jesus to death — Mark 15:6-15, Luke 23:17-25, John 18:39-40

¹⁵ At every feast the governor used to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they chose. ¹⁶ At that time they were holding a well-known prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷ Therefore, when the people had gathered, Pilate asked them, “Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas or Jesus, who is called ‘Christ’?”

¹⁸ For he knew that they had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.

¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent someone to tell him, “Do not have anything to do with that innocent Man! For I have suffered greatly today in a dream because of Him.”

²⁰ However, the Chief Priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus put to death. ²¹ The governor asked them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?”

They said, “Barabbas.”

22 Pilate asked them, “Then what should I do with Jesus, who is called ‘Christ’?”

They all said, “Let Him be crucified!”

23 Pilate said, “No, what wrong has He done?”

Nevertheless, they began to shout even louder: “Let Him be crucified!”

24 When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd. He said, “I am innocent of this Man’s blood. You will see to it yourselves.”

25 All the people answered, “Let His blood be on us and on our children!”

26 Then he released Barabbas for them but had Jesus scourged and handed Him over to be crucified.

The soldiers’ mockery of Jesus — Mark 15:16-20, John 19:1-3

27 Then the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into the governor’s quarters and gathered the whole company of soldiers around Him. 28 They took His clothes off and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29 They twisted together a crown of thorns, placed it on His head and put a stick in His right hand, knelt in front of Him and made fun of Him, saying: “Welcome, King of the Jews!”

30 They spat on Him, took the stick and began to beat Him on the head.

31 After they had made fun of Him, they took the robe off Him and put His own clothes on Him. Then they led Him away to crucify Him.

The road to Calvary — Mark 15:21, Luke 22:26-32

32 While they were going out, they found a man from Cyrene by the name of Simon and forced him to carry Jesus’ cross.

Jesus’ crucifixion — Mark 14:22-32, Luke 23:33-43, John 19:16b-24

33 When they had come to a place called “Golgotha,” which means “The Place of a Skull,” 34 **they offered Him a drink** of wine mixed with **gall**, but, when He had tasted it, He refused to drink it. 35 After they had crucified Him, **they divided His clothes among themselves by throwing lots**. 36 Then they sat down there and kept watch over Him. 37 Above His head they placed the written charge against Him: “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

38 At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one at His right, and the other at His left. 39 Those who were passing by kept **ridiculing Him, shaking their heads**, 40 and saying, “You, who are going to tear down the Temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross!”

41 The Chief Priests, together with the scribes and elders, also kept making fun of Him in a similar way, saying, 42 “He saved others: He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel. He should come down from the cross now, and we shall believe in Him. 43 **He trusts in God. Let God rescue Him now if He wants Him!** For He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’” 44 In the same way even the robbers who had been crucified

with Him kept insulting Him.

Jesus’ death on the cross — Mark 15:33-41, Luke 23:44-49, John 19:28-30

45 At noon darkness came over the whole land and lasted until three in the afternoon. 46 About three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “**Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?**” which means, “**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**”

47 When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “This man is calling Elijah.”

48 Immediately one of them ran, took a sponge, filled it with **sour wine**, put it on a stick and **gave it to Him to drink**. 49 The others said, “Let Him alone! Let us see if Elijah is coming to save Him!”

50 Jesus cried out once again with a loud voice and gave up His spirit.

51 Just then the curtain in the Temple was torn in two from the top to the bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. 52 The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had died were raised. 53 They came out of the tombs, after Jesus had risen, went into the Holy City and appeared to many people.

54 When the captain and those who were watching Jesus with him saw the earthquake and the other things that happened, they were terrified. They said, “Truly, this Man was the Son of God!”

55 Many women were there, watching **from a distance**. They had followed Jesus from Galilee and used to support Him. 56 Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

Jesus’ burial — Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56, John 19:38-42

57 In the evening a rich man from Arimathea by the name of Joseph, who had also become a disciple of Jesus, came. 58 He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered that it should be given to him.

59 Joseph took the body, wrapped it in clean linen cloth, 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. After he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, he went away. 61 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

The guard at the tomb

62 The next day, the one after the Day of Preparation, the Chief Priests and Pharisees met with Pilate. 63 They said, “Sir, we remember how that deceiver said while He was still alive, ‘After three days I shall rise.’ 64 Therefore, order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, to keep His disciples from coming and stealing Him and telling the people, ‘He has been raised from the dead!’ Then the latter deception will be worse than the former.”

65 Pilate told them, “You have a guard. Go and make it as secure as you know how!”

66 They went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.

28

The resurrection of Jesus — Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10

¹ After the Sabbath, as Sunday was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. ² There was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, went to the tomb, rolled the stone back and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were as white as snow. ⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. ⁵ The angel told the women, “Do not be afraid! For I know that you are looking for Jesus, who has been crucified. ⁶ He is not here. For He has risen, as He said. Come! See the place where He was lying! ⁷ Then go quickly and tell His disciples, ‘He has risen from the dead. Indeed, He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see Him.’ Be sure! I have told you.”

⁸ The women hurried away from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to tell His disciples. ⁹ Just then Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” They went up to Him, took hold of His feet and worshipped Him.

¹⁰ Then Jesus told them, “Stop being afraid! Go and tell **My brothers** to go to Galilee! There they will see Me.”

The bribery of the soldiers

¹¹ While the women were on their way, some of the guard went into the city and reported to the Chief Priests everything that had happened. ¹² When they had assembled with the elders and devised a plan, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³ and told them, “Say, ‘His disciples came by night and stole Him while we were sleeping!’ ¹⁴ If the governor hears about it, we shall persuade him and keep you out of trouble.”

¹⁵ They took the money and did as they had been instructed. This story has also been widely circulated among the Jews until the present day.

Jesus' command to the eleven to make disciples

¹⁶ The eleven disciples went to the mountain in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted.

¹⁸ When Jesus came near, He spoke to them. He said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. ¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations by baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ²⁰ and by teaching them to keep all that I have commanded you! Certainly, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

MARK

1

A. The theme (1:1) and introduction (1:2-13)

The preaching of John the Baptist — Matthew 3:1-12, Luke 3:1-18, John 1:19-28

¹ The beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it has been written in the prophet Isaiah: **“Look! I am sending My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way. ³ A voice of one calling out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord! Make His paths straight!’”**

⁴ John the Baptist came in the wilderness and preached that people should repent and be baptised for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ All the land of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem kept coming out to him. They were baptised by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶ John was dressed in camels’ hair, wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He preached: “He who is mightier than I am is coming after me, and I am not worthy to bend down and untie His sandal-straps. ⁸ I have baptised you with water, but He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.”

The baptism of Jesus — Matthew 3:13-17, Luke 3:21-22, compare John 1:29-34

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. ¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, He saw heaven being torn apart and the Spirit coming down on Him like a dove. ¹¹ Then a voice came from heaven: “You are **My Son**, whom I love. With You **I am well pleased.**”

The temptation of Jesus — Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13

¹² At once the Spirit drove Him out into the wilderness, ¹³ and He was in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and the angels served Him.

Galilean period of Jesus’ ministry (1:14-9:50)

Jesus’ ministry around the Sea of Galilee (1:14-5:43)

The first preaching in Galilee and the call of the first disciples — Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 5:1-11, John 1:35-51

¹⁴ After John had been arrested, Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News of God: ¹⁵ “The time has come, and the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe in the Good News!”

¹⁶ While He was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Simon’s brother Andrew casting a net in the sea. For they were fishermen. ¹⁷ Jesus told them, “Come and follow Me! I shall make you fishers of men.”

¹⁸ They at once left their nets and followed Him.

¹⁹ When He had gone on a little farther, He saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John, who were also in their boat, mending their nets. ²⁰ He called them at once, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed Him.

Jesus’ driving out of a demon at Capernaum — Luke 4:31-37

²¹ They went to Capernaum. On the next Sabbath, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach.

²² The people were amazed at His teaching. For He was teaching them as one who had authority and not as the scribes taught. ²³ Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit and he cried out, ²⁴ “What do we have in common with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of God!”

²⁵ Jesus spoke sharply to him: “Be quiet and come out of him!”

²⁶ The unclean spirit shook the man violently and, with a loud shriek, came out of him. ²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they debated with one another: “What is this? This is a new teaching, with authority! He even gives orders to the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

²⁸ The news about Him spread quickly everywhere through the surrounding region of Galilee.

Jesus’ healing of Peter’s wife’s mother — Matthew 8:14-15, Luke 4:38-39

²⁹ Immediately after they left the synagogue, they went into the home of Simon and Andrew, together with James and John. ³⁰ Simon’s mother-in-law was lying down with a fever, and they told Jesus about her at once. ³¹ He went to her, took her hand and lifted her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

Jesus’ healing of sick people one evening — Matthew 8:16-17, Luke 4:40-41

³² In the evening, when the sun had set, people kept bringing to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. ³³ The whole city had gathered at the door. ³⁴ Jesus healed many who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons but would not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.

Jesus’ departure from Capernaum and His first preaching-journey in Galilee — Matthew 4:23-25, Luke 4:42-44

³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went away to a lonely place and there He prayed. ³⁶ Simon and those who were with him searched for Him. ³⁷ When they found Him, they told Him, “Everyone is looking for You.”

³⁸ He told them, “Let us go somewhere else, to the small towns that are near, that I may preach there also! For I have come forth for this purpose.”

³⁹ He went and preached in their synagogues everywhere in Galilee and drove out the demons.

Jesus’ healing of a leper — Matthew 8:1-4, Luke 5:12-14

⁴⁰ Then a leper came to Him and begged Him on his knees. He said to Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”

⁴¹ Jesus was moved with compassion. He stretched out His hand, touched him and told him, “I am willing. Be made clean!”

⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: ⁴⁴ “See that you do not say anything to anyone! Instead, go, **show yourself to the priest** and of-

fer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them!”

⁴⁵ Instead, he went out and began to tell about it so much and to spread the news so widely that Jesus could no longer enter a city openly but stayed outside in lonely places. People kept coming to Him from every direction.

2

Jesus' healing of a paralysed man — Matthew 9:1-8, Luke 5:17-26

¹ When Jesus came back to Capernaum after some days, people heard that He was at home. ² So many people gathered that there was no longer any room, even near the door. He kept speaking the Word to them. ³ Then some people came, bringing to Him a paralysed man. Four men carried him. ⁴ Since they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they opened the roof over where Jesus was. After they had dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

⁶ Some of the scribes were sitting there and thought to themselves: ⁷ “Why is this Man speaking like this? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸ Jesus immediately knew in His spirit that they were thinking to themselves like this. He asked them, “Why do you have these thoughts in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to the paralysed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk!’?”

¹⁰ “You should know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins!” Then He said to the paralysed man, ¹¹ “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go to your home!”

¹² The man got up, immediately took his mat and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and praised God. They said, “We have never seen anything like this.”

Jesus' call of Matthew (Levi) — Matthew 9:9-13, Luke 5:27-32

¹³ Jesus went out again beside the sea. The entire crowd kept coming to Him, and He began to teach them. ¹⁴ As He was going past, He saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax office. Jesus told him, “Follow Me!”

Levi got up and began to follow Him.

¹⁵ While Jesus was reclining at the table in Matthew’s home, many tax-collectors and sinners were eating with Jesus and His disciples. For there were many, and they were following Him. ¹⁶ When the scribes belonging to the Pharisees saw that He was eating with sinners and tax-collectors, they kept asking His disciples, “Why does He eat with tax-collectors and sinners?”

¹⁷ Jesus heard them and told them: “Those who are healthy have no need of a doctor, but those who are sick. I have not come to call righteous people but sinners.”

Jesus' response to a question about fasting — Matthew 9:14-17, Luke

5:33-39

¹⁸ John’s disciples and the Pharisees used to fast. People came to Jesus and asked Him, “Why is it that John’s disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?”

¹⁹ Jesus told them, “The friends of the bridegroom cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? While they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ However, the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then, on that day, they will fast.

²¹ “No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new patch shrinks away from the old cloth, and the tear is made worse. ²² No one puts new wine in old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the wineskins, and both the wine and the skins are lost. Rather, people put new wine in new wineskins.”

The plucking of grain by Jesus' disciples on a Sabbath — Matthew 12:1-8, Luke 6:1-5

²³ Once Jesus was going through the grain-fields on a Sabbath. As the disciples walked along, they began to pick heads of grain. ²⁴ The Pharisees began to tell Him, “Look! Why are they doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?”

²⁵ Jesus asked them, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were in need and became hungry: ²⁶ how he went into the house of God at the time of Abiathar the Chief Priest and ate **the loaves set out before God**, which are unlawful for anyone to eat except the priests and how he also gave some to his companions?”

²⁷ Then He went on to tell them, “The Sabbath was made for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the Sabbath. ²⁸ For this reason the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

3

Jesus' healing of a man with a shrivelled hand — Matthew 12:9-15a, Luke 6:6-11

¹ Then He went again into the synagogue, and a man was there who had a shrivelled hand. ² They were watching Him closely to see whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, that they might accuse Him. ³ He told the man with the shrivelled hand, “Stand up in the middle!”

⁴ Then Jesus asked them, “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath or to do evil, to save a life or to kill?”

However, they remained silent. ⁵ Jesus looked around at them with anger and was distressed at the hardness of their hearts. Then He told the man, “Stretch out your hand!”

He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. ⁶ Then the Pharisees went out and immediately began to plot with Herod’s supporters against Jesus that they might destroy Him.

Jesus' healing of many people — Luke 6:17-19

⁷ Then Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. A large crowd from Galilee followed Him. There was

also a large crowd from Judea, ⁸ from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from the other side of the Jordan and from the area of Tyre and Sidon. They had heard about all the things that He was doing and came to Him. ⁹ He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the crowd, to prevent them from pressing against Him. ¹⁰ For He had healed many people, so that all who had diseases were pressing around Him to touch Him. ¹¹ Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall before Him and shout, “You are the Son of God!”

¹² However, He sternly warned them not to make Him known.

Jesus' choice of twelve apostles — Matthew 10:1-4, Luke 6:13-16

¹³ Then He went up on the mountain and called to Him those whom He wanted, and they came to Him.

¹⁴ He appointed twelve, whom He also named “apostles,” that they might be with Him, that He might send them out to preach ¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out demons.

¹⁶ He appointed the Twelve: Simon, to whom He gave the name “Peter,” ¹⁷ James the son of Zebedee, and John, the brother of James, to whom He gave the name “Boanerges,” which means “Thunderbolts,” ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

An accusation of the Pharisees and the controversy about Beelzebul — Matthew 12:22-32, Luke 11:14-23

²⁰ Then Jesus came into the house. The crowd gathered again, so that Jesus and those who were with Him were not even able to eat bread. ²¹ When His family heard about it, they came out to take charge of Him. For they were saying, “He has gone out of His mind!” ²² The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem began to say, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and, “It is by the ruler of the demons that He is driving out the demons.”

²³ Jesus called them to come to Him and spoke to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan?”

²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ If a family is divided against itself, that family will not be able to stand. ²⁶ If Satan has risen up against himself and has been divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. ²⁷ Rather, no one can go into the strong man’s house and plunder his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he will plunder his house. ²⁸ Truly, I tell you, all the sins that the sons of men commit will be forgiven and all the blasphemies that they utter. ²⁹ However, anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven but is guilty of an eternal sin.”

³⁰ He said this because they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Jesus' declaration about His real brothers — Matthew 12:46-50, Luke 8:19-21

³¹ Just then His mother and His brothers came. They stood outside and sent someone to Him to ask Him to

come out. ³² A crowd was sitting around Jesus and they told Him, “Look! Your mother, Your brothers and Your sisters are outside, looking for You.”

³³ He answered them, “Who are My mother and My brothers?” ³⁴ He looked around at those who sat in a circle around Him and said, “Look! Here are My mother and My brothers. ³⁵ Whoever does the will of God is My brother and sister and mother.”

4

Jesus' parable about the sower — Matthew 13:1-9, Luke 8:4-8

¹ Again Jesus began to teach beside the sea. A very large crowd gathered around Him, so that He got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, while the entire crowd was on the land, facing the sea.

² He kept teaching them many things in parables and, as He was teaching, He told them, ³ “Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ As he was sowing, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵ Some seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because it did not have deep soil. ⁶ When the sun came up, it was scorched and, because it had no roots, it withered. ⁷ Some seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸ However, other seeds fell on the good soil. They came up, grew and produced grain, some thirty times as much, some sixty times as much and some a hundred times as much.”

⁹ Then Jesus said, “He who has ears to hear should hear!”

Jesus' reason for speaking in parables — Matthew 13:10-15, Luke 8:9-10

¹⁰ When He was alone, those who were with Him together with the Twelve began to ask Him about the parables. ¹¹ He answered them, “To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those on the outside everything comes in parables, ¹² **that they may see clearly and yet not perceive and hear clearly and yet not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.**”

Jesus' interpretation of the parable of the sower — Matthew 13:18-23, Luke 8:11-15

¹³ He asked them, “Do you fail to understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables?”

¹⁴ The sower sows the Word. ¹⁵ These are the ones along the path where the Word is sown: when they hear it, Satan comes immediately and takes away the Word that has been sown in them. ¹⁶ These are the ones who are sown on the rocky ground: when they hear the Word, they immediately receive it with joy, ¹⁷ and yet they have no root in themselves but last for only a while. Afterwards, when trouble or persecution comes because of the Word, they are immediately caused to stumble. ¹⁸ Still others are the ones who are sown among the thorns: these are the ones who have heard the Word, ¹⁹ but the worries of the world, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for the other things come in and choke the Word, and it does not

produce anything. ²⁰ These are the ones who have been sown on the good soil: they continue to hear the Word, receive it and go on producing a crop, some thirty times as much, some sixty times as much and some a hundred times as much.”

The comparison of a lamp and the right use of parables — (Matthew 5:14-16) Luke 11:33, Luke 8:16-18

²¹ Then He asked them: “Surely a lamp is not brought that it may be placed under the grain-measure or under the bed? Rather, is it not brought that it may be placed on the lampstand? ²² For there is nothing so secret that it will not be revealed, and there is nothing so hidden that it is not brought into the open. ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, he should hear!”

²⁴ Then He went on to tell them: “Pay attention to what you are hearing! You will be measured by the measure by which you measure and you will get even more. ²⁵ For whoever has will be given more, and he who does not have will have even what he has taken away from him.”

Jesus' parable about seed growing secretly

²⁶ Then He said: “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, ²⁷ and should sleep and get up, by night and by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, although he does not know how. ²⁸ All by itself the ground produces grain, first the green blade, then the head and then the full wheat in the head. ²⁹ As soon as the grain is ready, he **puts in the sickle, because harvest has come.**”

Jesus' parable about the mustard seed — Matthew 13:31-32, Luke 13:18-19

³⁰ Then He asked, “To what are we to compare the kingdom of God or with what parable are we to present it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which, when it is sown on the ground, is a very small seed among all the seeds on earth. ³² Nevertheless, when it is sown, it comes up and becomes the largest of all the garden plants. It produces large branches, so that **the birds of the sky can make their dwelling under its shade.**”

The use of parables — Matthew 13:36-43

³³ He used many parables like these to speak the Word to them, as they could hear it. ³⁴ He did not speak to them without using a parable. However, in private He used to explain everything fully to His disciples.

Jesus' stilling of a storm — Matthew 8:23-27, Luke 8:22-25

³⁵ That day, when evening came, Jesus said to His disciples, “Let us go over to the other side!”

³⁶ They left the crowd and took Him along in the boat just as He was. There were other boats with Him. ³⁷ A violent windstorm came up, and the waves kept beating into the boat, so that the boat was already filling up. ³⁸ Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping on the cushion. They woke Him and asked Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are drowning?”

³⁹ When He had been wakened, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Be quiet! Be silenced!”

The wind stopped, and it became very calm.

⁴⁰ He asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still

have no faith?”

⁴¹ They were very afraid and kept saying to one another, “Who is this, then, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

5

Jesus' healing of a Gadarene demoniac — Matthew 8:28-34, Luke 8:26-39

¹ Then they went to the other side of the sea, to the region of the Gergesenes. ² After Jesus had come out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit immediately came out of the tombs to meet Him. ³ The man used to live in the tombs. No one could tie him up any longer, even with a chain. ⁴ For he had often been tied up with fetters and chains but had torn the chains apart and smashed the fetters, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵ Continually, by night and by day, he used to cry out in the tombs and in the mountains and beat himself with stones. ⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before Him. ⁷ He shouted at the top of his voice, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!”

⁸ For Jesus had begun to tell him, “You unclean spirit, come out of the man!”

⁹ Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

He told Him, “My name is ‘Legion,’ because we are many.”

¹⁰ He kept begging Jesus earnestly that He would not send them out of the area. ¹¹ A large herd of pigs was feeding there near the mountain. ¹² The demons begged Jesus, “Send us into the pigs! Let us go into them!”

¹³ Jesus gave them permission. The unclean spirits came out and went into the pigs; and the herd, about two thousand pigs, rushed down the cliff into the sea and drowned in the sea. ¹⁴ Those who used to take care of them ran away and reported it in the city and on the farms, and people came to see what had happened. ¹⁵ They came to Jesus and saw that the man who used to be possessed by the legion was sitting down, clothed and in his right mind and they were afraid. ¹⁶ Those who had seen it related to them what had happened to the man who used to be possessed by demons and told them about the pigs. ¹⁷ Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. ¹⁸ As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed kept begging Jesus that he might go with Him. ¹⁹ However, Jesus did not permit him but told him, “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you and how He has had mercy on you!”

²⁰ The man went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis all that Jesus had done to him. They were all amazed.

Jesus' healing of a woman who was continuously bleeding and His raising of the daughter of Jairus — Matthew 9:18-26, Luke 8:40-56

²¹ After Jesus had crossed over again in the boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around

Him while He was beside the lake. ²² Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came. When he saw Jesus, he fell at His feet. ²³ He pleaded earnestly with Jesus: “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her that she may be saved and live!”

²⁴ Jesus went with him. A large crowd was following Him and pressing around Him.

²⁵ There was a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered much under the care of many doctors and had spent all that she had. She had not been helped at all but instead had become worse. ²⁷ Since she had heard about Jesus, she came from behind in the crowd and touched His garment. ²⁸ For she said, “If I only touch His clothes, I shall be made well.”

²⁹ Immediately the source of her haemorrhage dried up, and she was aware in her body that she had been healed from her affliction. ³⁰ At once Jesus realised in Himself that power had gone out from Him. He turned around in the crowd and kept asking, “Who has touched My clothes?”

³¹ His disciples kept saying to Him, “You see how the crowd is pressing around You, yet You ask, ‘Who has touched Me?’”

³² However, He kept looking around to see the woman who had done this. ³³ The woman, in fear and trembling, because she knew what had happened to her, came and fell before Him and told Him the whole truth.

³⁴ He told her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace! Be healed from your affliction!”

³⁵ While He was still speaking, some men came from the ruler of the synagogue and said, “Your daughter has died. Why do you trouble the Teacher any further?”

³⁶ Jesus disregarded the message that they were telling and told the ruler of the synagogue, “Stop being afraid! Only believe!”

³⁷ He did not allow anyone to go with Him except Peter, James and John, the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the ruler of the synagogue, Jesus saw a noisy crowd, with people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ When He had gone inside, He asked them, “Why do you go on making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep.”

⁴⁰ They began to laugh at Him. However, He put them all outside, took with Him the child’s father and mother and those who were with Him and went in to where the child was. ⁴¹ He took the child’s hand and said to her, “Talitha, koum!” which means, “Little girl, I tell you, get up!”

⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At once they were completely astonished. ⁴³ Jesus gave them strict orders that no one should find out about this and told them that something should be given to her to eat.

6

Jesus’ ministry in Galilee (6:1-9:50)

The rejection of Jesus at Nazareth — Matthew 13:54-58, Luke 4:16-30

¹ Then Jesus went away from there and came to His hometown and His disciples followed Him. ² When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard Him were amazed. They asked, “Where did this Man get these things? What is this wisdom given to Him, that His hands are doing such miracles? ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James, Joses, Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters also here with us?”

They took offence at Him.

⁴ However, Jesus began to tell them, “A prophet is not without honour, except in his hometown, among his relatives and in his family.”

⁵ He could not perform any miracle there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶ He was amazed at their unbelief. Then He went all around in the villages and taught.

Jesus’ sending out of the twelve — Matthew 10:1-42, Luke 9:1-6

⁷ Jesus called the Twelve to Him, began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits. ⁸ He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff – no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, ⁹ but to wear sandals. He told them, “Do not put on two tunics!” ¹⁰ He also told them, “Wherever you go into a house, stay there until you leave that place! ¹¹ Moreover, if any place does not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake off the dust that is under your feet, as a testimony against them!”

¹² They went out and preached that people should repent. ¹³ They also drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with olive-oil and healed them.

Herod’s opinion about Jesus — Matthew 14:1-2, Luke 9:7-9

¹⁴ King Herod heard about this. For Jesus’ name had become well known. Some people were saying, “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in Him.”

¹⁵ Others were saying, “He is Elijah.”

Others were saying, “He is a prophet, like one of the other prophets.”

¹⁶ However, when Herod heard about it, he used to say, “John, the man whom I beheaded, has been raised.”

The death of John the Baptist — Matthew 14:3-12, Luke 3:19-20

¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent some men, arrested John and bound him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, whom Herod had married.

¹⁸ For John used to tell Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” ¹⁹ Herodias held a grudge against John and wanted to kill him but could not do it, ²⁰ because Herod was afraid of John. For he knew that John was a righteous and holy man and he kept protecting him. When he listened to John, he was

greatly disturbed and yet he liked to hear him. ²¹ Then an opportune day came on Herod's birthday, when he made a dinner for his noblemen, his military officers and the leading men of Galilee. ²² When his daughter, that is, the daughter of Herodias, came in and danced, she pleased Herod and those who were sitting at table with him. The king told the girl, "Ask me for whatever you want! I shall give it to you."

²³ He solemnly swore to her: "I shall give you whatever **you ask** me for, **up to half of my kingdom.**"

²⁴ She went out and asked her mother, "What am I to ask for?"

She answered, "The head of John the Baptist."

²⁵ Immediately the girl hurried in to the king and made her request: "I want you to give me at once on a platter the head of John the Baptist."

²⁶ Although the king became very sorry, yet, because of his oaths and because of those who were sitting at the table with him, he did not want to refuse her.

²⁷ Immediately the king sent an executioner and ordered him to bring John's head. He went and beheaded John in the prison, ²⁸ brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹ When John's disciples heard this, they came and took away his body and laid it in a tomb.

The return of the twelve and Jesus' feeding of five thousand men — Matthew 14:13-21, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-14

³⁰ The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to Him everything that they had done and taught. ³¹ He told them, "Come away to a deserted place where you can be alone and rest a little!"

For so many people were coming and going that there was not even time to eat. ³² They went away in the boat to a deserted place to be alone. ³³ However, many people who saw them leaving recognised them, ran there on foot from all the cities and arrived ahead of them. ³⁴ When Jesus came out of the boat, He saw a large crowd and felt sorry for them, because they were **like sheep without a shepherd**. Then He began to teach them many things.

³⁵ When it was already late in the day, His disciples came to Him and began to say, "This is a deserted place, and it is already late. ³⁶ Send them away, that they may go to the surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat!"

³⁷ Jesus answered them, "You give them something to eat!"

They asked Him, "Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?"

³⁸ He asked them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see!"

When they had found out, they said, "Five and two fish."

³⁹ He ordered them that they should all sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So, they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. ⁴¹ After He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to

heaven and gave thanks. He broke the loaves apart and kept giving them to His disciples, that they might set them before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² They all had enough to eat. ⁴³ They took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces of bread and the fish. ⁴⁴ There were five thousand men who had eaten the bread.

Jesus' walking on the water — Matthew 14:22-33, John 6:15-21

⁴⁵ Immediately Jesus compelled His disciples to get into the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side at Bethsaida, while He was sending the crowd away.

⁴⁶ After He had taken leave of them, He went away into the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ When Jesus saw that they were having great trouble as they rowed, because the wind was against them, He came to them, about the fourth watch of the night, walking on the sea. He wanted to go past them. ⁴⁹ When they saw Him walking on the sea, they thought that He was a ghost and cried out. ⁵⁰ For they all saw Him and were terrified. However, He immediately spoke to them, "Be courageous! It is I. Stop being afraid!"

⁵¹ Then He climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were altogether amazed in themselves. ⁵² For they had not understood about the loaves, but their hearts had been hardened.

Jesus' healings at Gennesaret — Matthew 14:34-36

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to the land at Gennesaret and anchored there. ⁵⁴ When they had come out of the boat, people immediately recognised Him. ⁵⁵ They ran all over that region and began to carry those who were sick on their stretchers to wherever they heard He was. ⁵⁶ Wherever He went, into villages, cities or farms, people would lay down the sick in the market places. They begged Him that they might touch even the hem of His garment, and all who touched it were made well.

7

Jesus' comments about the tradition of the elders — Matthew 15:1-20, Luke 6:18-19

¹ The Pharisees and some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus. ² They saw that some of His disciples were eating their food with 'defiled' hands, that is, without washing them. ³ For the Pharisees, like all other Jews, do not eat without washing their hands up to the wrist, to follow the tradition of their elders. ⁴ When they come from the marketplace, they do not eat without first washing, and there are many other things that they have had handed on to them and observe, such as the washing of cups, pitchers, brass pots and couches. ⁵ The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him: "Why do Your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders but eat bread with defiled hands?"

⁶ He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites, as the Scriptures say: '**This**

people honours Me with its lips, but its hearts are far from Me. ⁷ They worship Me in vain, since what they teach as doctrines are the commandments of men.’ ⁸ You have abandoned the Commandment of God but hold on to the tradition of men.”

⁹ He told them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the Commandment of God to establish your own tradition! ¹⁰ For Moses said: ‘Honour your father and your mother!’ and ‘Let the person who speaks evil of father or mother be put to death!’ ¹¹ However, you say, ‘If anyone says to his father or mother, “Anything by which I might have helped you is Corban (that is, a gift to God),”’ ¹² then you do not let him do anything for his father or his mother any longer. ¹³ You make the Word of God of no effect by the tradition that you have handed down. You also do many other things like that.”

¹⁴ When He had called the multitude to Himself again, He told them, “Listen to Me, all of you and understand this! ¹⁵ There is nothing that enters a person from outside that can defile him. Rather, the things that come out of a person are the things that defile a person.” *170

¹⁷ When He had left the crowd and gone home, His disciples asked Him about this parable.

¹⁸ He asked them, “Are you also so lacking in understanding? Do you not know that nothing that comes into a person from the outside can defile him, ¹⁹ because it does not go into his heart but into his stomach and goes out into the toilet?” — In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.” — ²⁰ He went on to say: “What comes out of a person is the thing that defiles him. ²¹ For from inside, out of people’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual sins, thefts, murders, ²² adulteries, sinful desires, greed, wickedness, cheating, shameless lust, a jealous eye, slander, pride and folly. ²³ All these evils come from inside and ‘defile’ a person.”

Jesus’ healing of the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman — Matthew 15:21-31

²⁴ Jesus left that place and went away to the vicinity of Tyre. He went into a house and did not want anyone to know it but could not avoid being noticed. ²⁵ Indeed, a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about Him, came and fell at His feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She kept asking Jesus to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He answered her, “First let the children eat all they want! For it is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the pet-dogs.” ²⁸ She answered Him, “Lord, even the pet-dogs under the table eat some of the children’s crumbs.”

²⁹ Jesus told her, “Because you have said this, go! The demon has gone out of your daughter.”

³⁰ When the woman went home, she found her little child lying on the bed and the demon gone.

Jesus’ healing of a man who was deaf and dumb — Matthew 15:29-31

³¹ Jesus again left the region of Tyre and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee and through the region of the Decapolis. ³² Some people brought to Him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk and begged Jesus to lay His hand on him. ³³ Jesus took him away from the crowd to be alone with him and put His fingers into the man’s ears. Then He spat and touched the man’s tongue. ³⁴ He looked up to heaven, groaned and said to him, “Ephphatha!” which means, “Be opened!” ³⁵ Immediately the man’s ears were opened, the bond of his tongue was untied, and he began to speak plainly. ³⁶ Jesus ordered the people not to tell anyone. However, the more He forbade them the more widely they kept telling about it. ³⁷ They were extremely amazed. They said, “He has been doing everything well. He even makes deaf people hear and dumb people speak.”

8

Jesus’ feeding of the four thousand — Matthew 15:32-39, Luke 9:10-17

¹ During those days, when the crowd was again very large and since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called the disciples to Him and told them: ² “I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been staying with Me for three days already and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them away hungry, they will become exhausted on the road, and some of them have come from far away.”

⁴ His disciples asked Him, “From where will anyone be able to feed these people with bread here in the wilderness?”

⁵ Jesus asked them, “How many loaves do you have?” They answered, “Seven.”

⁶ He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then He took the seven loaves, gave thanks, broke them and kept giving them to His disciples to set before them, and they set them before the crowd. ⁷ They also had a few small fish. He blessed them and told the disciples to set these also before them. ⁸ They had enough to eat. Then they picked up seven large baskets of broken pieces that were left over. ⁹ There were about four thousand people. Then He sent them away.

The Pharisees’ request to see a miraculous sign — Matthew 16:1-4, Luke 11:16-20

¹⁰ Jesus immediately got into the boat with His disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. ¹¹ The Pharisees came out and began to argue with Him. To test Him, they tried to get from Him a miraculous sign from heaven. ¹² He sighed deeply in His spirit and said, “Why does this generation try to get a miraculous sign? Truly, I tell you, a miraculous sign will certainly not be given to this generation.”

Jesus’ warning about the yeast of the Pharisees — Matthew 16:5-12, Luke 12:1

¹³ Then He left them, got into a boat again and went

¹⁷⁰ For 7:16 in some manuscripts, see Mark 4:23.

away to the other side. ¹⁴ They had forgotten to bring bread and did not have anything with them in the boat except one loaf of bread. ¹⁵ Jesus ordered them, “Watch out! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod!”

¹⁶ They discussed this with one another and said, “It is because we have no bread.”

¹⁷ Jesus knew it and asked them, “Why are you discussing about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Do you have hearts that have been hardened? ¹⁸ **Do you have eyes but fail to see? Do you have ears but fail to hear?** Do you not remember either? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?”

They answered Him, “Twelve.”

²⁰ “When I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?”

They answered Him, “Seven.”

²¹ He asked them, “Do you still not understand?”

Jesus’ healing of a blind man of Bethsaida

²² They went to Bethsaida. People brought a blind man to Jesus and begged Him to touch him. ²³ He took hold of the blind man’s hand and led him outside of the village. Then He spat on the man’s eyes and laid His hands on him. Jesus asked him, “Do you see anything?”

²⁴ He looked up and kept saying, “I see people. I see that they are like trees and walking around.”

²⁵ Then Jesus again laid His hands on the man’s eyes, and he saw distinctly. He was completely restored and saw everything clearly. ²⁶ Jesus sent him home, saying, “Do not even go into the village!”

Peter’s confession at Caesarea Philippi — Matthew 16:13-20, Luke 9:18-21

²⁷ Then Jesus went away with His disciples to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way He asked His disciples, “Who do people say I am?”

²⁸ They answered Him, “John the Baptist, but others say Elijah, and others say one of the other prophets.”

²⁹ He asked them, “You, however, who do you say I am?”

Peter answered Him, “You are the Christ!”

³⁰ He strictly warned them not to tell anyone about Him.

Jesus’ first explicit prediction of His passion — Matthew 16:21-23, Luke 9:22

³¹ Then Jesus began to teach them that it was necessary for the Son of Man to suffer greatly, to be rejected by the elders, Chief Priests and scribes, to be killed and, after three days, to rise again. ³² He was speaking frankly about this, and Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³ However, Jesus turned around, looked at His disciples and rebuked Peter, saying, “Get behind Me, Satan! For you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of men.”

The conditions for being a disciple — Matthew 16:24-28, Luke 9:23-27

³⁴ When He had called the crowd to Him together with His disciples, He told them: “If anyone wants to follow Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me! ³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake and for the sake of the Good News will save it. ³⁶ For what good does it do a person to gain the whole world and yet lose his own soul? ³⁷ For what is a person to give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ For, if anyone is ashamed of Me and of My Words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

9

¹ Jesus went on to tell them, “Truly, I tell you that there are some of those standing here who will certainly not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power.”

Jesus’ Transfiguration — Matthew 17:1-8, Luke 9:28-36

² After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him and led them up onto a high mountain, by themselves and alone. He was transfigured before them, ³ and His clothes became dazzling and very white, whiter than any launderer on earth could bleach them.

⁴ Then Elijah appeared to them together with Moses, and they began to talk with Jesus.

⁵ Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three Tabernacles, one for You, one for Moses and one for Elijah!”

⁶ For he did not know what to say, because they had become very afraid. ⁷ Then a cloud came and overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud: “This is **My Son**, whom I love. **Listen to Him!**”

⁸ Suddenly, as they looked around, they did not see anyone with them any longer except Jesus only.

⁹ While they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Jesus’ explanation about the predicted coming of Elijah — Matthew 17:10-13, Luke 9:37

¹⁰ They kept this saying to themselves but continued to discuss what “rising from the dead” meant. ¹¹ They asked Him, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?”

¹² Jesus told them, “Indeed, **Elijah** is coming first and **restores all things**. How, then, has Scripture spoken concerning the Son of Man, that He must suffer much and be treated with contempt? ¹³ However, I tell you that Elijah has come, and people have done to him whatever they have wished, just as Scripture has said concerning him.”

Jesus’ healing of an epileptic boy with a demon — Matthew 17:14-20, Luke 9:37-43a

¹⁴ When they came back to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and scribes arguing with them. ¹⁵ As soon as the whole crowd saw Jesus, they were amazed and ran to Him and greeted Him.

16 He asked them, “What are you discussing with them?”

17 Someone in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought to You my son, who has a spirit who has robbed him of speech. 18 Wherever it takes hold of him, it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked Your disciples to cast the spirit out, but they could not.”

19 Jesus answered them, “O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!”

20 They brought the boy to Him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground, rolled around and foamed at the mouth.

21 Jesus asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?”

He said, “Since he has been a child. 22 It has often thrown him into fire or into water to destroy him. Nevertheless, if You are at all able, have compassion on us and help us!”

23 Jesus answered him, “With reference to ‘If You are able’ — all things are possible for him who believes.”

24 Immediately the child’s father cried out, “I believe. Help my unbelief!”

25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was running together towards Him, He rebuked the unclean spirit: “You speechless and deaf spirit, I command you, ‘Come out of him and do not go into him again!’”

26 It cried out, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy became like a corpse, so that most of them were saying, “He has died.”

27 However, Jesus took hold of his hand and lifted him up, and he stood up. 28 After Jesus had gone into a house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

29 He told them, “This kind cannot be driven out by any means except by prayer.”

Jesus’ second explicit prediction of His passion — Matthew 17:22-23, Luke 9:43b-45

30 They left that place and were passing through Galilee, and Jesus did not want anyone to know about it.

31 For He was teaching His disciples and telling them: “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, but, after He has been killed, He will rise on the third day.”

32 They did not understand what He said and were afraid to ask Him.

A dispute among the disciples about greatness — Matthew 18:1-5, Luke 9:46-48

33 Then they came to Capernaum. When He had come into the house, He asked them, “What were you discussing on the road?”

34 They kept quiet. For on the road they had been discussing who the greatest was. 35 Jesus sat down and called the Twelve. He told them, “If anyone wants to be the first, he must be the last of all and the servant of all!”

36 He took a little child and set him among them. He put His arms around him and told them, 37 “Whoever welcomes one of the little children like this one in My name welcomes Me. Whoever welcomes Me welcomes not Me but the One who has sent Me.”

Jesus’ comment about an exorcist who did not belong to the twelve — Luke 9:49-50

38 John told Jesus, “Teacher, we saw someone who is not one of us driving out demons in Your name. We tried to stop him because he was not one of us.”

39 Jesus said, “Do not try to stop him! For no one who works a miracle in My name will be able soon afterwards to speak evil of Me. 40 For he who is not against us is for us. 41 For truly, I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because of your name as followers of Christ will certainly not lose his reward.

Jesus’ warning about causing others to stumble — Matthew 18:6-10, Luke 17:1-2

42 “If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a heavy millstone were put around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea. 43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life maimed than to go into hell with two hands, into the fire that will never be put out. *171 45 If your foot causes you to sin, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. *172 47 If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out! It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, 48 where **their worm does not die, and the fire is not put out.**

Jesus’ comparison about salt — Luke 14:34-35

49 “For everyone will be salted with fire. 50 Salt is good. However, if salt loses its saltiness, how will you make it taste salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another!”

10

The Judean period of Jesus’ ministry (10:1-16:8)

Jesus’ Words and Works before His passion (10:1-13:37)

Jesus’ instruction about marriage and divorce — Matthew 19:1-12, Luke 16:18

1 Jesus left that place and went into the territory of Judea and to the other side of the Jordan, and crowds gathered around Him again. As was His custom, He began to teach them again. 2 Some Pharisees came to Him and asked Him, to test Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?”

3 He answered them by asking, “What has Moses commanded you?”

4 They said, “Moses permitted a man **to write a certificate of divorce and divorce her.**”

5 Jesus told them, “It was because your hearts were hard that he wrote this Commandment for you.

6 However, at the beginning of creation God **‘made**

¹⁷¹ For 9:44 in some manuscripts, see v. 48.

¹⁷² For 9:46 in some manuscripts, see v. 48.

them male and female.’⁷ **‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,’⁸ and the two will become one flesh.** Therefore, they are no longer two but one flesh.⁹ Therefore, no person should separate what God has joined together!”

¹⁰ When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. ¹¹ He answered them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. ¹² If a wife divorces her husband and marries another man, she also commits adultery.”

Jesus’ reception of little children — Matthew 19:13-15, Luke 18:15-17

¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus that He might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ However, when Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He told them, “Allow the little children to come to Me and stop forbidding them! For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ Truly, I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child does will certainly not enter it.”

¹⁶ He took the children in His arms, laid His hands on them and blessed them.

Jesus’ answer to a rich young leader’s question — Matthew 19:16-30, Luke 18:18-30

¹⁷ As Jesus was going out onto the road, a man came running to Him and fell on his knees before Him. He asked Him, “Good Teacher, what am I to do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁸ Jesus asked him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, that is, God. ¹⁹ You know the Commandments: **‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not give false testimony,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honour your father and mother!’**”

²⁰ He told Him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since I was a child.”

²¹ Jesus looked straight at him and loved him. He told him, “You lack one thing, Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor! You will have treasure in heaven. Then come here and follow Me!”

²² He looked gloomy when he heard that and went away sad, because he had great wealth. ²³ Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it will be for those who are rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

²⁴ The disciples were amazed at His Words. However, Jesus told them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ They were extremely amazed. They asked one another, “Who then can be saved?”

²⁷ Jesus looked straight at them and said: “With men it is impossible but not with God. For **with God all things are possible.**”

²⁸ Then Peter began to say to Him: “Look! We have

left everything and followed You.”

²⁹ Jesus said, “Truly, I tell you, there is no one who has left his house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for My sake and for the sake of the Gospel, ³⁰ who will fail to receive a hundred times as much, now, in this time, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields, with persecutions and, in the coming age, eternal life. ³¹ However, many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Jesus’ third explicit prediction of His passion — Matthew 20:17-28, Luke 18:31-34

³² They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going ahead of them. The disciples were amazed, and the others who were following Him were afraid. Then He again took the Twelve aside and began to tell them the things that were going to happen to Him: ³³ “Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the Chief Priests and the scribes. They will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴ They will mock Him and spit on Him, flog Him and kill Him, and after three days He will rise.”

The request of the sons of Zebedee for prominent positions in Jesus’ kingdom — Matthew 20:20-28, Luke 9:48b

³⁵ James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him. They told Him, “Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.”

³⁶ He asked them, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

³⁷ They told Him, “Grant that one of us may sit at Your right, and the other at Your left in Your glory!”

³⁸ Jesus told them, “You do not realise what you are requesting. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptised with the baptism with which I am baptised?”

³⁹ They said to Him, “We can.”

Jesus told them, “You will drink the cup that I drink and be baptised with the baptism with which I am baptised, ⁴⁰ but sitting at My right or at My left is not Mine to grant but is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

⁴¹ When the other ten heard about it, they began to be angry with James and John. ⁴² Then Jesus summoned them and told them, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them.

⁴³ However, it is not like that among you, but whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all! ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

Jesus’ healing of blind Bartimaeus — Matthew 20:29-34, Luke 18:35-43

⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and His disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus from Nazareth, he began to shout, “Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁸ Many people kept urging him to be quiet. Instead, he shouted much louder, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, “Call him!”

Then they called the blind man and told him, “Cheer up! Get up! He is calling you.”

⁵⁰ He threw aside his outer garment, jumped up and went to Jesus. ⁵¹ Jesus asked him, “What do you want Me to do for you?”

The blind man told Him, “Rabboni, I want to see again.”

⁵² Jesus told him, “Go! Your faith has saved you.”

Immediately he could see again and began to follow Jesus on the road.

11

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem — Matthew 21:1-9, Luke 19:28-38, John 12:12-19

¹ When they were approaching Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of His disciples. ² He told them, “Go into the village ahead of you! Just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied up, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here! ³ If anybody asks you, ‘Why are you doing that?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it!’ Then that person will promptly send it back here.”

⁴ They went and found a colt tied at a doorway, outside in the street and began to untie it. ⁵ Some of the people standing there asked them, “What are you doing, untying the colt?”

⁶ They answered them just as Jesus had told them, and the people let them go. ⁷ They brought the colt to Jesus, put their cloaks over it, and He sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the fields and spread them on the road. ⁹ Those who went ahead and those who followed Him kept shouting: “**Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!** ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!”

Jesus' appearance at the Temple and His return to Bethany — Matthew 21:12-17, Luke 10:45-46

¹¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple. He looked around at everything. Since it was already late, He went out to Bethany with the Twelve.

Jesus' cursing of the fig tree — Matthew 21:18-19

¹² On the next day, after they had left Bethany, Jesus became hungry. ¹³ He saw in the distance a fig tree with leaves and went to see if He would perhaps find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves. For it was not the season for figs.

¹⁴ Jesus reacted by saying to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” His disciples heard Him.

Jesus' clearing of the Temple — Matthew 21:12-17, Luke 19:45-48

¹⁵ When they had come to Jerusalem Jesus went into the Temple and began to drive out those who were selling and buying in the Temple. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the chairs of those who were selling doves. ¹⁶ He would not allow any-

one to carry any object through the Temple. ¹⁷ Then He began to teach them: “Has not Scripture said, ‘**My House will be called a house of prayer for all the nations**’? However, you have made it ‘**a den of robbers**.’”

¹⁸ When the Chief Priests and scribes heard this, they began to look for a way to destroy Him. For they were afraid of Him, because the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching. ¹⁹ Whenever evening came, they used to go out of the city.

The meaning of the withered fig tree — Matthew 21:18-22

²⁰ When they were walking past early in the morning, they saw that the fig tree had withered from the roots.

²¹ Peter remembered and said to Jesus, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.”

²² Jesus answered them, “Have faith in God. ²³ Truly, I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Be lifted up and be thrown into the sea!’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he is saying is happening, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore, I tell you, believe that you have received all the things that you pray for and ask for and you will have them.

²⁵ Whenever you stand and pray, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses!” *173

Jesus' response to a question about His authority — Matthew 21:23-27, Luke 20:1-8

²⁷ They came to Jerusalem again. While Jesus was walking in the Temple, the Chief Priests, the scribes and the elders came to Him. ²⁸ They asked Him, “By what authority are You doing these things? Or who has given You this authority, that you are doing these things?”

²⁹ Jesus answered them, “I shall ask you one question. Answer me! Then I shall tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ³⁰ Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men? Answer Me!”

³¹ They began to discuss it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will ask, ‘Then why did you not believe him?’ ³² However, if we say, ‘From men’ —” For they were afraid of the crowd, because they all considered that John had certainly been a prophet.

³³ They answered Jesus, “We do not know.”

Then Jesus told them, “Neither do I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

12

Jesus' parable about the wicked tenant-farmers — Matthew 21:33-46, Luke 20:9-19

¹ Then Jesus began to speak to them in parables: “A man **planted a vineyard**. He **put a fence around it**, **dug a pit for the winepress** and **built a tower**. Then he leased the vineyard out to tenant-farmers and went on a journey. ² At the right time he sent a servant to the tenant-farmers to obtain from the tenant-farmers some of the fruit of the vineyard. ³ Nevertheless, they

¹⁷³ For 11:26 in some manuscripts, see Matthew 6:15.

seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ⁴ Again, he sent another servant to them, and they hit him on the head and treated him shamefully. ⁵ Then he sent another, and they killed that one. He sent many others. They beat some and killed others. ⁶ He had one more, a son, whom he loved. He sent him to them last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

⁷ "However, those tenant-farmers said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come here, let us kill him! Then the inheritance will be ours.'

⁸ "They took him, killed him and threw him out of the vineyard. ⁹ Therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come, destroy the tenant-farmers and give the vineyard to others. ¹⁰ Have you not read this Scripture-passage: '**The Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone.** ¹¹ **This has been done by the Lord, and it is marvellous in our eyes**'?"

¹² They looked for a way to arrest Him and yet they were afraid of the crowd. For they knew that He had told the parable against them. They left Him and went away.

Jesus' answer to a question about paying tax to Caesar — Matthew 22:15-22, Luke 20:20-26

¹³ Then they sent some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians to Jesus to catch Him in His Words.

¹⁴ They came to Him and said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are true and that You do not court anyone's favour. For You do not regard the person of human beings but teach the Way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it lawful to pay tax to Caesar or not? Are we to pay it or are we not to pay it?"

¹⁵ However, He was aware of their pretence and asked them, "Why are you testing Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it!"

¹⁶ They brought one, and He asked them, "Whose image is this, and whose inscription?"

They said to Him, "Caesar's."

¹⁷ Jesus told them, "Pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's!"

Then they were amazed at Him.

Jesus' answer to a question of the Sadducees about the resurrection — Matthew 22:23-33, Luke 20:27-40

¹⁸ Then Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, ¹⁹ "Teacher, Moses has written for us that, **if someone's brother dies and leaves behind a wife but no child**, as the dead man's **brother he should marry the woman and raise up offspring for his brother.** ²⁰ There were seven brothers. The first married a woman and, when he died, he left no children. ²¹ The second married her and died and left no children, and so did the third. ²² None of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman also died. ²³ In the resurrection, when people rise, which of them will have her as his wife? For the seven had her as a wife."

²⁴ Jesus asked them, "Is not this the reason why you

are mistaken, that you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? ²⁵ For, when people rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven. ²⁶ Now, concerning the dead, that they are raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God told him: '**I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob**'? ²⁷ He is not the God of the dead but of the living. You are greatly mistaken."

Jesus' response about the greatest commandments, love of God and of the neighbour — Matthew 22:34-40

²⁸ One of the scribes came to Him. When he heard them arguing and saw that Jesus had been answering them well, he asked Him, "Which Commandment is the first of them all?"

²⁹ Jesus answered, "The first one is: '**Hear, Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one,** ³⁰ **and you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength!**' ³¹ The second one is this: '**You shall love your neighbour as yourself!**' There is no other Commandment greater than these."

³² The scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher! You have told the truth in saying that **He is one** and that **there is no other besides Him.** ³³ **Loving Him with all one's heart**, with all one's understanding and **with all one's strength** and **loving one's neighbour as oneself** is also more than all **the burnt offerings and sacrifices.**"

³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had answered sensibly, He told him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."

After that, no one dared to ask Him another question.

Jesus' question to the Pharisees about David's Son — Matthew 22:41-46, Luke 20:41-44

³⁵ While Jesus was teaching in the Temple, He asked, "How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? ³⁶ David himself said by the Holy Spirit, '**The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand until I put Your enemies under Your feet!"**'"

³⁷ David himself calls Him 'Lord'. Then how is He his son?"

The large crowd used to enjoy listening to Him.

Jesus' warnings about the scribes — Matthew 23:1-12, Luke 20:45-47

³⁸ As Jesus was teaching, He said, "Beware of the scribes, who want to walk around in long robes, to be greeted in the marketplaces, ³⁹ to sit in the chief seats in synagogues and to have the best places at dinners! ⁴⁰ They devour widows' houses and, to put on a good appearance, they make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

Jesus' comment about a widow's coins — Luke 21:1-4

⁴¹ As Jesus sat facing the contribution box, He was watching how the crowd was putting money into the contribution box. Many rich people were putting in large amounts. ⁴² A poor widow also came and put in two small copper coins, which make a quadrans. ⁴³ He summoned His disciples and told them, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all the oth-

ers who were putting money into the contribution box.
⁴⁴ For they all have put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all that she had, everything she had to live on.”

13

Jesus' prediction of the destruction of the Temple — Matthew 24:1-3, Luke 21:5-7

¹ As Jesus was going out of the Temple, one of His disciples told Him, “Teacher, look at these massive stones and magnificent buildings!”

² Jesus asked him, “Do you see these great buildings? Truly, not one stone will be left on another. Each one will be thrown down.”

³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, opposite the Temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked Him privately: ⁴ “Tell us when these things will happen and what the miraculous sign will be when all these things are going to be fulfilled!”

The signs of the kingdom — Matthew 24:4-8, Luke 21:8-11

⁵ Jesus began to tell them, “Beware that no one deceives you! ⁶ Many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and will deceive many. ⁷ When you hear about wars and rumours of wars, do not be alarmed! **Such things must happen**, but that is not yet the end.

⁸ For one **nation will rise against** another **nation**, and one **kingdom against** another **kingdom**. There will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines. These things are the beginning of birth-pains.

The beginning of the troubles — Matthew 24:9-14, Luke 21:12-19

⁹ “Nevertheless, watch out for yourselves! For they will hand you over to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, to testify to them. ¹⁰ The Good News must also first be preached to all nations.

¹¹ When they are taking you away to hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what to say! Instead, say whatever is given you at that time! For you are not the ones who are speaking, but the Holy Spirit. ¹² A brother will betray his brother to death, and a father his child. **Children will rebel against their parents** and cause them to be put to death. ¹³ All people will also hate you because of My name. However, he who endures to the end will be saved.

A prediction about the devastating abomination — Matthew 24:15-22, Luke 21:20-24

¹⁴ “When you see ‘**the devastating abomination**’ standing where it should not be (let the reader understand!), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains! ¹⁵ He who is on the roof of his house should not come down or go inside to get anything out of his house! ¹⁶ He who is in the field should not return to get his cloak! ¹⁷ How terrible for the women who are pregnant and to those who are breast-feeding in those days! ¹⁸ Pray that it will not happen during winter! ¹⁹ For in those days **there will be such distress as has not happened from the beginning** of the world, which God created, **until now** and will certainly not happen again. ²⁰ Moreover, if the Lord had not

shortened those days, no human being would have been saved. However, because of the elect, whom He has chosen, He has shortened the days.

The culmination of the troubles — Matthew 24:23-25, Luke 17:21

²¹ “Then if anyone tells you, ‘Look! Here is the Christ,’ or ‘Look! There He is,’ do not believe it!

²² For false christs and false prophets will **appear and offer** miraculous **signs and wonders**, to deceive the elect, if that were possible. ²³ However, as for you, be on your guard! I have told you everything in advance.

The coming of the Son of Man — Matthew 24:29-31, Luke 21:25-28

²⁴ “However, in those days, after that distress, **the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light**. ²⁵ **The stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers in the heavens** will be shaken. ²⁶ Then people will see **the Son of Man coming in clouds** with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then He will send the angels and **gather** His elect **from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven**.

Jesus' parable about the fig tree — Matthew 24:32-33, Luke 21:29-31

²⁸ “Learn this parable from the fig tree! When its branch has already become tender and puts out leaves, you know the summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things happening, you know He is near, at the doors.

The certainty of Jesus' Words and the time of His coming — Matthew 24:34-36, Luke 21:32-33

³⁰ “Truly, I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until these things all take place. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Words will certainly not pass away.

³² “No one knows about that day or hour, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

The conclusion of Jesus' eschatological discourse — Matthew 24:42, Luke 12:38-40

³³ “Beware and be on the alert! For you do not know when the time will be. ³⁴ It is like a man who was away on a journey. When he left home, he put his slaves in charge, assigned each one his task and ordered the doorkeeper to keep watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep watch! For you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at the time when the rooster crows or early in the morning. ³⁶ Make sure that, if he comes suddenly, he does not find you asleep! ³⁷ What I tell you, I tell everyone: ‘Keep watch!’”

14

Jesus' passion and resurrection (14:1-16:8)

The plot of the Jews to put Jesus to death — Matthew 26:1-5, Luke 22:1-2, John 11:45-57

¹ It was two days before the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The Chief Priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus in an underhand manner and kill Him. ² For they were saying, “Not during the feast, to avoid a riot among the people!”

Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany — Matthew 26:6-13, John 12:1-8

³ While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon

the leper and was reclining at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfume, pure nard and very expensive. She broke the alabaster jar and poured the perfume on His head. ⁴ Some people were saying indignantly to one another, “Why has the perfume been wasted like this? ⁵ For this perfume could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor.”

They also scolded her. ⁶ Jesus said, “Leave her alone! Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to Me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you and can do good to them whenever you want to but do not always have Me. ⁸ She has done what she could. She has put perfume on My body in advance for My burial. ⁹ Truly, I tell you, wherever the Good News is preached in the entire world, what this woman has done will also be told in memory of her.”

Judas' plan to betray Jesus — Matthew 26:14-16, Luke 22:3-6

¹⁰ Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the Chief Priests to betray Jesus to them. ¹¹ When they heard this, they were delighted and promised to give him money. He kept trying to find a convenient way of betraying Him.

The preparation for the Passover — Matthew 26:17-20, Luke 22:7-17

¹² On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when people used to kill the Passover lamb, the disciples asked Jesus, “Where do You want us to go and prepare for You to eat the Passover?”

¹³ He sent two of His disciples and told them: “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him! ¹⁴ Where he goes inside, tell the owner: ‘The Teacher asks, “Where is My guest-room, in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?”’ ¹⁵ Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Prepare for us there!”

¹⁶ The disciples left, went into the city, found things just as Jesus had told them and prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve.

Jesus' prediction of His betrayal — Matthew 26:21-25, Luke 22:21-23, John 13:21-30

¹⁸ While they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, “Truly, I tell you, one of you, **one who is eating with Me**, will betray Me!”

¹⁹ They began to be sad and to ask Him one after another, “I am not the one, am I?”

²⁰ He told them, “It is one of the Twelve, the one who is dipping into the bowl with Me. ²¹ For the Son of Man is going away as Scripture has said about Him, but how terrible for that man by whom the Son of Man is being betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had never been born.”

The institution of the Lord's Supper — Matthew 26:26-30, Luke 22:18-20, I Corinthians 11:23-25

²² While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, gave it to them and said, “Take it! This is My body.”

²³ Then He took a cup, gave thanks and gave it to

them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ He told them, “This is My **blood of the Covenant**, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly, I tell you, I shall certainly not drink of the fruit of the vine any longer until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.”

The way to Gethsemane and Jesus' prediction of Peter's denials — Matthew 26:30-35, Luke 22:30, John 13:36-38

²⁶ After they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

²⁷ Then Jesus told them, “You will all fall away. For Scripture has said, ‘**I shall strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.**’ ²⁸ However, after I have been raised, I shall go ahead of you to Galilee.”

²⁹ However, Peter said to Him, “Even if they are all going to fall away, yet I shall not.”

³⁰ Jesus told him, “Truly, I tell you, today, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.”

³¹ However, he kept insisting strongly, “If I must die with You, I shall certainly not deny You.”

All the others also kept speaking like that.

Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane — Matthew 26:36-46, Luke 22:39-46

³² Then they came to a place that had the name “Gethsemane,” and Jesus told His disciples, “Sit down here while I pray!”

³³ He took Peter, James and John with Him and began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ He told them, “**My soul is very sad**, to the point of death. Remain here and be watchful!”

³⁵ He went forward a little, fell to the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. ³⁶ He was saying, “Abba! Father! All things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me! Nevertheless, not what I want but what You want!”

³⁷ Then He came and found them sleeping. He asked Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not be watchful for one hour? ³⁸ Be watchful and pray, that you may not begin to be tempted! The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹ Then He went away again and prayed, saying the same words. ⁴⁰ He came again and found them sleeping. For their eyes were heavy, and they did not know what to answer Him. ⁴¹ Then He came a third time and asked them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough. The hour has come. Look! The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Get up! Let us go! Look! The one who is betraying Me has arrived.”

The arrest of Jesus — Matthew 26:47-56, Luke 22:47-54a, John 18:1-14

⁴³ Just then, while Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the Chief Priests, the scribes and the elders. ⁴⁴ The man who was betraying Him had given them a signal. He told them, “The One whom I kiss is the One. Arrest Him and lead Him away securely!”

45 When he came, he immediately went up to Jesus and said, “Rabbi,” and kissed Him. 46 Then the men took hold of Jesus and arrested Him. 47 A certain one of those who were standing near drew his sword, struck the Chief Priest’s servant and cut off his ear.

48 Jesus answered them, “Have you come out to capture Me as if you were coming against a robber, with swords and clubs? 49 Every day I was with you while I was teaching in the Temple, and you did not arrest Me. However, let the Scriptures be fulfilled!”

50 Then they all left Him and ran away.

51 A certain young man was also following Him wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They tried to take hold of him, 52 but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.

Jesus’ first trial before the Jewish court — Matthew 26:57-68

53 The men led Jesus away to the Chief Priest and all the Chief Priests, the elders and the scribes assembled.

54 Peter followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the Chief Priest. He was sitting with the servants and warming himself at the fire. 55 The Chief Priests and the whole Jewish council were trying to find some evidence against Jesus to put Him to death but could not find any. 56 For many were testifying falsely against Him, but their statements in evidence did not agree. 57 Then some men stood up and gave this false testimony against Him: 58 “We heard Him saying, ‘I shall destroy this Temple, made with hands; and in three days I shall build another not made with hands.’” 59 However, even on this point their evidence did not agree.

60 Then the Chief Priest stood up in the middle and asked Jesus, “Are You not answering at all? What is it that these men are testifying against You?”

61 However, Jesus remained silent and did not answer at all. The Chief Priest asked Him again, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?”

62 Jesus said, “I am, and you will see **the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming with the clouds of heaven.**”

63 Then the Chief Priest tore his clothes and said, “Why do we need witnesses any longer? 64 You have heard the blasphemy. What is your opinion?” They all condemned Him, saying that He deserved to die. 65 Then some men began to **spit** at Him, cover His face, strike Him with their fists and say to Him, “Prophecy!” The attendants also gave Him blows.

Peter’s denials of Jesus — Matthew 26:69-75, Luke 22:54b-62, John 18:15-18, 25-27

66 While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the Chief Priest came, 67 and, when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, “You were also with the Man from Nazareth, this Jesus!”

68 However, he denied it, saying: “I neither know nor understand what you are saying.” He went outside to the forecourt, and a rooster crowed. 69 When the serv-

ant girl saw him, she again began to tell those who were standing around, “This is one of them!”

70 However, he denied it again. After a little while, those who were standing near began to say to Peter again, “In fact you are one of them. For you are a Galilean.”

71 However, he began to curse and swear: “I do not know this Man, about whom you are talking.”

72 Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered the Words that Jesus had told him: “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.”

Then he began to weep.

15

An early-morning meeting of the Jewish council — Matthew 27:1-2, Luke 23:1, John 18:28-38

1 Very early in the morning, the Chief Priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led Him away and handed Him over to Pilate.

Jesus’ trial before Pilate — Matthew 27:11-14, Luke 23:2-5

2 Pilate then asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered him, “Yes, it is as you say.”

3 The Chief Priests kept accusing Him of many things.

4 Pilate asked Him again, “Are You making no reply at all? See how many things about which they are accusing You!”

5 However, Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate was amazed.

The choice between Jesus and Barabbas and the sentencing of Jesus to death — Matthew 27:15-26, Luke 23:17-25, John 18:39-40

6 At every festival Pilate used to release a prisoner whom the people requested. 7 There was a man by the name of Barabbas. He had been in prison with the rebels who had committed a murder in the rebellion.

8 The crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. 9 Pilate answered them by asking, “Do you want me to release ‘the King of the Jews’ for you?”

10 For he knew that the Chief Priests had handed Jesus over because they were jealous. 11 The Chief Priests stirred up the crowd, that Pilate might release Barabbas to them instead. 12 Pilate again asked them, “Therefore, what am I to do with the One whom you call ‘the King of the Jews’?”

13 They shouted back, “Crucify Him!”

14 Pilate asked them, “Why? What wrong has He done?”

However, they shouted even louder, “Crucify Him!”

15 Then Pilate, wanting to satisfy the people, released Barabbas to them but scourged Jesus and handed Him over to be crucified.

The soldiers’ mockery of Jesus — Matthew 27:27-31, Luke 23:26

16 The soldiers took Him away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. 17 They put a purple robe on Him, twisted together a crown of thorns, put it on Him,

¹⁸ and began to greet Him: “Welcome, King of the Jews!” ¹⁹ They kept hitting Him on the head with a stick, **spitting** on Him, kneeling down and paying homage to Him.

²⁰ After they had mocked Him, they took off the purple robe and put His own clothes on Him. Then they led Him out to crucify Him.

The road to Calvary — Matthew 27:32, Luke 23:26-32

²¹ A certain man, Simon from Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was going past as he was coming in from the country, and they forced him to carry Jesus’ cross.

The crucifixion of Jesus — Matthew 27:33-44, Luke 23:33-43, John 19:16b-24

²² They took Jesus to the place called “Golgotha,” which means “The Place of the Skull.” ²³ They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh, but He did not take it. ²⁴ They crucified Him and **divided His clothes by casting lots for them**, to see what each one should get. ²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified Him. ²⁶ The notice of the accusation against Him had been written above Him: “The King of the Jews.” ²⁷ With Him they crucified two robbers, one on His right, and one on His left. ^{*174} ²⁹ Those who were going past kept **ridiculing** Him, **shaking their heads** and saying, “Ha! You who are tearing down the Temple and building it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save Yourself!”

³¹ In the same way the Chief Priests and the scribes kept **mocking** Him among themselves, saying, “He saved others. He cannot save Himself. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe!”

Those who had been crucified with Him also kept **insulting** Him.

The death of Jesus on the cross — Matthew 27:45-56, Luke 23:44-49, John 19:28-30

³³ At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ At the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “**Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?**” which means, “**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**” ³⁵ When some of those who were standing nearby heard that, they said, “Look! He is calling for Elijah.”

³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with **wine-vinegar**, put it on a stick and **offered it** to Jesus **to drink**. He said, “Let Him alone! Let us see whether Elijah is coming to take Him down!”

³⁷ Jesus cried out in a loud voice and breathed His last. ³⁸ The curtain of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ When the centurion, who was standing opposite Jesus, saw that He breathed His last like this, he said, “Truly, this Man was the Son of God.”

⁴⁰ There were also some women watching **from a distance**. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary,

the mother of James the Younger and of Joses and Salome. ⁴¹ While Jesus was in Galilee, they had been following Him and supporting Him. There were also many other women who had come up to Jerusalem with Him.

The burial of Jesus — Matthew 27:57-61, Luke 23:50-56, John 19:38-42

⁴² When evening had already come, since it was the Day of Preparation, which is the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph from Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who himself also was waiting for the kingdom of God, dared to go in to Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate wondered whether Jesus had already died. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus was already dead. ⁴⁵ When he had found from the centurion that this was so, Pilate granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Joseph bought linen, took Him down and wrapped Him in the linen. He laid Him in a tomb that had been cut out of rock and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Joses, were watching where He was laid.

16

The resurrection — Matthew 28:1-10, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10

¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome bought spices to go and anoint Jesus. ² On Sunday they were coming to the tomb very early when the sun had just come up. ³ They asked one another, “Who is going to roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?”

⁴ However, when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back, even though it was very large. ⁵ As they went into the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting at the right side and were amazed.

⁶ He told them, “Do not be amazed any longer! You are looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen. He is not here. See the place where He was laid! ⁷ Go, however, and tell His disciples and Peter, ‘He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you!’”

⁸ They went out and hurried away from the tomb, because they were trembling and bewildered, and said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.

*Postscript (16:9-20) *175*

Jesus’ command to the eleven to preach the Gospel to the whole creation

⁹ After Jesus had risen early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and reported it to those who had been with Him as they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹ When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe it. ¹² After that, Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them as they were walking on a journey into the country. ¹³ They went back and reported it to the rest of them, but they did not believe them

¹⁷⁴ For 15:28 in some manuscripts, see Luke 22:37b.

¹⁷⁵ Some manuscripts do not contain 16:9-20.

Mark

either. ¹⁴ Later He appeared to the Eleven while they were reclining at the table. He scolded them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had been raised. ¹⁵ He told them, “Go into the entire world and preach the Good News to the whole creation! ¹⁶ He who has come to faith and been baptised will be saved, but he who has not believed will be condemned. ¹⁷ These are the miraculous signs that will accompany those who have become believers: In My name they will cast out demons. They will speak in

new languages. ¹⁸ They will pick up snakes in their hands, and, if they drink anything deadly, it will certainly not harm them. They will lay their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

¹⁹ So, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was **taken up into heaven** and **sat down at the right hand of God**. ²⁰ However, the disciples went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord was working with them and confirming the Word by the miraculous signs that accompanied it.

LUKE

1

The preface about Luke's research (1:1-4)

¹ Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ² just as those who from the beginning have been eyewitnesses and servants of the Word have handed them over to us. ³ For this reason, since I too have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I have decided to write down an orderly account for you, most noble Theophilus, ⁴ that you may be sure that the things about which you have been instructed are certain.

Beginnings of the New Testament: the period from the birth of John the Baptist to the temptation of Jesus (1:5-4:13)

The angel Gabriel's promise of the birth of John the Baptist

⁵ In the days of Herod, the King of Judea, there was a priest by the name of Zacharias. He belonged to the division of priests named after Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

⁶ Both were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the Commandments and Regulations of the Lord. ⁷ However, they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren and they were both well advanced in years. ⁸ When Zacharias was serving as a priest before God in the order of his division, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the Temple of the Lord to burn incense. ¹⁰ The whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the time for burning incense. ¹¹ An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zacharias saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³ However, the angel told him, "**Stop being afraid, Zacharias! For your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him 'John.'**" ¹⁴ He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will be glad when he is born. ¹⁵ For he will be great in the sight of the Lord. **He must never drink any wine or other intoxicating drink!** He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb. ¹⁶ He will **turn** many of the people of Israel **back** to the Lord, their God. ¹⁷ He will go ahead of Him with the spirit and power of **Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,'** to turn those who are disobedient to the wisdom of those who are righteous and to make the people ready, so that they are thoroughly prepared for the Lord."

¹⁸ Zacharias asked the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

¹⁹ The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel! I stand before God and have been sent to speak to you and tell you this Good News. ²⁰ Look! You will be silent and not able to talk until the day when this happens, because you have not believed my words. However, they will be fulfilled at their proper time."

²¹ The people were waiting for Zacharias and were astonished that he was staying so long in the Temple.

²² When he came out, he could not speak to them. Then they realised that he had seen a vision in the Temple. He kept beckoning to them and remained unable to speak. ²³ When his time of service as priest was completed, he returned home. ²⁴ After this time, his wife Elizabeth conceived and remained in seclusion for five months. She said, ²⁵ "The Lord has dealt with me in this way at a time when He has looked with favour on me and removed my disgrace among people."

The angel Gabriel's annunciation to Mary of Jesus' birth

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called "Nazareth," ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man by the name of Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ When the angel entered her home, he said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ She was greatly troubled at what he said and was wondering what kind of greeting this was. ³⁰ The angel told her: "Stop being afraid, Mary! For you have found favour with God. ³¹ You see: **you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a Son and you shall call His name 'Jesus.'**" ³² He will be great and will be called **'the Son of the Most High.'** Moreover, the Lord God will give Him **the throne of His father David.** ³³ **He will reign over the family of Jacob forever, and there will be no end of His kingdom."**

³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "How will this be, since I am not living with a husband?"

³⁵ The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come over you, and the Power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, also the Holy One who is conceived will be called 'the Son of God.'" ³⁶ In addition, look! Your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her, whom people used to call barren. ³⁷ **For nothing will be impossible with God."**

³⁸ Mary answered, "Look! I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said!"

Then the angel left her.

Mary's visit to Elizabeth

³⁹ In those days Mary got ready and hurried to a city of Judah in the hill-country. ⁴⁰ She went into Zacharias' home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴² and exclaimed in a loud voice: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the Child who will come from your womb! ⁴³ Why, then, does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For indeed, as soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped with delight in my womb."

⁴⁵ Moreover, blessed is she who has believed that the Lord will accomplish what He has promised to do for her!”

Mary's song

⁴⁶ Mary said, ⁴⁷ **“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God, my Saviour,** ⁴⁸ **because He has looked kindly on the humble state of His servant.** For look! From now on all generations will call me blessed. ⁴⁹ For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and **His name is holy;** ⁵⁰ **and He is merciful to those who fear Him throughout all generations.** ⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds **with His arm. He has scattered** those who have proud thoughts in their hearts. ⁵² **He has brought strong rulers down** from their thrones but has **exalted lowly people.** ⁵³ **He has filled hungry people with good things** but has sent rich people away empty. ⁵⁴ **He has come to help His servant Israel,** so that He **has remembered to be merciful,** ⁵⁵ **to Abraham and his descendants for ever, as He has promised our fathers.”**

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then went back home.

The birth of John the Baptist

⁵⁷ When the full time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. ⁵⁸ When her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹ On the eighth day they came to circumcise the baby. They were going to call him “Zacharias” because that was his father’s name. ⁶⁰ However, his mother spoke up and said, “No, he will be named ‘John.’”

⁶¹ They told her, “There is no one among your relatives who has this name.”

⁶² They motioned to his father to find out what he would like him to be called. ⁶³ He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.”

They were all astonished. ⁶⁴ At once Zacharias’ mouth and tongue were opened, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵ Then fear came on all who lived around them, and through all the hill-country of Judea people kept talking about all these things. ⁶⁶ All who heard about them thought them over and asked, “What, then, is this child going to be?”

For it was clear that the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷ His father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: ⁶⁸ **“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel! For He has visited His people and has redeemed them.** ⁶⁹ He has **raised up a Horn of salvation** for us in the family of His servant David, ⁷⁰ as He has promised by the mouths of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began, ⁷¹ **that He would save us from our enemies and from the hands of all who hate us.** ⁷² He has promised **to be merciful to our fathers and to remember His holy Covenant,** ⁷³ **the oath that He swore to our father**

Abraham: ⁷⁴ that we would be rescued from the hands of our **enemies** and serve Him without fear, ⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. ⁷⁶ You, child, will be called ‘the prophet of the Most High.’ For you will **go ahead of the Lord, to prepare His ways,** ⁷⁷ to give the knowledge of salvation to His people by the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸ because of the compassionate mercy of our God, by which **the Dawn** from on high **will visit us,** ⁷⁹ **to shine on those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death** and to guide our feet into **the way of peace.”**

⁸⁰ The child John grew and became strong in spirit. He lived in the deserts until the day when he appeared publicly before Israel.

2

The birth of Jesus

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the whole world. ² This was the first census, which took place while Quirinius was the governor of Syria. ³ Everyone went to be registered, each to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to the city of David in Judea, which is called Bethlehem, because he belonged to the house and line of David, ⁵ to register himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to have her Baby, ⁷ and she gave birth to her first-born Son. She wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The announcement to shepherds of Jesus' birth

⁸ There were shepherds in the same district, staying out in the fields, watching over their flocks by night.

⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were very afraid. ¹⁰ The angel said to them, “Stop being afraid! For look! I am bringing you Good News of great joy, which will be for all the people, ¹¹ because a Saviour, who is Christ, the Lord, has been born for you today, in the city of David. ¹² This will also be the sign to you: you will find an Infant wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly there was with the angel a great company of the heavenly host, who were praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people whom He favours!”

¹⁵ When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us!” ¹⁶ Then they came quickly and found Mary and Joseph and the Infant, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen Him, they declared to others the Word that had been told them about this Child. ¹⁸ All those who heard it were astonished at what the shepherds told

them. ¹⁹ Mary kept treasuring up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen. They were just as they had been told them.

The circumcision of Jesus

²¹ On the eighth day, when the time came to circumcise the Baby, He was named “Jesus,” the name that the angel had given Him before He was conceived in the womb.

The presentation of Jesus at the Temple

²² When **the time of their purification** according to the Law of Moses **had been completed**, they took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord: “**Every first-born male will be called ‘holy to the Lord’**”). ²⁴ They also went to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord: “**a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.**”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem by the name of Simeon. This man was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Christ of the Lord. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the Temple. When the parents brought in the Child Jesus to do for Him what was customary according to the Law, ²⁸ Simeon took Him in his arms, blessed God and said: ²⁹ “Now, Lord, You are letting Your servant depart in peace, as You have promised, ³⁰ because my eyes **have seen Your Salvation**, ³¹ which You have prepared in the sight of all the peoples, ³² **a Light to bring revelation to the Gentiles and the Glory of Your people Israel.**”

³³ The Child’s father and mother were astonished at the things that were being said about Him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and told Mary, His mother, “Look! This Child is appointed for many in Israel to fall and to rise and to be a Sign that is spoken against, ³⁵ that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. A sword will also pierce your own soul.”

³⁶ Moreover, there was Anna, a prophetess, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old. She had lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage. ³⁷ This woman had been a widow for as much as eighty-four years. She never left the Temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Just then she came up to them, gave thanks to God and kept speaking about the Child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they went back to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

The twelve-year-old Jesus’ devotion to His Father’s business

⁴⁰ The Child grew and became strong, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on Him.

⁴¹ Every year Jesus’ parents used to go to Jerusalem

for the feast of the Passover. ⁴² When He was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. ⁴³ When they had spent the days there and while they were returning, the Boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents were unaware of this. ⁴⁴ They thought He was with the others who were travelling with them. After travelling for a day, they began to look for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵ When they did not find Him, they went back to Jerusalem, looking for Him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found Him in the Temple, sitting among the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ All those who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. ⁴⁸ When His parents saw Him, they were astonished. His mother asked Him, “Son, why have You done this to us? Look! Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”

⁴⁹ He asked them, “Why have you been looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be about My Father’s business?”

⁵⁰ However, they did not understand what He said to them. ⁵¹ Then He went down with them, came to Nazareth and was obedient to them. His mother kept all these things in her heart. ⁵² Jesus grew wiser and taller and **increased in the approval of God and of people.**

3

The preaching of John the Baptist — Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8, John 1:19-28

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, while Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea, while Herod was the tetrarch of Galilee, while his brother Philip was the tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis and while Lysanias was the tetrarch of Abilene, ² and at the time when Annas and Caiaphas were the Chief Priests, the Word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the country around the Jordan and preached that people should repent and be baptised for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ It was as Scripture has said in the book of the Words of the prophet Isaiah: “**The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord! Make His paths straight!’** ⁵ **Every ravine will be filled in. Every mountain and hill will be levelled. The crooked roads will be made straight, and the rough roads smooth,** ⁶ **and all people will see the salvation of God.**”

⁷ Therefore, John kept saying to the crowds who were coming out to be baptised by him, “You brood of poisonous snakes, who has warned you to run away from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, produce fruits worthy of repentance! Do not begin to tell yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father’! For I tell you that God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. ⁹ The axe has already been laid at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that does not produce good fruit

is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ The crowds used to ask him, “Therefore, what are we to do?”

¹¹ He used to answer them, “The person who has two tunics should share with the person who has none, and the person who has food should do the same!”

¹² Tax-collectors also came to be baptised and asked him, “Teacher, what are we to do?”

¹³ He told them, “Stop collecting any more money than what has been laid down for you!”

¹⁴ Soldiers also used to ask him, “What are we also to do?”

He told them, “Do not extort money by violence, do not accuse people falsely and be satisfied with your wages!”

¹⁵ The people were expecting something and were all wondering in their hearts whether John might perhaps be the Christ. ¹⁶ John answered them all: “I am baptising you with water. However, the One who is more powerful than I am is coming. I am not worthy to untie His sandal-strap. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷ He has His winnowing fork in His hand to clean up His threshing floor and to gather the wheat into His barn but will burn the chaff with fire that cannot be put out.”

¹⁸ So, with many other words John kept exhorting the people and telling them the Good News.

The imprisonment of John the Baptist — Matthew 14:3-4, Mark 6:17-18

¹⁹ However, when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and all the other evil things he had done, ²⁰ Herod added this to them all: he locked John up in prison.

The baptism of Jesus — Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, compare John 1:29-34

²¹ When all the people were being baptised, Jesus was also baptised. While He was praying, heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit came down on Him in bodily form like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, which said, “You are **My Son**, whom I love. **I am well pleased with You.**”

²³ Jesus Himself was about thirty years old when He began His ministry.

The family-line of Jesus — Matthew 1:1-17

He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli, ²⁴ the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, ²⁵ the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, ²⁶ the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, ²⁷ the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerub-Babel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, ²⁸ the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, ²⁹ the son of Jesus, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, ³⁰ the son of Simeon, the son of Judas, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, ³¹ the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the

son of Nathan, the son of David, ³² the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, ³³ the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, ³⁴ the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, ³⁵ the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, ³⁶ the son of Cainam, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, ³⁷ the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainam, ³⁸ the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

4

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness — Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13

¹ Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, ² where the Devil continued to tempt Him for forty days. He ate nothing during those days and, when they were over, He was very hungry.

³ The Devil said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread!”

⁴ Jesus answered him, “Scripture has said, ‘**A person will not live by bread alone.**’”

⁵ The Devil took Him up and, in a moment, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ The Devil told Him, “I shall give You all this authority and glory, because it has been given to me, and I give it to anyone to whom I please. ⁷ So, if You worship me, all this will be Yours.”

⁸ Jesus answered him, “Scripture has said, ‘**Worship the Lord, your God, and serve Him only!**’”

⁹ The Devil took Him into Jerusalem and had Him stand on the summit of the Temple. The Devil told Him, “If You are the Son of God, jump down from here! ¹⁰ For Scripture has said: ‘**He will order His angels about you, to watch over you carefully.**

¹¹ **They will carry you in their hands and never let you stub your foot against a stone.**’”

¹² Jesus answered him, “Scripture has said, ‘**You shall not put the Lord, your God, to a test!**’”

¹³ When the Devil had finished every way of tempting Him, he left Him until another opportunity would present itself.

Jesus’ ministry in Galilee (4:14-9:50)

The rejection of Jesus at Nazareth — Matthew 13:53-58, Mark 6:1-6

¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread all over the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He continued to teach in their synagogues, and everyone praised Him.

¹⁶ Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. On the Sabbath He went into the synagogue, as His custom was, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ He was given the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, He found the place where Scripture had said: ¹⁸ “**The Spirit of the Lord is on Me because**

He has anointed Me to tell the Good News to poor people. He has sent Me to announce freedom to prisoners and restoration of sight to blind people, to set free those who have been oppressed,¹⁹ and to announce the acceptable year of the Lord.”

²⁰ He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ He began to tell them, “Today, while you are listening, this passage of Scripture has been fulfilled.”

²² All spoke well of Him and were astonished at the gracious words that were coming from His mouth. They were asking, “Is This not Joseph’s son?”

²³ He told them: “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Doctor, heal yourself!’ and say, ‘Do the same things here in Your hometown as we have heard that You have done at Capernaum!’” ²⁴ He added, “Truly, I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown.

²⁵ However, I tell you truly, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months and there was a severe famine all over the land. ²⁶ Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them but to **a widow at Zarephath in the territory of Sidon.** ²⁷ There were also many lepers in Israel at the time of the prophet Elisha. Yet none of them was **made clean**, only **Naaman** the Syrian.”

²⁸ All the people in the synagogue were filled with anger when they heard these things. ²⁹ They got up, drove Him out of the city and took Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, to throw Him down the cliff. ³⁰ However, He walked right through them and went on His way.

Jesus’ transfer to Capernaum and His driving out of a demon — Mark 1:21-28, Matthew 7:28-29

³¹ Then He went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee and was teaching people on the Sabbath. ³² The people were amazed at His teaching, because His Word had authority.

³³ In the synagogue there was a man who had a spirit of an unclean demon. He cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴ “Ha! What do we have in common with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are, the Holy One of God.”

³⁵ Jesus rebuked him: “Be quiet and come out of him!”

The demon threw him down in the middle of the crowd and came out of him, without doing him any harm. ³⁶ They were all amazed and began to ask one another, “What kind of speaking is this, that with authority and power He gives orders to unclean spirits, and they come out?”

³⁷ The news about Him kept spreading to every place in the surrounding region.

Jesus’ healing of Peter’s wife’s mother — Matthew 8:14-15, Mark 1:29-28

³⁸ Jesus left the synagogue and went to Simon’s home. Simon’s mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. ³⁹ He bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her.

She got up at once and began to wait on them.

Jesus’ healing of sick people one evening — Matthew 8:16-17, Mark 1:32-34

⁴⁰ When the sun was going down, all who had people who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him. He laid His hands on each one of them and healed them.

⁴¹ Moreover, demons were also being cast out of many people, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” However, He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that He was the Christ.

Jesus’ departure from Capernaum — Mark 1:35-38

⁴² At daybreak Jesus came out and went to a solitary place. The crowds continued to look for Him. When they came to Him, they tried to keep Him from leaving them. ⁴³ However, He told them, “I must tell the Good News of the kingdom of God in other cities also, because I have been sent for this purpose.”

Jesus’ first preaching-journey in Galilee — Matthew 4:23-25, Mark 1:39

⁴⁴ Then He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

5

A miraculous catch of fish — Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:14-20, (John 1:35-51)

¹ While the people were crowding around Jesus as they were listening to the Word of God, He was standing beside the Lake of Gennesaret. ² He saw two boats standing on the shore of the lake. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³ Then Jesus got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from the shore. He sat down and began to teach the crowd from the boat. ⁴ When He had stopped speaking, He told Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch!”

⁵ Simon answered, “Master, we have been working hard all night and have caught nothing. Nevertheless, at Your Word, I shall let down the nets.”

⁶ When the men had done this, they caught a very large number of fish, and their nets began to tear.

⁷ They signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came, and they filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me! For I am a sinful man, Lord.”

⁹ He and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰ and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon’s partners. Then Jesus told Simon, “Stop being afraid! From now on you will be catching people.”

¹¹ When they had brought the boats to the shore, they left everything and became His followers.

Jesus’ healing of a leper — Matthew 8:1-4, Mark 1:40-45

¹² When Jesus was in one of the cities, there was a man who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell face-down and begged Him, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

¹³ Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him. He

said, "I am willing. Be made clean!"

Immediately the leprosy left him.

¹⁴ Jesus ordered him, "Do not tell anyone but go, **show yourself to the priest** and make an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them!"

¹⁵ However, the news about Jesus kept spreading even more, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, Jesus used to withdraw to lonely places and pray.

Jesus' healing of a paralysed man — Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 2:1-12

¹⁷ One day while Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and teachers of the Law were sitting there. They had come from every village in Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem, and He had the power of the Lord to heal. ¹⁸ Then some men brought a paralysed man on a bed and tried to take him inside and place him in front of Jesus. ¹⁹ However, when they could not find how to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof. They let him down with his stretcher through the tiles into the middle of the people, in front of Jesus. ²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith, He said, "Man, your sins have been forgiven you."

²¹ The scribes and the Pharisees began thinking to themselves, "Who is this Man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

²² Jesus perceived what they were thinking and asked them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"

²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk!?' ²⁴ You should know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins!" He said to the paralysed man, "I tell you, get up, pick up your stretcher and go home!"

²⁵ Immediately the man stood up in front of them, picked up the stretcher on which he had been lying and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶ Astonishment gripped them all, and they began to praise God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Jesus' call of Matthew (Levi) — Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 2:13-17

²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax-collector by the name of Levi sitting in his tax booth. He told him, "Follow Me!"

²⁸ Levi got up, left everything and began to follow Him. ²⁹ Then Levi held a large banquet for Jesus at his home, and there was a large crowd of tax-collectors and others who were sitting at table with them.

³⁰ The Pharisees and their scribes complained to Jesus' disciples: "Why are you people eating and drinking with tax-collectors and sinners?"

³¹ Jesus answered them, "Those who are healthy do not need a doctor, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call righteous people but sinners, to repentance."

Jesus' response to a question about fasting — Matthew 9:14-17, Mark 2:18-22

³³ However, they said to Him, "John's disciples often

fast and say prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink."

³⁴ Jesus asked them, "Surely you cannot make the guests of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵ However, the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then, in those days, they will fast."

³⁶ Then He went on to tell them a parable: "No one tears a patch from a new garment and puts it on an old garment. Otherwise he will tear the new one, and the patch from the new one will not match the old one.

³⁷ No one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the wineskins, it will be spilt, and the wineskins will be ruined. ³⁸ Rather, new wine must be put into new wineskins! ³⁹ No one who has drunk old wine wants the new. For he says, 'The old is fine!'"

6

The plucking of grain by Jesus' disciples on a Sabbath — Matthew 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28

¹ On a Sabbath, while Jesus was walking through grain-fields, His disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands and eating them.

² Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you people doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"

³ Jesus answered them, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he and those who were with him became hungry, ⁴ how he went into the house of God and took **the loaves set out before God**, which it is not lawful to eat, except only for the priests; and he ate and gave some to those who were with him?"

⁵ Then Jesus told them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Jesus' healing of a man with a shrivelled hand — Matthew 12:9-15, Mark 3:1-6

⁶ On another Sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shrivelled. ⁷ The scribes and the Pharisees were watching Jesus closely to see whether He would heal him on a Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. ⁸ However, He knew what they were thinking and told the man with the shrivelled hand, "Get up and stand in the middle!" The man got up and stood there.

⁹ Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to destroy one?"

¹⁰ After looking around at all of them, He told the man, "Stretch out your hand!"

He did, and his hand was completely restored. ¹¹ They were filled with fury and began to discuss with one another what they were to do to Jesus.

Jesus' choice of twelve apostles — Matthew 10:1-4, Mark 3:13-19

¹² In these days Jesus went out to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God.

¹³ When day came, He called His disciples and chose twelve of them, whom He also named "apostles":

¹⁴ Simon, whom He also named “Peter,” and his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, ¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, James, who was the son of Alphaeus, Simon, who was called “the Zealot,” ¹⁶ Judas, who was the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Jesus' healing of many people — (Matthew 12:15-21), Mark 3:7-12

¹⁷ Jesus went down with them and stood on a level place with a large crowd of His disciples and a great many people from all over Judea, Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled by unclean spirits were made well.

¹⁹ All the people were trying to touch Him, because power was coming from Him and healing them all.

Jesus' sermon on the plain 6:20-49

Four beatitudes — Matthew 5:3-6, 11-12.

²⁰ Jesus looked at His disciples and said: “Blessed are you who are poor! For yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now! For you will be satisfied.

“Blessed are you who are weeping now! For you will laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man! ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For, you see, your reward is great in heaven. For that is how their fathers used to treat the prophets.

Four woes

²⁴ “However, how terrible for you who are rich! For you have already received your comfort.

²⁵ “How terrible for you who are well fed now! For you will be hungry.

“How terrible for you who are laughing now! For you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ “How terrible for you when all people speak well of you! For that is how their fathers used to treat the false prophets.

Jesus' teaching about love of one's enemies — Matthew 5:38-48

²⁷ “However, I tell you who are listening: Love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you! ²⁸ Bless those who curse you! Pray for those who mistreat you! ²⁹ If someone strikes you on the cheek, offer him the other also! If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic as well! ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you and, if someone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back! ³¹ Treat other people the same as you want them to treat you! ³² If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

³³ For, if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do the same.

³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you expect to get it back, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners to get equal payment back. ³⁵ Rather, love your enemies! Do good and lend, without expecting to get anything back! Then your reward will be great,

and you will be the children of the Most High, because He is kind to ungrateful and wicked people.

³⁶ Be merciful, as your Father also is merciful!

Jesus' teaching about judging — Matthew 7:1-5

³⁷ “Stop judging, and you will certainly not be judged. Stop condemning, and you will certainly not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. People will put a good measure, pressed together, shaken down and running over, into your lap. For the measure with which you measure others will be used for you in return.”

³⁹ Jesus also told them a parable “A blind man cannot lead another blind man, can he? Will not both fall into a ditch? ⁴⁰ A pupil is not above his teacher. However, everyone who has been fully trained will be like his teacher. ⁴¹ Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and do not notice the plank that is in your own eye? ⁴² How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye!’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the plank out of your own eye! Then you will see clearly, to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

The testing of what is good — Matthew 7:16-21

⁴³ “For a good tree does not produce bad fruit, and a bad tree does not produce good fruit. ⁴⁴ For every tree is known by its own fruit. For people do not gather figs from thorns or pick grapes from a bramble bush. ⁴⁵ A good person brings forth what is good out of the good treasure in his heart, and an evil person brings forth what is evil out of the evil there. For a person says with his mouth what fills his heart. ⁴⁶ Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ but do not do what I tell you?”

Jesus' teaching about hearing the Word and practising it — Matthew 7:24-27

⁴⁷ “I shall show you what everyone is like who comes to Me, hears My Words and continues to put them into practice. ⁴⁸ He is like a person who was building a house, dug down deep and laid the foundation on the rock. When a flood came, the torrent dashed against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. ⁴⁹ The one who has heard My words but has not put them into practice is like a person who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the torrent dashed against it, it immediately collapsed. The ruin of that house was great.”

7

Jesus' healing of a centurion's servant — Matthew 8:5-13

¹ When Jesus had finished all His sayings to the people who were listening to Him, He entered Capernaum. ² A certain centurion had a slave, who was dear to him and who was sick and about to die. ³ When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him to ask Him to come and heal his slave. ⁴ They came to Jesus and earnestly pleaded with Him, “He deserves to have You do this for him, ⁵ because he

loves our nation and has personally built the synagogue for us.”

⁶ Jesus began to go with them. He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to tell Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself! For I do not deserve that You should come in under my roof. ⁷ That is why I did not think that I was worthy to come to You either. Rather, just give an order, and let my servant be healed! ⁸ For I also am a man placed under authority and I have soldiers under myself. I order one of them, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and another, ‘Come!’ and he comes. I order my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does it.”

⁹ When Jesus heard these words, He was astonished at him. He turned to the crowd that was following Him and said, “I tell you, I have not found such great faith, even in Israel.”

¹⁰ When the messengers returned to the house, they found that the slave was well.

Jesus’ raising of the widow’s son from the dead at Nain

¹¹ Soon after this, Jesus went to a city called Nain, and His disciples and a large crowd were going along with Him. ¹² As He came near the gate of the city, they saw that a dead man was being carried out. He was his mother’s only son, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the city was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and told her, “Stop crying!”

¹⁴ He went up to the open coffin and touched it, and the men who were carrying it stood still. Jesus said, “Young man, I tell you, get up!”

¹⁵ The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus **gave him back to his mother.**

¹⁶ Fear came over them all, and they began to glorify God. They said, “A great prophet has arisen among us,” and “God has visited His people.”

¹⁷ This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the entire surrounding region.

The question of John the Baptist — Matthew 11:2-6

¹⁸ The disciples of John reported to him about all these things. ¹⁹ Then John called two of his disciples and sent them to ask the Lord, “Are You the One who is coming or are we to expect someone else?”

²⁰ The men came to Jesus and said, “John the Baptist has sent us to ask You, ‘Are You the One who is coming or are we to expect someone else?’”

²¹ At that time Jesus had healed many people of their diseases, afflictions and evil spirits and had given sight to many who were blind.

²² Jesus answered, “Go and report to John what you have seen and heard! **Blind people see**, lame people are walking, lepers are made clean, **deaf people hear**, the dead are raised, and **poor people are having the good news** told them. ²³ Blessed is anyone who is not offended because of Me!”

Jesus’ testimony about John the Baptist — Matthew 11:7-19

²⁴ After the messengers of John had left, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the

wind? ²⁵ What, then, did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft robes? No, those who wear splendid clothing and live in luxury are found in kings’ palaces.

²⁶ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is the one about whom Scripture has said: ‘**Look! I am sending My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way before You.**’ ²⁸ I tell you, among those born to women no one is greater than John; but the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

²⁹ When all the people, even the tax-collectors, heard John, they acknowledged that God was right when they were baptised with the baptism of John.

³⁰ However, when the Pharisees and the lawyers were not baptised by John, they rejected God’s purpose for themselves.

³¹ “Therefore, to what shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to one another. They say: ‘We have played the flute for you, but you have not danced. We have sung a funeral song, but you have not wept.’ ³³ For John the Baptist has come, neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ ³⁴ The Son of Man has come, eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Look! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!’ ³⁵ Nevertheless, wisdom is proved right by all her children.”

Jesus’ forgiveness of a sinful woman

³⁶ One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him. Jesus went into the Pharisee’s home and reclined at the table. ³⁷ In the city there was a sinful woman. When she found out He was reclining at a meal at the Pharisee’s home, she brought an alabaster jar of fragrant oil ³⁸ and stood behind Jesus at His feet. She was weeping and began to wet His feet with her tears. Then she used the hair of her head to dry His feet, kissed His feet and poured the fragrant oil on them. ³⁹ The Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this and said to himself, “If this Man were a prophet, He would know who is touching Him and what kind of woman she is, that she is a sinner.”

⁴⁰ Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.”

Simon said, “Teacher, say it.”

⁴¹ “Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they could not pay it back, he freely forgave them both. Therefore, which of them will love him more?”

⁴³ Simon answered, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.”

Jesus told him, “You have judged correctly.”

⁴⁴ Then Jesus turned to the woman and asked Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your home, and you did not give Me any water for My feet, but she

wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss, but since I came in, this woman has not stopped kissing My feet. ⁴⁶ You did not put olive-oil on My head, but she has poured fragrant oil on My feet. ⁴⁷ That is why I tell you that the greatness of her love shows that her many sins have been forgiven. However, he who has little forgiven has only a little love.”

⁴⁸ Then He told her, “Your sins have been forgiven.”

⁴⁹ His fellow guests began to say to themselves, “Who is this Person who even forgives sins?”

⁵⁰ Jesus told the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace!”

8

The women who supported Jesus

¹ After this, Jesus travelled through every city and village, preaching and telling the Good News of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with Him, ² and some women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary, the one called “Magdalene,” from whom seven demons had been cast out, ³ Joanna, the wife of Chusa, the manager of Herod’s household, Susanna and many other women. They used to support Jesus and His disciples from their own means.

Jesus’ parable of the sower — Matthew 13:1-9, Mark 4:1-9

⁴ When a large crowd was gathering and the people were coming to Jesus from every city, He spoke by means of a parable: ⁵ “A sower went out to sow his seed. As he was sowing, some seed fell along the path. It was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it.

⁶ Some fell on rock. When it came up, it withered because it had no moisture. ⁷ Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it.

⁸ However, other seed fell on good soil, came up and yielded a crop a hundred times as much.”

When He said this, He called out, “Let the one who has ears to hear listen!”

Jesus’ reason for speaking in parables — Matthew 13:10-15, Mark 4:10-12

⁹ His disciples asked Him what this parable meant.

¹⁰ He answered, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables, that ‘although **they see** they may **not see** and that although they **hear** they may **not understand**.’

Jesus’ interpretation of the parable of the sower — Matthew 13:18-23, Mark 4:13-20

¹¹ “The parable is this: The seed is the Word of God.

¹² Those people along the path are those who hear. Then the Devil comes and takes the Word out of their hearts that they may not become believers and be saved. ¹³ The people on the rock are those who receive the Word with joy when they hear it and yet these have no root. They believe for a while and in time of temptation they fall away. ¹⁴ The seeds that fell among thorns are those who have heard and yet,

as they go along, they are choked by worries, riches and pleasures of life and do not produce a mature crop. ¹⁵ However, the seeds on the good soil are the

ones who, with a good and honest heart, have heard the Word, retain it and produce a crop with patience.

The comparison of a lamp and the right use of parables — Mark 4:21-25

¹⁶ “No one lights a lamp and covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a lampstand that those who come in may see the light. ¹⁷ For there is nothing secret that will not be made visible, and there is nothing hidden that will not surely be made known and be brought out into the open. ¹⁸ Therefore, be careful how you hear! For whoever has will be given more, and, if anyone does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken away from him.”

Jesus’ declaration about His real brothers — Matthew 12:46-50, Mark 3:31-35

¹⁹ Jesus’ mother and His brothers came to Him but could not get near Him because of the crowd. ²⁰ He was told, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside and want to see You.”

²¹ However, He answered them, “My mother and My brothers are these who are hearing the Word of God and putting it into practice.”

Jesus’ stilling of a storm — Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41

²² On a certain day Jesus and His disciples got into a boat. He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side of the lake!” and they launched out. ²³ However, while they were sailing along He fell asleep. A wind-storm came down on the lake, and they were being swamped and were in danger. ²⁴ They came to Him and woke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are drowning.”

When He was awakened He rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. They subsided, and it became calm.

²⁵ He asked them, “Where is your faith?”

They were afraid and amazed and asked one another, “Who, then, is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?”

Jesus’ healing of a Gadarene demoniac — Matthew 8:28-34, Mark 5:1-20

²⁶ They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷ When Jesus came out onto the shore, a certain man from the city, who was possessed by demons, met Him. He had not worn clothes for a long time and did not stay in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell before Him and shouted, “What do we have in common, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!”

²⁹ For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had been seizing him violently for a long time. He used to be bound with chains and shackles and used to be kept under guard but would tear the chains and be driven by the demon into lonely places.

³⁰ Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

He answered, “Legion,” because many demons had gone into him.

³¹ They kept begging Him not to order them to go into the abyss. ³² There was a herd of many pigs there,

feeding on the mountain. The demons begged Jesus to permit them to go into them, and He permitted them.

³³ The demons came out of the man and went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the cliff into the lake and was drowned. ³⁴ However, when those who had been taking care of the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported it in the city and in the country. ³⁵ People came out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus they found the man from whom the demons had been cast out. He was sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind, and the people were afraid. ³⁶ Those who had seen it told them how the man who had been demon-possessed had been made well. ³⁷ Then the whole crowd from the surrounding region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to go away from them, because they were overcome by great fear. He got into a boat and went back. ³⁸ The man from whom the demons had gone out kept begging Jesus that he might be with Him. However, Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹ "Return home and tell what great things God has done for you!"

The man left and preached throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

Jesus' healing of a woman who was continuously bleeding and His raising of the daughter of Jairus — Matthew 9:18-26, Mark 5:21-43

⁴⁰ When Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed Him. For they were all expecting Him. ⁴¹ Then a man named Jairus, who was a leader of the synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet. He began to plead with Jesus to come to his home, ⁴² because he had an only daughter, who was about twelve years old and was dying. While Jesus was going there, the crowds were pressing against Him.

⁴³ There was a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years. Although she had spent her whole livelihood on doctors, she could not be healed by anyone. ⁴⁴ She came to Him from behind and touched the hem of His garment, and immediately her bleeding stopped. ⁴⁵ Jesus asked, "Who is the one who has touched Me?"

When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds are cramping You in and pressing against You."

⁴⁶ However, Jesus said, "Someone has touched Me. For I have perceived that power has gone out of Me."

⁴⁷ When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell before Him. In front of all the people she told the reason why she had touched Him and how she had been healed immediately. ⁴⁸ He told her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace!"

⁴⁹ While He was still speaking, someone came from the house of the leader of the synagogue. He said, "Your daughter is dead. Do not bother the Teacher any longer!"

⁵⁰ When Jesus heard this, He answered him, "Stop being afraid! Only believe, and she will be saved."

⁵¹ When He arrived at the house, He did not permit anyone to go in with Him except Peter, John, James and the child's father and mother. ⁵² People were all weeping and mourning for her. However, He said, "Stop weeping! For she has not died but is sleeping."

⁵³ They ridiculed Him, because they knew that she had died. ⁵⁴ However, He took hold of her hand and called out, "Girl, arise!"

⁵⁵ Her spirit returned, and she got up immediately, and Jesus ordered that she should be given something to eat. ⁵⁶ Her parents were astonished, but He ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

9

Jesus' sending out of the twelve — Matthew 10:1-12, Mark 6:5-13

¹ Jesus called the Twelve together and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases. ² He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³ He told them, "Do not take anything for the journey, no staff, no bag, no bread and no money! Do not take two tunics each!

⁴ Whenever you go into a house, stay there and leave from there! ⁵ As for all who do not welcome you, when you go out of that city, shake the dust off your feet as a witness against them!"

⁶ They left and passed through from village to village, telling the Good News and healing people everywhere.

Herod's opinion of Jesus — Matthew 14:1-2, Mark 6:14-16

⁷ Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening and was perplexed, because some people were saying that John had risen from the dead. ⁸ It was being said by some that Elijah had appeared and by others that one of the other prophets of long ago had risen.

⁹ Herod said, "I have beheaded John. However, who is this about whom I am hearing such things?"

He kept trying to see Jesus.

Jesus' feeding of five thousand men — Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, John 6:1-14

¹⁰ The apostles came back and told Jesus all that they had done. He took them with Him and withdrew in private to a city called Bethsaida. ¹¹ However, when the crowds found out about it, they followed Him. He welcomed them, began to speak to them about the kingdom of God and was healing those who needed healing. ¹² The day began to decline, and the Twelve came to Him and told Him, "Send the crowd away, that they may go to the villages and farms round about, get lodging and find food! For here we are in a remote place."

¹³ He told them, "You give them something to eat!" However, they answered, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps we go and buy food for all these people."

¹⁴ For there were about five thousand men. Then He told His disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each!"

¹⁵ The disciples did this and made them all sit down.

¹⁶ He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them, broke them and kept giving them to the disciples to set them before the crowd.

¹⁷ All of them had enough to eat. Twelve baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over by them were also taken up.

Peter's confession of Jesus at Caesarea Philippi — Matthew 16:13-20, Mark 8:27-30

¹⁸ Once when Jesus was alone praying, His disciples were with Him, and He asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”

¹⁹ They answered Him, “John the Baptist. Others say that You are Elijah, and still others say that one of the other ancient prophets has come back to life.”

²⁰ He asked them, “You, however, who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

²¹ He strictly warned them and commanded them not to tell this to anyone.

Jesus' first explicit prediction of His passion — Matthew 16:21-23, Mark 8:31-33

²² He said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, Chief Priests and scribes, be killed and be raised on the third day.”

The conditions of discipleship — Matthew 16:24-28, Mark 8:34-9:1

²³ He went on to tell them all, “If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross every day and follow Me! ²⁴ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. ²⁵ For what good does it do a person to gain the whole world and lose himself or forfeit himself? ²⁶ For, if anyone is ashamed of Me and My Words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷ However, I tell you truly, there are some of those who are standing here who will certainly not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”

Jesus' transfiguration — Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8

²⁸ About eight days after He said this, Jesus took Peter, John and James with Him and went up the mountain to pray. ²⁹ While He was praying, the appearance of His face changed, and His clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰ Suddenly two men were talking with Him. They were Moses and Elijah. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were talking about His departure, which He was about to make come true at Jerusalem.

³² Peter and the men with him had been overcome by sleep. When they woke up, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him. ³³ When these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah!”

He did not realise what he was saying. ³⁴ While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them. They were frightened as they went into the cloud. ³⁵ Then a voice came out of the cloud: “This is

My Son, whom I have chosen. Listen to Him!”

³⁶ When the voice had spoken, there was Jesus all alone. The disciples kept quiet about this and, in those days, they did not tell anything of what they had seen.

Jesus' healing of an epileptic boy with an evil spirit — Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:14-29

³⁷ The next day, after they had come down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him. ³⁸ Suddenly a man from the crowd called out, “Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, because he is my only child. ³⁹ You see, a spirit takes hold of him, and he suddenly screams. It throws him into convulsions, and he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and it bruises him. ⁴⁰ I begged Your disciples to drive it out, but they could not.”

⁴¹ Jesus answered, “O you unbelieving and perverted generation! How long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here!”

⁴² While the boy was still coming, the demon flung him to the ground and threw him into convulsions. However, Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father. ⁴³ They were all amazed at the majesty of God.

Jesus' second explicit prediction of His passion — Matthew 17:22-23, Mark 9:30-32

While they were all marvelling at all the things that Jesus was doing, He told His disciples, ⁴⁴ “As for you, put these Words into your ears! For the Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.”

⁴⁵ However, they did not understand this saying. It had been hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

A dispute among the disciples about greatness — Matthew 18:1-5, Mark 9:33-37

⁴⁶ An argument began among them about which of them was the greatest. ⁴⁷ However, because Jesus knew the thoughts of their hearts, He took a little child, set him beside Him, ⁴⁸ and told them, “Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me. Moreover, whoever receives Me receives the One who has sent Me. For the one who is least among you all is the one who is the greatest.”

Jesus' comment about an exorcist who did not belong to the twelve — Mark 9:38-41

⁴⁹ John replied, “Master, we saw a man casting out demons in Your name and tried to stop him, because he is not a follower together with us.”

⁵⁰ However, Jesus told him, “Do not try to stop him! For the one who is not against you is for you.”

Jesus' journey from Galilee to Jerusalem (9:51-19:27)

His refusal to harm a Samaritan village for refusing to welcome Him

⁵¹ As the time was coming nearer for Jesus to be taken up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.

⁵² He sent messengers ahead of Him. They went and entered a village of the Samaritans to get things ready for Him. ⁵³ However, the people did not welcome Him, because He was journeying with His face toward Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ When His disciples James and John saw this, they asked, “Lord, do You want us to command **fire to come down from heaven and destroy them?”**

⁵⁵ However, Jesus turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶ Then Jesus and His disciples went on to another village.

Jesus' response to claimants to discipleship — Matthew 8:19-22

⁵⁷ While they were walking along the road, someone told Jesus, "I shall follow You wherever You go."

⁵⁸ However, Jesus told him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head."

⁵⁹ He told another man, "Follow Me!"

However, he said, "Lord, first permit me to go back and bury my father!"

⁶⁰ Jesus told him, "Let the dead bury their own dead! Rather, you go and proclaim the kingdom of God!"

⁶¹ Another man also said, "I shall follow You, Lord, but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home!"

⁶² Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

10

Jesus' sending out of the seventy-two

¹ After this the Lord appointed seventy-two other men and sent them out in pairs to go ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was intending to go.

² He told them, "The harvest is great, but the labourers are few. Therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest! ³ Go! Look! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴ Do not carry a purse or a bag or sandals and do not greet anyone on the road! ⁵ Whenever you go into a house, first say, 'Peace to this house!' ⁶ If a man of peace is there, let your peace rest on him, but, if not, it will return to you. ⁷ Stay in the same house and eat and drink what they give! For a worker is worthy of his wages. Do not move around from one house to another!

⁸ Whenever you go into a city and the people welcome you, eat what is set before you! ⁹ Heal the sick that are in it and tell the people, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you'! ¹⁰ However, whenever you go into a city and they do not welcome you, go out on its streets and say, ¹¹ 'We are wiping off against you even the dust of your city that has clung to our feet! Nevertheless, realise this: The kingdom of God has come near you'!

¹² I tell you, on that day it will be more bearable for Sodom than for that city. ¹³ How terrible for you, Chorazin! How terrible for you, Bethsaida! For, if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

¹⁴ However, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. ¹⁵ As for you, Capernaum, you will not be **lifted up to heaven**, will you? **You will go down to Hades.** ¹⁶ The person who hears you hears Me, and the person who rejects you rejects Me. The person who rejects Me rejects the One who has sent Me."

The return of the seventy-two men to Jesus

¹⁷ The seventy-two men returned with joy. They said,

"Lord, even the demons do what we tell them in Your name."

¹⁸ He replied to them, "I was watching Satan falling like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Look! I have given you the authority to **trample on snakes** and scorpions and on all the power of the enemy, and nothing at all will harm you. ²⁰ However, do not rejoice because the spirits are subordinate to you! Rather, rejoice that your names have been written in heaven!"

Jesus' thanksgiving to the Father — Matthew 11:25-27

²¹ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from wise and intelligent people and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, because this has been Your gracious purpose. ²² All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal Him."

Jesus' declaration about the blessedness of the disciples — Matthew 13:16-17

²³ Jesus turned to His disciples and told them privately: "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see! ²⁴ For I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you are seeing but have not seen them and to hear the things that you are hearing but have not heard them."

Jesus' response to a lawyer's question — compare Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-31

²⁵ On one occasion a certain lawyer stood up to test Jesus. He asked, "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ Jesus asked him, "What do the Scriptures say in the Law? How do you read it?"

²⁷ He answered, "'**You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength** and with all your mind,' and '**You shall love your neighbour as yourself!**'"

²⁸ Jesus told him, "You have answered correctly. Continue to **do this and you will live!**"

²⁹ However, the lawyer wanted to justify himself. So, he asked Jesus, "Who, then, is my neighbour?"

Jesus' parable about the good Samaritan

³⁰ Jesus answered: "A certain man was going from Jerusalem down to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, struck him blow after blow and went away, leaving him half-dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down that road, but, when he saw him, he went past on the other side. ³² When a Levite came to the place he too did the same thing. He looked at him and went past on the other side.

³³ However, as a certain Samaritan was travelling, he came on the man. When he saw him, he felt sorry for him. ³⁴ He went over to him, poured olive-oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, 'Take care of him! When I return I shall pay you back

for whatever else you spend on him.’

³⁶ “Which one of those three, do you think, has been a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?”

³⁷ He said, “The one who has shown mercy to him.” Jesus told him, “You, too, go and keep doing as he did!”

Jesus’ statement about the one thing needful in the home of Martha and Mary

³⁸ As they were on their journey, Jesus entered a certain village, where a woman by the name of Martha welcomed Him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister by the name of Mary, who also kept sitting at the Lord’s feet, listening to His Word. ⁴⁰ However, Martha was distracted with much serving. She came and asked, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do the serving alone? Tell her to help me, then!”

⁴¹ The Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Yes, Mary has chosen that better part, and it will not be taken away from her.”

11

Jesus’ teaching of the Lord’s Prayer — Matthew 6:9-13

¹ Once Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He had finished, one of His disciples asked Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples!”

² He told them, “When you pray, say: ‘Our Father in heaven,

‘May Your name be kept holy!

‘May Your kingdom come!

³ ‘Give us day by day our daily bread!

⁴ ‘Forgive us our sins! For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

‘Do not lead us into temptation!’”

Jesus’ parable about a friend at midnight

⁵ He also asked them, “Which of you will have a friend and will go to him at midnight and ask him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ⁶ because a friend of mine on a journey has just come to my house, and I have nothing to set before him?’ ⁷ If he answers from inside: ‘Stop bothering me! The door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything,’ ⁸ I tell you, although he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet, because he persists, he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Jesus’ teaching about God’s answer to prayer — Matthew 7:7-13

⁹ “I also tell you: Keep asking! It will be given to you. Keep searching! You will find. Keep knocking! The door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who continues to ask receives, and he who continues to search finds, and to him who continues to knock the door will be opened.

¹¹ “Which father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will he give him a scorpion?

¹³ Therefore, if you, although you are wicked, know

how to give your children good gifts, how much more will your Father from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

An accusation of the Pharisees and the controversy about Beelzebul — Matthew 12:22-30, Mark 3:22-27

¹⁴ Jesus was casting out a demon, and it could not talk. After the demon had gone out, the man who had been unable to talk began to speak and the crowds were amazed. ¹⁵ However, some of them said, “He is casting out the demons by Beelzebul, the ruler over the demons.”

¹⁶ Others, testing Him, were trying to get from Him a miraculous sign from heaven. ¹⁷ Since He knew their thoughts, He told them, “Every kingdom that has been divided against itself is ruined, and a family that has been divided against a family falls. ¹⁸ If Satan also has been divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you are saying that I am casting out the demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ Moreover, if I am casting out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges. ²⁰ Nevertheless, if I am driving out the demons by the Finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come on you.

²¹ “Whenever the strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are secure. ²² However, when someone stronger than he attacks him and defeats him, he takes away his full armour, in which he had been trusting, and divides the spoils.

²³ “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who is not gathering with Me is scattering.

The return of the evil spirit — Matthew 12:43-45

²⁴ “When the unclean spirit is cast out of a person, it goes through dry places, looking for rest. When it does not find it, then it says, ‘I shall return to my house, from which I have come out.’ ²⁵ When it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and fetches with it seven other spirits that are more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there, and the last condition of that person is worse than the first.”

Jesus’ declaration about the blessedness of those who hear the Word

²⁷ While Jesus was saying these things, a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that gave birth to You, and the breasts that You have sucked!”

²⁸ However, He said, “Rather, blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it!”

Jesus’ warning against trying to see miraculous signs — Matthew 12:38-42, Mark 8:11-12

²⁹ While the crowds were gathering even more, He began to say, “This is a wicked generation. It is trying to get a miraculous sign, and a miraculous sign will not be given to it except the miraculous sign of Jonah.

³⁰ For, as Jonah became a miraculous sign to the people of Nineveh, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation. ³¹ The Queen of the South will stand up at the judgment with the men of this generation and will condemn them, because she came from the ends of the

earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and look! Something greater than Solomon is here. ³² The men of Nineveh will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah. and look! Something greater than Jonah is here.

Jesus comparison with light — Matthew 5:14-16, Matthew 6:22-28, Mark 4:21

³³ “No one lights a lamp and puts it in a cellar or under the grain-measure but on the lampstand, that those who come in may see the light. ³⁴ Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is sound, your whole body also is full of light. However, when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

³⁵ Therefore, take heed that the light that is in you is not darkness! ³⁶ Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, without any part of it being dark, your whole body will be full of light as when a lamp shines on you with its light.”

Jesus' warnings about the Pharisees and the lawyers — Matthew 23:13-39, Mark 12:38-39

³⁷ When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited Him to eat a meal with him. He went in and reclined at the table. ³⁸ However, the Pharisee was astonished when he saw that Jesus did not first wash before the meal. ³⁹ The Lord told him, “Now, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but the inside of you is full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰ You foolish people! Has not the One who has made the outside also made the inside? ⁴¹ Rather, give the things that are on the inside as a gift to help the poor! Then, you see, everything is clean for you.

⁴² “However, how terrible for you Pharisees! For you give a tenth of mint, rue and every other garden herb and yet you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practised the latter things without leaving the former things undone!

⁴³ “How terrible for you Pharisees! For you love the most important seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces.

⁴⁴ “How terrible for you! For you are like the unmarked graves People who walk over them without being aware of them.”

⁴⁵ One of the lawyers replied to Him, “Teacher, when You say these things You are insulting us also.”

⁴⁶ Jesus said, “How terrible for you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens that are hard to carry and yet you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.

⁴⁷ “How terrible for you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and it was your fathers who killed them.

⁴⁸ Therefore, you are witnesses that you approve of what your fathers did, because they killed them, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹ Because of this, the wisdom of God has also said: ‘I shall send to them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill or persecute,’ ⁵⁰ with the result that this generation will have to answer for the blood of all the prophets that has

been shed from the foundation of the world, ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah, who was killed between the altar and the Temple. Yes, I tell you, this generation will have to answer for it.

⁵² “How terrible for you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You have not gone in yourselves and you have hindered those who were entering.”

⁵³ When Jesus had gone out from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be fiercely hostile to Him and to try to catch Him in many things that He said,

⁵⁴ lying in wait for Him, to trap Him in something He might say.

12

Jesus' warning about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees

¹ Meanwhile, after a crowd of many thousands had come together to Him, so that they were trampling on one another, Jesus began to speak first to His disciples: “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy!

An exhortation to fearless confession — Matthew 10:19-20, 26-33, Mark 3:28-29

² “There is nothing that has been completely concealed that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known. ³ Therefore, everything that you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have said in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. ⁴ However, I tell you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that there is nothing more that they can do! ⁵ However, I shall show you the One whom you are to fear. Fear Him who, after He has killed, has the authority to cast into hell! Yes, I tell you, fear Him!

⁶ “Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Nevertheless, not one of them has been forgotten before God.

⁷ However, even the hairs on your heads have all been counted! Stop being afraid! You are worth more than many sparrows. ⁸ I tell you, if anyone confesses Me before other people, the Son of Man will also confess him before the angels of God. ⁹ However, he who denies Me before other people will be denied before the angels of God. ¹⁰ Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but he who has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

¹¹ “When people bring you in before synagogues, rulers and other authorities, do not begin to worry about how you are to defend yourselves or what you are to say! ¹² For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you must say.”

Jesus' parable about a rich fool

¹³ Someone in the crowd asked Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me!”

¹⁴ Jesus asked him, “Man, who appointed Me to be a judge or an arbitrator over you?”

¹⁵ Then He told them, “Beware and be on your guard

against all greed! For a person's life does not consist in how plentiful his possessions are."

16 Then Jesus told them a parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 He thought to himself, 'What am I to do? For I have no place to store my produce.'

18 "Then he said, 'This is what I shall do: I shall pull down my barns and build bigger ones and shall store my grain and all my other goods in them. 19 Then I shall say to myself, "Soul, you have many good things stored up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink and enjoy yourself!"'

20 "However, God said to him, 'You fool, this very night your life will be demanded of you. Then who will get the things that you have prepared?'"

21 Jesus said, "So is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

Jesus' teaching about worry — Matthew 6:19-21, 26-33

22 Jesus said to His disciples: "Therefore, I tell you: Stop worrying about your lives, what you are to eat or about your bodies, what you are to wear! 23 For life is a greater thing than food, and the body is a greater thing than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens! They do not sow or reap. They have no storeroom or barn, and yet God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds? 25 Which of you by worrying can add an hour to his length of life? 26 Therefore, if you cannot do even the smallest thing, why do you worry about the rest? 27 Consider how the lilies grow! They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.

28 If that is how God clothes the grass, which is in the field today and tomorrow is thrown into an oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith!

29 You also, stop trying to get what you are to eat and what you are to drink and stop being anxious! 30 For all the nations of the world search for these things, but your Father knows that you need them. 31 Rather, be eager to have His kingdom! These things will be given to you as well.

32 "Stop being afraid, little flock! For your Father has considered it good to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor! Make yourselves purses that do not wear out, a treasure that will never be used up, in heaven, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys! 34 For your heart will also be where your treasure is.

Jesus' admonitions to be watchful and faithful — Matthew 24:43-51, Mark 13:35-36

35 "Be dressed for action and have your lamps burning! 36 Be like people who are waiting for their master when he comes back from the wedding feast, so that, when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open the door for him! 37 Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find wide-awake when he comes! Truly, I tell you, he will dress himself for work, have them recline at the table and will come

and wait on them. 38 If he comes even in the second watch or even in the third watch and finds them like that, blessed are they! 39 Be aware of this, that if the owner of a house had known at what hour the burglar was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into! 40 You also, be ready! For the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him."

41 Peter asked, "Lord, are You telling this parable to us or also to all people?"

42 The Lord said, "Who, then, is the trustworthy and sensible manager whom the master will put in charge of his other servants, to give them their food-allowance at the right time? 43 Blessed is that slave whom his master will find doing this when he comes! 44 Truly, I tell you that he will put him in charge of all his property. 45 However, if that slave says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time to come,' and begins to beat the male and female servants and to eat and drink and get drunk, 46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he is not expecting him and at an hour about which he is not aware. He will cut him in two and assign him his place with those who cannot be trusted.

Jesus' teaching about what is required from a servant

47 "That slave who has known what his master has wanted and has not prepared or done what he has wanted will be beaten with many blows. 48 However, he who has not known and has done things for which he has deserved to be beaten will be beaten with few blows. Much will be required from everyone who has been given much; and, if people have entrusted much to someone, they will require more from him.

Jesus' warning that He causes division and His criticism of the inability of His generation to discern its crucial time — Matthew 10:34-36, Matthew 16:2-3, Mark 10:38

49 "I have come to set fire on the earth, and how I wish it had already been kindled! 50 I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how troubled I am until it is completed! 51 Do you think that I have come to give peace on the earth? No, I tell you but rather, division. 52 For from now on there will be five in one family who have been divided, three against two, and two against three. 53 A father will be divided against a son, and **a son against a father**, a mother against her daughter, and **a daughter against her mother**, a mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and **a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.**"

54 Jesus also told the crowds, "When you see the cloud coming up in the west, you immediately say, 'A rainstorm is coming,' and that is what happens. 55 In addition, when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'It will be a hot day,' and it is. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to discern the appearance of the earth and of the sky. How is it that you do not know how to discern this present time? 57 Why, even for yourselves, do you not judge what is right?"

Jesus' teaching about the need to be reconciled with an adversary — Mat-

thew 5:23-26

58 “For, when you are going with your opponent in a lawsuit before a magistrate, try hard to come to a settlement with him on the way, that he may not drag you off before the judge and the judge may not throw you over to the officer and the officer may not throw you into prison! 59 I tell you, you will certainly not get out of there until you have paid the very last cent.”

13

Jesus' exhortation to repentance

1 At that time some people were present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 Jesus answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way?

3 I tell you, no. However, unless you repent, you too will all perish in a similar way. 4 Or do you think that those eighteen who were killed when the tower at Siloam fell on them were guiltier than all the other people who were living in Jerusalem were? 5 I tell you, no; but, unless you repent, you will all perish in the same way.”

Jesus' teaching about God's patience and its limits

6 Jesus told them this parable: “A man had a fig tree that had been planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it but did not find any. 7 He told the man who worked the vineyard, ‘Look here! For the last three years I have been coming here looking for fruit on this fig tree and have not been finding any. Therefore, cut it down! Why does it keep using up the ground?’

8 “However, the man answered him, ‘Sir, allow it to stand this year also, until I dig around it and put fertiliser on it! 9 If the tree bears fruit in future, fine. However, if it does not, you will cut it down.’”

Jesus' healing of a woman who had been sick for eighteen years

10 Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath, 11 and a woman was there whom a spirit had caused to be unwell for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. 12 When Jesus saw her, He called her to Himself and told her, “Woman you have been set free from your sickness.”

13 He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight and began to glorify God.

14 However, the ruler of the synagogue responded with indignation that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. He kept telling the crowd, “There are six days in which people ought to work. So, come on those days and be healed and not on the Sabbath day!”

15 The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Does not each of you untie his ox or donkey from its stall on the Sabbath and lead it out to give it a drink? 16 Should not this woman, who is a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has tied up for eighteen whole years, be untied on the Sabbath day from this thing that has tied her up?”

17 As He said this, all His opponents were put to

shame, but all the crowd began to rejoice over all the glorious things that were being done by Him.

Jesus' parable about the mustard seed — Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32

18 Then Jesus went on to say, “What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it? 19 It is like a mustard seed that a man took and put in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and **the birds of the sky nested in its branches.**”

Jesus' parable about yeast — Matthew 13:33

20 He asked again, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? 21 It is like yeast, which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened.”

Jesus' admonition to enter through the narrow door, a warning about false confidence in being Israelites and a promise of God's grace to Gentiles

22 Jesus was travelling through each of the cities and villages and teaching as He was making the journey to Jerusalem. 23 Someone asked Him, “Lord, are there only few who are saved?”

He told them: 24 “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door! For, I tell you, many will try to enter and not be able to. 25 After the Owner of the house gets up and closes the door, and after you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open it for us!’ He will answer you, ‘I do not know you or where you are from.’ 26 Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ 27 However, He will tell you, ‘I do not know you or where you are from. **Go away from Me, all you evildoers!**’ 28 There will be weeping there and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and see yourselves being thrown out. 29 People will also come **from the east and the west** and from the north and the south and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. 30 Indeed, there are those who are last who will be first, and there are those who are first who will be last.”

Jesus' departure from Galilee

31 Right at that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and told Him, “Leave here and go away! For Herod wants to kill You.”

32 He answered them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Look! Today and tomorrow I am driving out demons and working healings and on the third day I shall be perfected!’ 33 Nevertheless I must be on My way today, tomorrow and the next day, because it is impossible that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

Jesus' lament over Jerusalem — compare Matthew 23:37-39

34 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one that kills the prophets and stones those who have been sent to it! How often I have wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you have not been willing! 35 Look! **Your house is abandoned** to your disadvantage. I also tell you, you certainly will not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!**’”

14

Jesus' healing of a man with dropsy

¹ On a Sabbath Jesus went to the home of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat a meal, and they were watching Him closely. ² He saw a man in front of Him who had dropsy. ³ Jesus asked the lawyers and Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?"

⁴ However, they remained silent. Jesus took hold of the man, healed him and sent him away. ⁵ Then He asked them, "Which of you, whose son or ox falls into a well, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?"

⁶ They could not answer this.

Jesus' teaching about humility

⁷ Then He began to tell a parable to those who had been invited, since He noticed how the guests were trying to choose the places of honour: ⁸ "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the place of honour! It may be that he has invited a person who is more distinguished than you are. ⁹ Then he who has invited him and you will tell you, 'Give this man your place!' and then with shame you will begin to take the last place. ¹⁰ However, when you are invited, go and sit down in the last place, and so when your host comes he will tell you, 'Friend, move up higher!' Then you will be honoured in the presence of all the fellow guests who are sitting with you. ¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

¹² Then He told the man who had invited Him, "When you give a meal or a dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers, your relatives or your rich neighbours, to avoid having them invite you back and repaying you! ¹³ Rather, when you give a banquet, invite poor people, crippled people, lame people and blind people. ¹⁴ Then you will be blessed, because they have nothing with which to pay you back. For you will be paid back when those who are righteous rise from the dead."

Jesus' parable about the great supper

¹⁵ When one of those who were reclining at table with Jesus heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is the person who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

¹⁶ Jesus told him: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many people. ¹⁷ When it was time for the banquet, he sent his slave to tell those who had been invited, 'Come! For everything is now ready.'

¹⁸ "Then they all alike began to excuse themselves. The first told him, 'I have bought a field and must go out to see it. I ask you, have me excused!'

¹⁹ "Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen and am on my way to try them out. I ask you, have me excused!'

²⁰ "Another said, 'I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come.'

²¹ "The slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and told his slave, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the city and bring in here poor people, crippled people, blind people and lame people!'

²² "The slave said, 'Master, what you have ordered has been done and there is still room.'

²³ "Then the master told the slave, 'Go out to the roads and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled! ²⁴ For I tell you that none of those men who had been invited will taste my banquet.'"

The conditions of discipleship — Matthew 10:37-38

²⁵ Large crowds were travelling with Jesus. He turned to them and said, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, yes and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate what it will cost, to see if he has enough to finish it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and cannot finish the building, all who watch him might begin to make fun of him, ³⁰ and say, 'This man began to build but could not finish it.' ³¹ Or what king, on his way to make war against another king, does not first sit down and consider whether with ten thousand men he can oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? ³² Otherwise, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation to ask for terms of peace. ³³ In the same way, therefore, whoever of you does not give up everything that he has cannot be My disciple. ³⁴ Therefore, salt is good. However, if salt loses its taste, how will it be seasoned? ³⁵ It is no good either for the soil or for the manure pile. People throw it away. He who has ears to hear should listen!"

15

Jesus' parable about the lost sheep — Matthew 18:12-14

¹ All the tax-collectors and other sinners were coming to Jesus to hear Him. ² However, the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled and said, "This Man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ He told them this parable: ⁴ "Which man among you who has a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the other ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until he finds it? ⁵ When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and is glad.

⁶ He goes home, calls his friends and neighbours together and tells them, 'Be happy with me! For I have found my lost sheep.' ⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who do not need to repent.

Jesus' parable about the lost coin

⁸ "Or which woman who has ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house

and look for it carefully until she finds it? ⁹ When she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbours together and says, 'Be happy with me! For I have found the coin that I lost.' ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Jesus' parable about the lost son

¹¹ Jesus said: "A certain man had two sons. ¹² The younger one of them asked his father, 'Father, give me my share of the property!' So, he divided his property between them. ¹³ Not many days later the younger son got together all he had and left home for a distant country and there he wasted his possessions in wild living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ He went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill up on the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one would give him anything. ¹⁷ When he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have plenty of bread, and here I am starving to death. ¹⁸ I shall get up and go to my father and tell him, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I do not deserve to be called your son any longer. Make me one of your hired men!"'"

²⁰ "So, he got up and went to his father. While he was still far away, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran, fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ The son told him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against you. I do not deserve to be called your son any longer.'

²² "The father told his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe, the best one, and put it on him! Put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet! ²³ Bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and begin to celebrate! ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and has come to life again. He was lost and has been found.' They began to celebrate.

The resentment of the elder brother

²⁵ "His elder son was in the field. As he was coming in and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the servants and asked what this meant.

²⁷ "The servant answered, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.'

²⁸ "However, the elder brother became angry and would not go in. His father came out and pleaded with him.

²⁹ "However, he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I have been working like a slave for you and have never disobeyed a command of yours, and yet you have never given me a little goat to celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ However, as soon as this son of yours has come back, who has squandered your property with prostitutes, you have killed the fattened calf for

him.'

³¹ "The father told him, 'Son, you are always with me, and everything that I have is yours; ³² but we had to celebrate and be glad. For this brother of yours was dead and has come to life. He was lost and has been found.'"

16

Jesus' parable about a shrewd manager

¹ Then Jesus also told His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a manager, and allegations were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. ² He called the manager and asked him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your management! For you cannot be manager any longer.'

³ "The manager said to himself, 'What am I to do? For my master is taking my position as manager away from me. I am not strong enough to dig, I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have realised what I should do, so that, when I am dismissed from my position as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.'

⁵ "So, he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first one, 'How much do you owe my master?'

⁶ "He answered, 'Three thousand litres of olive-oil.'

"The manager said, 'Take your bill and sit down quickly and write "one thousand, five hundred!"'

⁷ "Then he asked another, 'How much do you owe?'

"He answered, 'Thirty tonnes of wheat.'

"The manager told him, 'Take your bill and write, "Twenty-four!"'

⁸ "The master praised the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are shrewder than the people of the light in dealing with their own kind of people. ⁹ I also tell you: Make friends for yourselves with unrighteous mammon, so that, when it runs out, they may welcome you into the eternal dwellings! ¹⁰ The person who is trustworthy in what is least is also trustworthy in much. The person who is unjust in what is least is also unjust in much.

¹¹ Therefore, if you have not been trustworthy with unrighteous mammon, who will trust you with what is genuine? ¹² If you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? ¹³ No household slave can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other or he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees' hypocrisy

¹⁴ The Pharisees, who were fond of money, heard all this and began to sneer at Jesus. ¹⁵ He told them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God.

Jesus' teaching about the Law and the prophets — Matthew 11:12-13, Matthew 5:18

¹⁶ "The Law and the Prophets were until John. Since

then the good news of the kingdom of God is being told, and everyone is forcing his way into it.

17 “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one small part of a letter to drop out of the Law.

Jesus’ teaching about divorce — Matthew 5:12

18 “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another is committing adultery. The man who marries a woman who has been divorced from her husband is also committing adultery.

Jesus’ contrast between a rich man and Lazarus

19 “A certain man was rich. He used to dress in purple and fine linen and enjoyed himself splendidly every day. ²⁰ A certain beggar by the name of Lazarus had been laid at his gate. He was covered with ulcers, ²¹ and longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs used to come and lick his ulcers. ²² The beggar died, and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades he looked up, as he was being tormented and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus at his side. ²⁴ He called, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue! For I am in agony in this flame.’

²⁵ “However, Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that you received your good things in your lifetime, while Lazarus received bad things! However, now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶ Besides all these things, a great chasm has been fixed between us and you, so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot, and people cannot cross over from there to us.’

²⁷ “He answered, ‘Therefore, I ask you, father, to send Lazarus to my father’s family. ²⁸ For I have five brothers. Let him warn them, that they also may not come to this place of torture!’

²⁹ “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets. They should listen to them!’

³⁰ “He said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’

³¹ “Abraham answered him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

17

Jesus’ warning about causing others to stumble — Matthew 18:6-7, Mark 9:42

¹ Jesus told His disciples, “It is impossible that things that cause people to stumble will not come, but how terrible for the person through whom they do come!

² It would be better for him if a large millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble.

Jesus’ teaching about forgiving others — Matthew 18:15, 21-22

³ “Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and, if he repents, forgive him! ⁴ If he sins against you seven times in a day and comes back to you seven

times and says, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him!”

Jesus’ teaching about faith — Matthew 17:20

⁵ Then the apostles asked the Lord, “Increase our faith!”

⁶ The Lord said, “If you have faith like a mustard seed, you would tell this mulberry tree, ‘Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea!’ and it would obey you.

Jesus’ teaching that doing one’s duty does not earn reward

⁷ “Which of you who has a slave ploughing or looking after sheep will tell him, when he comes in from the field, ‘Come here at once and sit down to eat!’?”

⁸ Rather, will he not tell him, ‘Get dinner ready for me! Tuck your clothes up and wait on me while I eat and drink! After that you may eat and drink’? ⁹ He does not thank the slave for doing what he has been ordered to do, does he? ¹⁰ When you have done everything you have been ordered to do, you also should say, ‘We are worthless slaves. We have only done what our duty was to do.’”

Jesus’ healing of ten lepers and the return of one of them to thank Him

¹¹ As Jesus was travelling to Jerusalem, He went along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As He was entering a village, ten men who were lepers came toward Him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out aloud, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

¹⁴ When Jesus saw them, He told them, “Go! **Show yourselves to the priests!**”

As they went, they were made clean. ¹⁵ When one of them saw that he had been healed, he came back, loudly glorifying God. ¹⁶ He fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, thanking Him; and he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, “Were not the ten made clean? Where are the other nine? ¹⁸ Has no one been found to return and give glory to God except this foreigner?”

¹⁹ Then Jesus told him, “Get up and go! Your faith has saved you.”

Jesus’ teaching about the coming of the kingdom of God — Matthew 24:23, Mark 13:21

²⁰ Jesus was asked by the Pharisees, “When will the kingdom of God come?”

He answered them, “The kingdom of God does not come in such a way that people can observe it. ²¹ Nor will people say, ‘Look! Here it is,’ or ‘There it is.’ For, indeed, the kingdom of God is in your midst.”

The day of the Son of Man — Matthew 24:26-28, 37-41, Matthew 10:39, Matthew 24:40, 28

²² He told His disciples, “The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man and you will not see it. ²³ People will tell you, ‘Look! There!’ or ‘Look! Here!’ Do not go off or follow them. ²⁴ For the Son of Man in His day will be like the lightning, which flashes out of one part under the sky and shines to the other part under the sky.

²⁵ However, first He must suffer much and be rejected by this generation. ²⁶ In the days of the Son of Man it will be as it was in the days of Noah. ²⁷ People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in mar-

riage until the day when **Noah went into the ark**, and **the flood came** and destroyed them all. ²⁸ Likewise, it will be as it was in the days of Lot: people were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹ However, on the day when Lot went out of Sodom, **fire and sulphur rained from heaven and destroyed** them all. ³⁰ That is what it will be like on the day when the Son of Man is revealed. ³¹ On that day, the person who is on the roof of his house and has his goods in the house should not come down to fetch them! Likewise, the person who is in the field should not **turn back!** ³² Remember **Lot's wife!** ³³ Whoever tries to preserve his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will keep it alive. ³⁴ I tell you, on that night there will be two people in one bed, the one will be taken and the other will be left. ³⁵ Two women will be grinding grain at the same place, the one will be taken and the other will be left.” *176

³⁷ People asked Him, “Where, Lord?” He told them, “Where the body is, there too the vultures will gather.”

18

Jesus' parable about the unjust judge

¹ Then Jesus told them a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up: ² He said: “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God or respect people. ³ There was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Get justice for me against my adversary!’ ⁴ For some time he refused. However, afterwards he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God or respect a human being either, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I shall secure justice for her, that she may not finally wear me out by her coming.’”

⁶ Then the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says! ⁷ Will God also not surely get justice for His elect, who cry out to Him for help day and night? Does He then delay a long time to help them? ⁸ I tell you, He will quickly get justice for them. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

Jesus' parable about the Pharisee and the tax-collector

⁹ Jesus also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised everyone else: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other a tax-collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed this about himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: robbers, wrongdoers, adulterers or even like this tax-collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all my income.’ ¹³ However, the tax-collector, standing at a distance, did not even want to look up to heaven but kept beating his chest and saying, ‘God, be propitiated to me, the sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man, rather than the other, went home justified. For every-

one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Jesus' reception of little children — Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16

¹⁵ People were bringing even the infants to Jesus that He might touch them. When the disciples saw it, they began to rebuke them. ¹⁶ However, Jesus called the infants to Him and said, “Let the little children come to Me and do not forbid them! For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ Truly, I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will certainly not enter it.”

Jesus' answer to a rich young leader's question — Matthew 19:16-30, Mark 10:17-31

¹⁸ A certain ruler asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁹ Jesus asked him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, God. ²⁰ You know the Commandments: ‘**Do not commit adultery!**’ ‘**Do not murder!**’ ‘**Do not steal!**’ ‘**Do not give false testimony!**’ ‘**Honour your father and mother!**’”

²¹ He said, “I have been keeping all these since I was young.”

²² When Jesus heard this, He told him, “You still lack one thing: Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor! You will have treasure in heaven. Then come here and follow Me!”

²³ When he heard this, he became very sad. For he was extremely rich.

²⁴ When Jesus saw that he had become very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ Those who heard Him asked, “Then who can be saved?”

²⁷ However, Jesus said, “The things that are impossible with men are possible with God.”

²⁸ Then Peter said, “Look! We have left our own possessions and have been following You.”

²⁹ He answered them, “Truly, I tell you that there is certainly no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰ who will not receive many times as much in this present time and, in the coming age, eternal life.”

Jesus' third explicit prediction of His passion — Matthew 20:17-19, Mark 10:32-34

³¹ Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them: “Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and all the things that have been written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. ³² For He will be handed over to the Gentiles and will be mocked, insulted and spat on. ³³ They will scourge Him and kill Him, and on the third day He will rise again.”

³⁴ However, the disciples understood none of these things. This saying had been hidden from them, and they did not understand the things that were being said.

Jesus' healing of blind Bartimaeus — Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 10:46-52

¹⁷⁶ For 17:36 in some manuscripts, see Matthew 24:40.

³⁵ As Jesus was approaching Jericho, a certain blind man was sitting beside the road, begging. ³⁶ When he heard a crowd going through, he tried to find out what was happening. ³⁷ People told him, “Jesus from Nazareth is going past.”

³⁸ He shouted, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

³⁹ Those who were going in front were rebuking him, telling him to be quiet. Instead, he kept shouting even more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁰ Jesus stood still and ordered that the man should be brought to Him. After he had come close, Jesus asked him, ⁴¹ “What do you want Me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, I want to get my sight back.”

⁴² Jesus told him, “Receive your sight again! Your faith has saved you.”

⁴³ Immediately he received his sight again and began to follow Jesus, glorifying God. When all the people saw this, they gave praise to God.

19

The change in Zacchaeus when Jesus went to his home

¹ Then Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. ² A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax-collector and was rich. ³ He was trying to see who Jesus was but could not see Him because of the crowd. For he was a short man. ⁴ So, he ran ahead and climbed up a sycamore-fig tree to see Jesus, because Jesus intended to go through that way. ⁵ When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and told him, “Zacchaeus, come down quickly! For today I must stay at your house.”

⁶ He came down quickly and welcomed Him joyfully.

⁷ However, when they all saw it, they began to grumble: “He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a ‘sinner’.”

⁸ Zacchaeus stood up and told the Lord, “Look! I am giving half of my property, Lord, to the poor and, if I have cheated anyone out of anything, I shall pay him back four times as much.”

⁹ Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man has come to **search for** and to save **what has been lost**.”

The parable about the ten minas

¹¹ While they were listening to these things, Jesus told another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately. ¹² Therefore, He said, “A certain man of noble birth went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself and then to return. ¹³ He called ten of his slaves, gave them ten minas and told them, ‘Do business until I come back!’”

¹⁴ “However, his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’”

¹⁵ “After he had received the kingdom, he came back.

He then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, to find out what business they had done.

¹⁶ “The first one came and said, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten more minas.’”

¹⁷ “He told him, ‘Well done, good slave!’ Because you have been faithful in very little, have authority over ten cities!”

¹⁸ “The second one came and said, ‘Your mina, master, has made five more minas.’”

¹⁹ “He told this one also, ‘You too be over five cities!’”

²⁰ “Then another one came and said, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have been keeping, laid aside in a face-cloth. ²¹ For I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You withdraw what you have not deposited and harvest what you have not sown.’”

²² “He told him, ‘I judge you by what you say, wicked slave.’ You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, withdrawing what I have not deposited and harvesting what I have not sown? ²³ Why, then, did you not put my money in the bank? Then, when I came back, I would have collected it with interest.’”

²⁴ “He told those who were standing by, ‘Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas!’”

²⁵ However, they answered him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’”

²⁶ “I tell you that more will be given to everyone who has, and even what he has will be taken away from the one who has nothing. ²⁷ However, bring here these enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them and slaughter them in front of me!””

Jesus’ last days in and around Jerusalem: Holy Week, Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection, to the ascension (19:28-24:53)

Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem — Matthew 21:1-9, Mark 11:1-10, John 12:12-19

²⁸ After Jesus had said this, He continued His way in front of them up to Jerusalem. ²⁹ When He came near Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, as it was called, He sent two of His disciples. ³⁰ He said, “Go into the village ahead of you! As you enter, you will find a colt tied up on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it! ³¹ If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it!’”

³² The men whom He had sent went and found it just as He had told them. ³³ While they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

³⁴ They said, “Because the Lord needs it.”

³⁵ They brought the colt to Jesus, put their garments on the colt and seated Jesus on it. ³⁶ As He was riding along, people kept spreading their garments on the road. ³⁷ As He was already coming near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully and loudly for all the miracles they had seen.

³⁸ They said: “**Blessed is the King who is coming in**

the name of the Lord! In heaven peace, and glory in the highest heavens!”

Jesus' prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem — Matthew 21:14-16

³⁹ Some of the Pharisees in the crowd told Him, “Teacher, order Your disciples to be quiet!”

⁴⁰ He answered them, “I tell you, if these keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

⁴¹ When Jesus approached the city and saw it, He wept over it, ⁴² and said, “If you, yes, you, had known, on this day, the things that bring peace! However, now they have been hidden from your eyes.

⁴³ For days will come on you when your enemies will build a palisade against you, surround you and hem you in from every side. ⁴⁴ They will **dash** to the **ground** you and **your children** inside your walls and will not leave one stone on another in you, because you have not recognised the time of your gracious visitation.”

Jesus' clearing of the Temple — Matthew 21:12-19, Mark 11:15-19

⁴⁵ Then Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the traders. ⁴⁶ He told them, “Scripture has said, ‘**My house will be a house of prayer,**’ but you have made it ‘**a den of thieves.**’”

⁴⁷ He was teaching daily in the Temple. However, the Chief Priests, the scribes and the leaders of the people were trying to destroy Him. ⁴⁸ However, they could not find what they were to do. For all the people used to hang on His Words as they listened to Him.

20

Jesus' response to a question about His authority — Matthew 21:23-27, Mark 11:27-31

¹ On one of the days, while He was teaching the people in the Temple and telling the Good News, the Chief Priests and the scribes, together with the elders, came up to Him. ² They asked Him, “Tell us by what authority You are doing these things or who the One is who has given You this authority!”

³ Jesus answered them, “I also shall ask you a question, and you tell Me! ⁴ ‘The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men?’”

⁵ They discussed it among themselves, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will ask, ‘Why did you not believe him?’ ⁶ However, if we say, ‘From men,’ all the people will stone us. For they are convinced that John was a prophet.”

⁷ So, they answered that they did not know where it was from. ⁸ Then Jesus told them, “Neither do I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.”

Jesus' parable about the wicked tenant-farmers — Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1-12

⁹ Then Jesus began to tell the people this parable: “A certain man **planted a vineyard**, leased it out to tenant-farmers and left home for a long time. ¹⁰ At the right time he sent a servant to the tenant-farmers that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. However, the tenant-farmers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. ¹¹ Then he sent another servant. They also beat him, treated him shamefully and sent

him away empty-handed. ¹² Then he sent a third servant. They wounded this one, too and threw him out. ¹³ Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What am I to do? I shall send my son, whom I love. Perhaps they will respect him.’

¹⁴ “However, when the tenant-farmers saw him, they discussed it among themselves. They said, ‘This is the heir. Let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours!’

¹⁵ “They threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

“Therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will come and destroy these tenant-farmers and give the vineyard to others.”

When the people heard this, they said, “May this not happen!”

¹⁷ Jesus looked straight at them and asked, “Therefore, what does this Scripture-passage mean: ‘**The Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone**’? ¹⁸ Everyone who falls on that Stone will be dashed in pieces and, if that Stone falls on anyone, It will scatter him like dust.”

¹⁹ The scribes and the Chief Priests looked for a way to lay hands on Him immediately, because they knew that He had spoken this parable against them but were afraid of the people.

Jesus' answer to a question about paying tax to Caesar — Matthew 22:15-22, Mark 12:13-17

²⁰ They kept a close watch on Him and sent spies who pretended to be righteous men, that they might catch Him in what He said, to hand Him over to the power and authority of the governor. ²¹ They said to Him, “Teacher, we know that You speak and teach what is right and that You do not show personal favouritism. Rather, You teach the Way of God in truth. ²² Is it right for us to pay a tax to Caesar or not?”

²³ Jesus perceived their craftiness and said to them, ²⁴ “Show Me a denarius! Whose image and inscription does it have?”

They answered, “Caesar’s.”

²⁵ He told them, “Therefore, pay to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s!”

²⁶ They could not trap Him before the people in what He said and, since they were astonished at His answer, they became silent.

Jesus' answer to a question of the Sadducees about the resurrection — Matthew 22:23-33, Mark 12:18-27

²⁷ Some of the Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection, came to Jesus and asked Him:

²⁸ “Teacher, Moses has written for us, ‘**If any married man dies and has no children, his brother should marry the widow and raise up children for his brother!**’ ²⁹ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died without children.

³⁰ Then the second one, ³¹ and then the third one married her, and in the same way the rest of the seven died without leaving any children. ³² Finally, the woman also died. ³³ Therefore, in the resurrection,

whose wife does she become? For the seven were married to her.”

³⁴ Jesus told them: “The people of this world marry and are given in marriage, ³⁵ but those who are considered worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. ³⁶ For they cannot die any longer either, because they are equal to the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection. ³⁷ However, that the dead are raised, even Moses revealed, in the passage about the bush, when he called the Lord ‘**the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.**’ ³⁸ He is not the God of the dead but of the living. For to Him all are alive.”

³⁹ Some of the scribes responded, “Teacher, You have spoken well.”

⁴⁰ For they did not dare to ask Him anything any longer.

Jesus’ question about David’s Son — Matthew 22:41-46, Mark 12:35-37

⁴¹ Jesus asked them, “How do people say that the Christ is the Son of David? ⁴² For David himself says in the Book of Psalms: ‘**The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand ⁴³ until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet!”**’ ⁴⁴ Therefore, David calls Him ‘Lord.’ How, then, is He his son?”

Jesus’ warning against the scribes — Matthew 23:1-12, Mark 12:37-40

⁴⁵ While all the people were listening, Jesus told His disciples: ⁴⁶ “Beware of the scribes, who want to walk in long robes and who love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues and the chief places at dinners, ⁴⁷ who devour widows’ houses and make long prayers to put on a good appearance! These will receive greater condemnation.”

21

Jesus’ comment about a widow’s coins — Mark 12:41-44

¹ Jesus looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the Temple-treasury. ² He saw a certain poor widow putting in two very small copper coins. ³ He said, “Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all the others. ⁴ For all these have put in among the gifts some of what they had in plenty, but this woman, out of her poverty, has put in everything she had to live on.”

Jesus’ prediction of the destruction of the Temple — Matthew 24:1-3, Mark 13:1-4

⁵ Some were saying about the Temple, “It has been beautifully constructed with fine stones and decorated with beautiful gifts.”

Jesus said, ⁶ “As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left on another. Each one will be thrown down.”

⁷ They asked Him, “Teacher, when will these things be, therefore. and what will be the miraculous sign when these things are about to happen?”

The signs of the kingdom — Matthew 24:4-8, Mark 13:5-8

⁸ Jesus said, “Be careful that you are not deceived! For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’

and ‘The time has come near.’ Do not follow them! ⁹ When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not become alarmed! For these things **must happen** first, but the end will not come immediately.”

¹⁰ Then He told them, “One **nation will arise against another nation.** and one **kingdom against another kingdom.** ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, famines, plagues in various places, terrifying sights and great miraculous signs from heaven.

The beginning of the troubles — Matthew 24:9-14, Mark 13:9-13

¹² “However, before all these things happen, people will lay their hands on you, persecute you and hand you over to synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and governors because of My name. ¹³ This will result in your giving witness to them. ¹⁴ Therefore, make up your minds not to worry beforehand how to defend yourselves! ¹⁵ For I shall give you such wisdom to utter that none of your enemies will be able to resist it or contradict it. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, even parents, brothers, relatives and friends will betray you and will put some of you to death. ¹⁷ Because of My name all people will also hate you. ¹⁸ However, not a strand of hair on your heads will be lost. ¹⁹ Gain your lives by your patient endurance!

A prediction about the devastating abomination — Matthew 24:15-22, Mark 13:14-20

²⁰ “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near! ²¹ Then those who are in Judea should flee to the mountains. and those who are inside the city should leave it! Those who are in the country should not go into the city! ²² For these are the **days of vengeance**, that all the things in the Scriptures may be fulfilled. ²³ How dreadful it will be for the women who are pregnant and for those who are breast-feeding in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath on this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword and will be led away as prisoners among all the nations, and **the Gentiles will trample on Jerusalem** until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The coming of the Son of Man — Matthew 24:29-31, Mark 13:24-27

²⁵ “There will be miraculous signs in the sun, the moon and the stars and, on the earth, nations will be distressed and perplexed at **the roaring and tossing of the sea.** ²⁶ People’s hearts will fail them as they fearfully wait for the things that are coming on the world. For **the powers of the heavens** will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see **the Son of Man coming in a cloud** with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads! For your redemption is coming near.”

Jesus’ parable about the fig tree — Matthew 24:32-33, Mark 13:28-29

²⁹ Then He told a parable to them: “Look at the fig tree and all the other trees! ³⁰ As soon as they put out their leaves, you see and know for yourselves that summer is near. ³¹ So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is

near!

The certainty of Jesus' Words — Matthew 24:34-36, Mark 13:30-32

32 “Truly, I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things take place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Words will certainly not pass away.

The need for watchfulness and prayer — compare Matthew 24:37-41, Mark 13:33-37

34 “However, be careful that your hearts do not become burdened with carousing, drunkenness and worries about this life or that day will come on you unexpectedly, 35 like **a trap!** For it will come on all those **who live on the face of the whole earth.** 36 However, always be on the watch and pray that you may be able to escape all these things that are going to happen and to stand before the Son of Man!”

A summary of the time that Jesus spent in Jerusalem before His passion

37 During the days, Jesus used to teach in the Temple, but, at nights, He used to go out to the mountain called “The Mount of Olives,” and stay there. 38 All the people used to get up very early in the morning to come to Him at the Temple to hear Him.

22

The plot of the Jews to put Jesus to death — Matthew 26:1-5, Mark 14:1-2, John 11:45-57

1 The Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called “the Passover,” was approaching. 2 The Chief Priests and the scribes were searching for a way to put Him to death. For they were afraid of the people.

Judas' plan to betray Jesus — Matthew 26:14-16, Mark 14:10-11

3 Then Satan entered Judas, who was called “Iscariot,” and who was numbered among the Twelve. 4 Judas went to the Chief Priests and the captains and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus to them. 5 They were glad and agreed to give him money. 6 He consented and kept looking for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

The preparation for the Passover — Matthew 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-16

7 Then the day of Unleavened Bread came, when the Passover lamb had to be killed. 8 Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it!”

9 They asked Him, “Where do You want us to prepare it?”

10 He told them, “Look! When you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters! 11 You shall tell the owner of the house: ‘The Teacher asks you, “Where is the guest room, that I may eat the Passover in it with My disciples?”!’ 12 He will show you a large, furnished room upstairs. Prepare for it there!”

13 They went, found it as He had told them and prepared the Passover. 14 When the hour had come, He and the apostles reclined at the table. 15 He told them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I shall certainly not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

17 Then He took a cup, gave thanks and said, “Take

this and divide it among yourselves! 18 For I tell you, from now on I shall certainly not drink what comes from the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

The institution of the Lord's Supper — Matthew 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-26, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

19 Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me!”

20 In the same way He took the cup after the supper, saying, “This cup is **the new Covenant in My blood,** which is poured out for you.

Jesus' prediction of Judas' betrayal — Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, John 13:21-30

21 “Nevertheless, look! The hand of him who is betraying Me is with Me on the table. 22 For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but how terrible for that man through whom He is being betrayed!”

23 Then they began to discuss among themselves which of them it might be who was going to do this.

A dispute among the disciples about greatness in the kingdom of God — compare Matthew 20:25-28, Mark 10:42-45

24 Then a dispute arose among them about which of them seemed to be the greatest. 25 Jesus told them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them. and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ 26 However, you should not be like that! Rather, the one who is the greatest among you should become like the youngest. and the one who rules should be like the one who serves! 27 For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? However, I am among you as the One who serves. 28 However, you are those who have continued with Me in My temptations. 29 I also confer on you a kingdom, as My Father has conferred one on Me, 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom and that you may sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Jesus' prophecy of Peter's denials — Matthew 26:30-35, Mark 14:26-31, John 13:36-38

31 Then the Lord said, “Simon, Simon, look! Satan has asked for you people, to sift you like wheat.

32 However, I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. When you have turned back, strengthen your brothers!”

33 However, Peter told Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death.”

34 Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day before you deny three times that you know Me.”

35 Then Jesus asked them, “When I sent you out without a purse or a bag or sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?”

They answered, “Nothing!”

36 He told them, “However, now the person who has a purse should take it and a bag too! The person who does not have a sword should sell his garment and buy one! 37 For I tell you that this passage of Scripture must be fulfilled in Me, ‘**He was numbered with transgressors.**’ Yes, what has been written about Me

is being fulfilled.”

³⁸ The disciples said, “Lord, look! Here are two swords.”

He told them, “That is enough.”

Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane — Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, John 18:1

³⁹ Jesus came out and went to the Mount of Olives, as He usually did, and His disciples also followed Him.

⁴⁰ When He reached the place, He told them, “Pray that you may not begin to be tempted!”

⁴¹ He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt and began to pray: ⁴² “Father, if You are willing, take this cup away from Me! However, let not My will, but Yours be done!”

⁴³ An angel appeared to Him from heaven and strengthened Him. ⁴⁴ He began to be in anguish and prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like clots of blood falling to the ground. ⁴⁵ When He rose up from the prayer and came to the disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. ⁴⁶ He asked them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray, that you may not begin to be tempted!”

The arrest of Jesus — Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-52, John 18:2-9

⁴⁷ While He was still speaking, they saw a crowd, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was coming in front of them. He came close to Jesus to kiss Him.

⁴⁸ However, Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

⁴⁹ When Jesus’ followers saw what was going to happen, they asked, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”

⁵⁰ A certain one of them struck the servant of the Chief Priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹ However, Jesus answered, “Stop! No more of this!” Then He touched his ear and healed him.

⁵² Then Jesus asked those who had come for Him, the Chief Priests, the captains of the Temple and the elders: “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? ⁵³ When I was with you daily in the Temple, you did not stretch out your hands against Me. Rather, this is your hour, when darkness reigns.”

Jesus’ trial before the Jewish council and Peter’s denials of Jesus — Matthew 26:57-75, Mark 14:53-72, John 18:15-18, 25-27

⁵⁴ They arrested Him, led Him away and took Him into the Chief Priest’s house. However, Peter followed at a distance. ⁵⁵ When the men had lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down among them. ⁵⁶ A certain servant girl saw him sitting at the light. She looked at him closely and said, “This man was also with Him.”

⁵⁷ However, he denied it, saying, “I do not know Him, woman.”

⁵⁸ After a little while, another man saw him and said, “You are also one of them.”

However, Peter said, “Man, I am not.”

⁵⁹ Then after about an hour had passed, another man began to assert: “It is certain that this man also was

with Him. For, indeed, he is a Galilean.”

⁶⁰ Peter replied, “Man, I do not know what you are saying.”

Just then, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. ⁶¹ Then the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter, and Peter remembered the Word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.”

⁶² Then he went outside and wept bitterly.

The condemnation of Jesus by the Jewish court

⁶³ The men who were holding Jesus in custody were making fun of Him as they struck Him. ⁶⁴ They covered His face and kept asking Him: “Prophecy! Who hit You?”

⁶⁵ They went on insulting Him in many other ways.

⁶⁶ In the morning, the council of elders of the people, including the Chief Priests and the scribes, held a meeting. They brought Jesus before their council and asked, ⁶⁷ “Are You the Christ? Tell us!”

He replied to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe Me. ⁶⁸ If I ask you a question, you will not answer.

⁶⁹ However, from now on **the Son of Man will be sitting at the right hand of the power of God.**”

⁷⁰ All of them asked, “Are You, then, the Son of God?”

He answered them, “As you say: I am He.”

⁷¹ They asked, “Why do we need any more testimony? We ourselves have heard Him say it.”

23

The accusations against Jesus before Pilate and His trial before Pilate — Matthew 27:1-2, 11-14, Mark 15:1-5, John 18:28-38

¹ Then the whole assembly rose and took Him to Pilate. ² They began to accuse Him: “We found that He makes our people disloyal, keeping them from paying taxes to Caesar, and saying that He is Christ, a King.”

³ Pilate asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

Jesus answered him, “Yes, it is as you say.”

⁴ Pilate told the Chief Priests and the crowd, “I do not find this Man guilty at all.”

⁵ However, they kept insisting, “He stirs up the people by teaching all over Judea. He began in Galilee and has come here.”

The questioning of Jesus by Herod

⁶ When Pilate heard that, he asked if the Man was a Galilean. ⁷ When he found out that Jesus was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸ When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, because for a long time he had wanted to see Him. For he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some miracle done by Him. ⁹ Herod asked Him many questions, but Jesus did not answer him at all. ¹⁰ The Chief Priests and the scribes were standing there and accusing Him vehemently. ¹¹ Herod and his soldiers treated Jesus with contempt and mocked Him. They put a splendid garment on Him and sent Him back to Pilate. ¹² On that very day Herod and Pilate became friends with each

other. For before this they had been enemies of each other.

The continuation of Jesus' trial before Pilate

¹³ Then Pilate called the Chief Priests, the rulers and the people together. ¹⁴ He told them, "You have brought this Man to me as one who is inciting the people to rebellion. Now, look! I have examined this Man before you and found Him innocent of the charges that you are making against Him. ¹⁵ No, neither has Herod. For he has sent Him back to us, and, as you can see, He has done nothing to deserve death. ¹⁶ Therefore, I shall chastise Him and release Him."

The choice between Jesus and Barabbas and the sentencing of Jesus to death — Matthew 27:15-26, Mark 15:6-15, John 18:39-40

^{*177} ¹⁸ The whole crowd then began to shout aloud: "Away with this Man! Release Barabbas for us!"

¹⁹ Barabbas had been thrown into prison for a revolt that had taken place in the city and for murder.

²⁰ Pilate spoke to them again, because he wanted to release Jesus. ²¹ However, they kept shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

²² Then Pilate spoke to them the third time, "No. What wrong has He done? I have found nothing in Him to make Him deserve to die. I shall therefore chastise Him and release Him."

²³ However, they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He should be crucified. and their voices began to prevail. ²⁴ Then Pilate decided that what they demanded should be done. ²⁵ He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they were asking. and delivered Jesus for them to do what they wanted.

The road to Calvary — Matthew 27:32, Mark 15:21

²⁶ As they led Jesus away, they took hold of Simon, a man from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid the cross on him, to carry it behind Jesus.

²⁷ A large crowd of the people followed Him. The women in the crowd were mourning and weeping for Him. ²⁸ Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me! Rather, weep for yourselves and for your children! ²⁹ For indeed the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren women, the wombs that have not borne children and the breasts that have not suckled!'

³⁰ Then **people** will begin to **say to the mountains: 'Fall on us!' and to the hills: 'Cover us!'** ³¹ For, if they do these things to the green tree, what will be done to the dry one?"

³² Two other men, who were criminals, were also led out to be executed with Him.

The crucifixion of Jesus — Matthew 27:31-44, Mark 15:22-32, John 19:16-24

³³ When they came to the place that is called "The Skull," they crucified Him there with the criminals, one at His right. and the other at His left. ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them! For they do not know what they are doing."

They divided His clothes among them by casting lots. ³⁵ The people stood there **watching**. The rulers were also **sneering**, "He saved others. Let Him save Himself if He is the Christ of God, the Chosen One!"

³⁶ The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and **offering Him wine-vinegar**. ³⁷ They said, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!"

³⁸ There was also a written notice above Him, "This is the King of the Jews."

The repentance of one of the thieves

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there was blaspheming Him: "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!"

⁴⁰ However, the other criminal rebuked him. He said, "Do you not even fear God? For you are under the same condemnation. ⁴¹ We are also being punished justly. For we are getting what we deserve for what we have done. However, this Man has done nothing wrong."

⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!"

⁴³ Jesus told him, "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with Me in paradise."

Jesus' death on the cross — Matthew 27:45-56, Mark 15:33-41, John 19:28-30

⁴⁴ It was now about the sixth hour and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵ because the sun stopped shining. The curtain in the Temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Jesus cried out aloud, "Father, **into Your hands I commit My spirit.**"

After He had said this, He breathed His last. ⁴⁷ When the captain saw what had happened, he praised God and said, "Certainly this Man was righteous."

⁴⁸ When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what had happened, they beat their breasts and went away.

⁴⁹ However, **all those who knew Him**, including the women who had followed Him from Galilee, **stood at a distance**, watching these things.

Jesus' burial — Matthew 27:57-61, Mark 15:42-47, John 19:38-42

⁵⁰ There was a man by the name of Joseph, a member of the Jewish council, a good and righteous man,

⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action. He was from Arimathea, a Jewish city and was waiting for the kingdom of God. ⁵² He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took it down,

wrapped it in linen and laid it in a tomb cut in the rock, in which no one had yet been laid. ⁵⁴ It was the Day of Preparation. and the Sabbath was about to begin. ⁵⁵ The women who had come with Him from Galilee followed closely behind. They observed the tomb. and how His body was laid. ⁵⁶ When they went back, they prepared spices and perfumes. Then they rested on the Sabbath according to the Commandment.

24

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead — Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-8,

¹⁷⁷ For 23:17 in some versions, see Matthew 27:15 and Mark 15:6.

John 20:1-10

¹ On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, some women went to the tomb, carrying the spices that they had prepared. ² They found that the stone had been rolled back from the tomb, ³ but, when they went in, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were troubled about this, suddenly two men stood beside them in clothes that were shining like lightning. ⁵ The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground. The two men asked the women, "Why are you looking among the dead for Him who is alive? ⁶ He is not here but has been raised. Remember how He told you while He was still in Galilee: ⁷ 'The Son of Man must be delivered to the hands of sinful men and be crucified and rise again on the third day!'"

⁸ Then they remembered His Words. ⁹ When the women returned from the tomb, they reported all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. ¹⁰ The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary, the mother of James, and the others with them. They told these things to the apostles. ¹¹ However, these words seemed like nonsense to the Eleven, and they would not believe them. ¹² However, Peter got up and ran to the tomb. He bent down and saw only the strips of linen. Then he went away, wondering to himself about what had happened.

Jesus' appearance to the two people going to Emmaus

¹³ On the same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, eleven kilometres from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself came up to them and began to walk along with them. ¹⁶ Their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know who He was. ¹⁷ He asked them, "What are you discussing with one another as you are walking along?"

They stood still, with gloomy faces. ¹⁸ The one by the name of Cleopas asked Him, "Are You the only visitor staying in Jerusalem, and do You not know what things have happened there during these days?"

¹⁹ He asked, "What things?"

They told him, "The things about Jesus from Nazareth, who was a Prophet, mighty in what He did and said before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our Chief Priests and officials handed Him over to be sentenced to death and crucified Him. ²¹ However, we were hoping that He would be the One who was going to redeem Israel. What is more, today is the third day since these things have happened. ²² However, then some of our women startled us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ and did not find His body. They came and told us that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that He is alive. ²⁴ Some of our companions went to the tomb and found it as the women had said but did not see Him."

²⁵ Jesus told them, "O foolish people, and slow in

your hearts to believe everything that the prophets have said! ²⁶ Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and enter His glory?" ²⁷ Then He began from Moses and all the other prophets and explained to them what had been said about Himself in all the Scriptures.

²⁸ They approached the village to which they were going, and He acted as if He were going further.

²⁹ They urged Him strongly, "Stay with us! It is nearly evening, and the day has almost gone."

So, He went in, to stay with them.

³⁰ When He sat at the table with them, He took the bread and said a blessing. He broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised Him. However, He vanished from them.

³² They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning in us as He was speaking to us on the road, and as He was opening the Scriptures to us?"

³³ That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and those who were with them gathered together. ³⁴ They were saying, "The Lord really has risen and has appeared to Simon."

³⁵ Then the two related what had happened on the road, and how they had recognised Jesus when He was breaking the bread.

Jesus' appearance in the locked room — John 20:19-25

³⁶ While they were talking about what had happened, Jesus stood among them. He said to them, "Peace to you!"

³⁷ They were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ He asked them, "Why are you troubled? Why do doubts come into your minds?"

³⁹ Look at My hands and My feet! It is I Myself. Feel Me and see! A ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see Me have."

⁴⁰ After He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

⁴¹ While they were still so overwhelmed with joy that they could not believe it, He asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"

⁴² They gave Him a piece of broiled fish. ⁴³ He took it and ate it while they watched Him.

⁴⁴ He told them, "These are the very words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, namely, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

⁴⁵ Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what Scripture has said: 'The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and, based on His name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.' ⁴⁸ You will testify to these things.

Jesus' ascension to heaven — Mark 16:19, Acts 1:9-11

⁴⁹ "I am sending you what My Father has promised. Wait here in the city until you are armed with power

Luke

from above!”

⁵⁰ He led them out to where Bethany lay ahead of them. Then He raised His hands and blessed them.

⁵¹ While He was blessing them, He left them and was

taken up to heaven.

⁵² They knelt in worship of Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ They stayed continually at the Temple, praising God.

JOHN

1

The prologue: the incarnation of the Word (1:1-18)

¹ **In the beginning** was the Word and the Word was **with God** and the Word was God. ² He was **in the beginning with God**. ³ Everything was made through Him, and not one thing that was made was made without Him. ⁴ In Him was life and the Life was the Light of mankind. ⁵ The Light is shining in the dark, and the darkness has not understood it. ⁶ A man came, whom God sent and whose name was John. ⁷ He came to testify, that is, to testify about the Light that through Him everyone might believe. ⁸ He was not the Light but came to witness about the Light. ⁹ The genuine Light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world and He had made the world, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. ¹² However, to all who received Him, who believe in His name, He gave the right to become the children of God. ¹³ They have been born not of blood or of an urge of the flesh or of a husband's desire but of God. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen His glory, the glory of the Father's only Son – He is full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John testified about Him when he cried out: "This was the One about whom I said, 'He who is coming after me has been before me, because He has been before me.'" ¹⁶ For from His fullness we have all received and grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. The only God, who is in the lap of the Father, has made Him known."

The revelation of the Word to Israel (1:19-4:54)

The preaching of John the Baptist — Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:1-18

¹⁹ This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to him, to ask him, "Who are you?"

²⁰ He confessed and did not deny. He confessed: "I am not the Christ."

²¹ They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

²² Then they asked him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who have sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³ John said: "I am '**a voice of one calling out in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the Lord,"**'" as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴ They had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, "Then why are you baptising, if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?"

²⁶ John answered them, "I am baptising with water.

There is One standing among you whom you do not know, ²⁷ the One who is coming after me. I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandal."

²⁸ This happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

John the Baptist's testimony to the Lamb of God — compare Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the One about whom I said, 'A Man is coming after me who has been ahead of me, because He has existed before me.'" ³¹ I myself did not know Him, but the purpose for which I have come baptising with water is that He may be revealed to Israel."

³² John testified: "I have seen the Spirit coming down from heaven like a dove, and He has remained on Him. ³³ I did not know Him, but He who has sent me to baptise with water told me, 'The One on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the One who baptises with the Holy Spirit.'" ³⁴ I have seen it and have been testifying that this is the Son of God."

Jesus' first disciples — Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:14-20, Luke 5:1-11

³⁵ On the next day John was again standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and looked at Jesus as He was walking along and said, "Look! The Lamb of God!"

³⁷ When the two disciples heard him saying this, they began to follow Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned around and, when He saw them following Him, He asked them, "What are you looking for?"

They asked Him, "Rabbi" (which is translated as "Teacher"), "where are You staying?"

³⁹ He told them, "Come! You will see."

So, they came, saw where He was staying and stayed with Him that day. It was about the tenth hour.

⁴⁰ Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who had heard what John had said and began to follow Jesus.

⁴¹ Andrew first found his brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated as "the Christ"). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus. Jesus looked straight at him and said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You will be called 'Cephas'" (which is translated as "Peter").

⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip. Jesus told him, "Follow Me!"

⁴⁴ Philip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the One about whom Moses wrote in the Law and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus, Joseph's son from Nazareth."

⁴⁶ Nathanael asked him, "Nazareth — can anything good come from there?"

Philip told him, "Come and see!"

⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him. He said about him, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is

no deceit.”

⁴⁸ Nathanael asked Him, “Where did You get to know me?”

Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

⁴⁹ Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel.”

⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, “You believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that.”

⁵¹ Then He told him, “Truly, truly, I tell you, you will see **heaven** opened and **the angels of God going up and coming down** on the Son of Man.”

2

Jesus' changing of water into wine

¹ On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ² Jesus and His disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

³ When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother told Him, “They have no more wine.”

⁴ Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”

⁵ His mother told the servants, “**Do whatever He tells you!**”

⁶ Six stone water-jars were standing there, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing. Each jar held between eighty and one hundred and eighteen litres. ⁷ Jesus told the servants, “Fill the water-pots with water!”

They filled them up to the top. ⁸ Then He told them, “Now dip some of it out and take it to the manager of the dinner!”

Then they took it to him. ⁹ When the manager of the dinner had tasted the water that had been turned into wine and did not know where it had come from, although the servants who had dipped the water out knew, the manager called the bridegroom. ¹⁰ He told him, “Everybody else serves his good wine first and, when people have had plenty to drink, then the inferior wine. You have kept the best wine until now.”

¹¹ Jesus performed this, as the first of His miraculous signs, at Cana in Galilee. He showed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

¹² After this He, His mother, His brothers and His disciples went down to Capernaum and stayed there for a few days.

Jesus' clearing out of the temple

¹³ The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the Temple He found those who were selling cattle, sheep and doves, as well as the moneychangers sitting there. ¹⁵ He made a whip of small ropes and drove them all out of the Temple, together with their sheep and cattle. He scattered the coins of the moneychangers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ He told those who sold the doves, “Take these away from here! Stop making My Father's house a house of merchandise!”

¹⁷ His disciples remembered that Scripture has said: “**The zeal for Your house will consume Me.**”

¹⁸ The Jews spoke up and asked Him, “What miraculous sign do You show to us, seeing that You are doing these things?”

¹⁹ Jesus answered them, “Destroy this Temple! I shall raise it in three days.”

²⁰ Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and will You raise it in three days?”

²¹ However, He was speaking about the Temple of His body. ²² Therefore, after He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this and believed the Scripture and the statement that Jesus had made. ²³ While He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw His miraculous signs, which He was doing. ²⁴ However, Jesus Himself did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all people, ²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify about man. For He knew what was in man.

3

The visit of Nicodemus to Jesus and the necessity of rebirth

¹ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher. For no one can do these miraculous signs, which You are doing, unless God is with him.”

³ Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I tell you, unless anyone is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

⁴ Nicodemus asked Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?”

⁵ Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I tell you, unless anyone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ What has been born of the sinful human nature is sinful human nature, but what has been born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I have told you, ‘You people must be born from above!’ ⁸ The wind blows where it pleases, and you hear the sound of it but do not know where it is coming from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who has been born of the Spirit.”

⁹ Nicodemus answered Him, “How can these things be?”

¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel without knowing these things? ¹¹ Truly, truly, I tell you, We speak what We know and testify to what We have seen, and you people do not accept Our testimony. ¹² If I have told you people earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has gone up into heaven except the One who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ As Moses **lifted up the snake** in the wilder-

ness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God has not sent His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world may be saved through Him. ¹⁸ The person who believes in Him is not condemned, but the person who does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of God's only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict, that the Light has come into the world, but people have loved darkness rather than the Light, because they have been doing evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wrong hates the Light and does not come to the Light, that his deeds may not be exposed. ²¹ However, he who practises the truth comes to the Light, that his deeds may be plainly seen to have been done in God."

John the Baptist's explanation about the Christ

²² After this, Jesus went into the country of Judea with His disciples and there He spent some time with them and baptised. ²³ John was also baptising at Aenon, near Salim, because water was plentiful there. People were coming to him and being baptised, ²⁴ for John had not yet been thrown into prison. ²⁵ Then an argument developed between some of John's disciples and a Jew about purification. ²⁶ People came to John and told him, "Rabbi, He who was with you on the other side of the Jordan and to whom you gave your testimony, look! He is baptising, and everyone is going to Him."

²⁷ John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it has been given to him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves bear me witness that I said, 'I am not the Christ but have been sent ahead of Him.' ²⁹ The One who has the bride is the Bridegroom. However, the friend of the Bridegroom, who stands and listens to Him, is full of joy when he hears the Bridegroom's voice. Therefore, this joy of mine has been made complete. ³⁰ He must become greater, but I must become less. ³¹ The One who comes from above is above all. The one who comes from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks from the earth. The One who comes from heaven is above all others. ³² He is testifying to what He has seen and heard, but no one is accepting His testimony. ³³ The person who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true. ³⁴ For the One whom God has sent is speaking the Words of God. For God is giving the Spirit without limit. ³⁵ The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in His hand. ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who does not believe in the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

4

Jesus' conversation with a Samaritan woman

¹ When the Lord found out that the Pharisees had heard that He was making and baptising more disciples than John had, ² although it was not Jesus Himself who was baptising but His disciples, ³ He left Judea and went back again to Galilee.

⁴ Jesus had to go through Samaria. ⁵ He came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's Well was there. Jesus, tired from His journey, simply sat down at the well. It was about noon.

⁷ A Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus asked her, "Give Me a drink!"

⁸ For His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. ⁹ The Samaritan woman asked Him: "How is it that You, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans).

¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink!' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

¹¹ The woman said, "Sir, You have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. From where, then, do You get this living water? ¹² Surely You are not greater than Jacob, our ancestor, who gave us the well and used to drink from it himself, as did also his sons and his animals?"

¹³ Jesus answered her, "Everyone who drinks this water will become thirsty again. ¹⁴ However, whoever drinks the water that I shall give him will never become thirsty. However, the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life."

¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not get thirsty or keep coming out here to draw water!"

¹⁶ Jesus told her, "Go, call your husband and come back here!"

¹⁷ The woman answered Him, "I do not have a husband."

Jesus told her, "You were right when you said, 'I do not have a husband.' ¹⁸ For you have had five husbands, and the man you have now is not your husband. What you have just said is true."

¹⁹ The woman said to Him, "Sir, I see that You are a prophet! ²⁰ Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews say, 'The place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.'"

²¹ Jesus told her, "Believe Me, woman, the time is coming when you will not be worshipping the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We Jews worship what we know. For salvation comes from the Jews. ²³ However, the time is coming and is now here, when the genuine worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father is looking for such people to worship Him. ²⁴ God is a spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth."

²⁵ The woman said to Him, "I know that the Messiah" (who is called 'the Christ') "is coming. When He comes, He will tell us everything."

²⁶ Jesus told her, "I, the One speaking to you, am He."

²⁷ Just then His disciples came and were amazed that He was talking to a woman. However, no one asked, "What do You want?" or "Why are You talking to her?"

²⁸ Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the town. ²⁹ She told the people, "Come! See a Man who told me everything that I have done! Could this be the Christ?"

³⁰ They went out of the town and came to Jesus.

³¹ Meanwhile the disciples kept urging Him, "Rabbi, eat!"

³² However, He told them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."

³³ Therefore, the disciples asked one another, "Could anyone have brought Him something to eat?"

³⁴ Jesus told them, "My food is to do the will of Him who has sent Me and to finish His work. ³⁵ Do you not say, 'Four more months and the harvest will be here'? I tell you, open your eyes and see that the fields are already white for harvest! ³⁶ The reaper receives wages and gathers grain for eternal life, that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. ³⁷ For in this respect the saying is true, 'One sows, and another reaps.' ³⁸ I have sent you to reap what you have not laboured at. Others have done the hard work, and you have succeeded them in their work."

³⁹ Many of the Samaritans in that town began to believe in Him because of the statement of the woman, who had testified: "He told me everything that I have done."

⁴⁰ Therefore, when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them. Then He stayed there for two days. ⁴¹ Then many more became believers because of His Words. ⁴² They told the woman, "We no longer believe because of what you have said. For we have heard Him ourselves and know that this is truly the Saviour of the world."

Jesus' healing of the son of a royal official

⁴³ After two days He went away from there to Galilee.

⁴⁴ For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honour in his own country. ⁴⁵ Therefore, when He had come to Galilee, the people of Galilee welcomed Him. They had seen all He had done at Jerusalem during the feast. For they also had gone to the feast. ⁴⁶ Jesus went again to Cana in Galilee, where He had made water wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and asked Him to come down and heal his son. For he was about to die. ⁴⁸ Then Jesus told him, "Unless you see miraculous signs and wonders, you will certainly not believe."

⁴⁹ The royal official asked Him, "Lord, come down

before my child dies!"

⁵⁰ Jesus told him, "Go! Your son lives."

The man believed the Word that Jesus told him and departed. ⁵¹ While he was still going down, his servants met him and told him, "Your son is alive."

⁵² He inquired from them at which hour the child had become better. Then they told him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour."

⁵³ The father realised that it was at the same hour in which Jesus had told him, "Your son lives." He himself began to believe, together with his whole family.

⁵⁴ This again was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed after He had come from Judea to Galilee.

5

The rejection of the Word by Israel (5:1-12:50)

Jesus' healing of a man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years

¹ After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² In Jerusalem there is a pool near the Sheep Gate, which in Aramaic is called "Bethesda." It has five porches. ³ In them a great number of people who were sick, blind, lame and paralysed, **used to lie**, [waiting for the water to be stirred. ⁴ At a certain time the Lord's angel used to come down into the pool and stir the water. After the stirring of the water, the first to step in was healed from whatever disease he was suffering.] *178 ⁵ A certain man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been sick for a long time. He asked him, "Do you want to be made well?"

⁷ The invalid answered Him, "Lord, I do not have any person to put me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am going, someone else gets down ahead of me."

⁸ Then Jesus told him, "Get up! Pick up your mattress and walk!"

⁹ Immediately the man was made well, picked up his mattress and began to walk. It was a Sabbath that day.

¹⁰ So, the Jews began to tell the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath. It is not lawful for you to carry your mattress."

¹¹ He answered them, "The One who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mattress and walk!'"

¹² They asked him, "Who is the Man who told you, 'Pick it up and walk'?"

¹³ However, the man who had been healed did not know who He was. For Jesus had withdrawn from the crowd that was at the place. ¹⁴ Afterwards Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, "Look! You have been made well. Do not sin any longer, that something worse may not happen to you!"

¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Jesus' witness to Himself as the Son of God

¹⁷⁸ Some manuscripts do not contain 5:3b-4.

¹⁶ Because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews began to persecute Him. ¹⁷ However, Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I also am working.”

¹⁸ Therefore, the Jews were trying even more to kill Him, because He was not only breaking the Sabbath but was also calling God His own Father, making Himself equal to God.

¹⁹ Therefore, Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I tell you, the Son cannot do anything by Himself, unless He sees the Father doing something. For whatever the Father does the Son also does in a similar way. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all the things that He Himself is doing and will show Him greater works than these, with the result that you will be amazed. ²¹ For, as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to those whom He wishes. ²² For the Father does not even judge anyone but has given all the judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honour the Son as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who has sent Him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I tell you that he who listens to My Word and believes Him who has sent Me has eternal life and will not come into judgment but has passed over out of death into life. ²⁵ Truly, truly, I tell you that the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For, as the Father has life in Himself, so He has also granted the Son to have life in Himself. ²⁷ He has also given Him authority to carry out judgment, because He is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not be astonished at this, because an hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice ²⁹ and will come out. Those who have done good will come out to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil will come out to the resurrection of condemnation. ³⁰ I Myself cannot do anything by Myself. I judge as I hear, and My judgment is just, because I am not trying to do what I want but what He who has sent Me wants. ³¹ If I give evidence about Myself, My evidence is not true. ³² There is Someone else who gives evidence about Me, and I know that the evidence that He gives about Me is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ Yet I do not receive testimony from a man but say these things that you may be saved. ³⁵ John was a burning and shining lamp, and you wanted to rejoice for a while in his light. ³⁶ However, I have witness that is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given Me to complete, these works, which I am doing, are testifying about Me, that the Father has sent Me. ³⁷ The Father Himself, who has sent Me, has also testified about Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. ³⁸ You do not have His Word remaining in you, because you do not believe Him whom He has sent. ³⁹ You exam-

ine the Scriptures, because you think that you have eternal life in them; and yet they are the ones that testify about Me! ⁴⁰ Nevertheless, you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from men. ⁴² However, I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. ⁴³ I have come in the name of My Father, and you do not receive Me. If someone else comes in his own name, you will receive him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and are not eager to have the glory that comes from the only God? ⁴⁵ Stop thinking that I shall accuse you before the Father! There is the one who is accusing you, Moses, in whom you have been hoping. ⁴⁶ For, if you had believed Moses, you would believe Me. For he has written about Me. ⁴⁷ However, if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My Words?”

6

Jesus' feeding of five thousand men — Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17

¹ After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd was following Him, because they had been seeing the miraculous signs that He was performing on the sick. ³ Jesus went up on the mountain and sat down there with His disciples. ⁴ The Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ When Jesus looked up and saw that a large crowd was coming to Him, He asked Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?”

⁶ He asked this to test him, since He knew what He was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered, “Bread costing two hundred denarii is not enough for each of them to get a little.”

⁸ One of His disciples Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, told Him, ⁹ “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what are these for so many people?”

¹⁰ Jesus said, “Make the people sit down!” There was plenty of grass in that place. Therefore, the men sat down, numbering about five thousand.

¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks and distributed them to the people who were sitting down and in the same way as much of the fish as they wanted.

¹² When they had had enough, He told His disciples, “Gather the broken pieces that are left over, that nothing may be lost!”

¹³ They gathered them and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves that were left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ Therefore, when the people had seen the miraculous sign that Jesus had performed, they began to say, “This is truly the **Prophet** who is coming into the world.”

Jesus' walking on water — Matthew 14:22-33, Mark 6:45-52

¹⁵ Therefore, since Jesus knew that the people were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He withdrew again into the mountain by Him-

self. ¹⁶ When evening came, His disciples went down to the sea. ¹⁷ After they got into a boat, they began to go to the other side of the sea, towards Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ A strong wind that was blowing began to make the sea rough. ¹⁹ Then, after they had been rowing for five or six kilometres, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming close to the boat and were terrified. ²⁰ He told them, "It is I. Stop being afraid!"

²¹ Then they wanted to take Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

Jesus' witness to Himself as the life-giving Bread from heaven

²² The following day, the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been no other boat there except one and that Jesus had not gone into the boat with His disciples but that His disciples had gone away alone. ²³ Other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum, looking for Jesus. ²⁵ When they found Him on the other side of the lake, they asked Him, "Rabbi, when did You get here?"

²⁶ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I tell you, you are looking for Me, not because you have seen miraculous signs but because you have eaten the loaves of bread and had your fill. ²⁷ Stop working for the food that spoils but work for the food that remains for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you! For God, the Father, has set His seal on Him."

²⁸ Therefore, they asked Him, "What are we to do, that we may do the works of God?"

²⁹ Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the One whom He has sent."

³⁰ Therefore, they asked Him, "So, what miraculous sign are You going to perform? Let us see it, that we may believe You! What work are You going to do?"

³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as Scripture has said: '**He gave them bread from heaven to eat.**'"

³² Then Jesus told them, "Truly, truly, I tell you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true Bread from heaven. ³³ For the Bread of God is the One who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

³⁴ Therefore, they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread!"

³⁵ Jesus told them, "I am the Bread of life. The person who comes to Me will certainly not be hungry and the person who believes in Me will certainly never be thirsty. ³⁶ However, I have told you both that you have seen Me and that you do not believe.

³⁷ Everything that the Father gives to Me will come to Me, and I shall certainly not cast out the person who comes to Me, ³⁸ because I have come down from

heaven, not that I may do My will but the will of Him who has sent Me. ³⁹ This is also the will of the One who has sent Me, that I should not lose anything of what He has given to Me but that raise it on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and that I should raise him on the last day."

⁴¹ The Jews therefore grumbled because He said, "I am the Bread that has come down from heaven."

⁴² They asked, "Is this not Jesus, Joseph's son, whose father and mother we know? How can He now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

⁴³ Jesus answered them, "Stop grumbling among yourselves! ⁴⁴ A person can come to Me only if the Father, who has sent Me, draws him, and I shall raise him on the last day. ⁴⁵ The prophets wrote: '**God will teach everyone.**' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from Him comes to Me. ⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father. Only He who comes from God has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I tell you, the one who believes in Me has eternal life.

⁴⁸ "I am the Bread of Life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and died. ⁵⁰ This is the Bread coming down from heaven, that anyone may eat from it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living Bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he will live for ever, and the Bread that I shall give is My flesh, for the life of the world."

⁵² Therefore, the Jews kept arguing sharply with one another: "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

⁵³ Therefore, Jesus told them, "Truly, truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood remains in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father has sent Me, and as I live because of the Father, so that person who feeds on Me will also live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the Bread that has come down from heaven. It is not like the bread that the fathers ate, they died. He who eats this Bread will live for ever."

⁵⁹ He said these things in the synagogue, while He was teaching at Capernaum. ⁶⁰ Therefore, when they heard this, many of His disciples said, "This is a hard statement. Who can listen to it?"

⁶¹ Since Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples were grumbling about this, He asked them, "Does this offend you? ⁶² Then what if you see the Son of Man go up to where He was before? ⁶³ The Spirit is the One who gives life. The sinful human nature is of no help at all. The Words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. ⁶⁴ However, there are some of you who do not believe."

For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe and the one who would betray Him. ⁶⁵ He went on to say, “That is why I have told you that no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him by My Father.”

⁶⁶ After this, many of His disciples went back and did not walk with Him any longer. ⁶⁷ Therefore, Jesus asked the Twelve, “Surely you too do not want to go away?”

⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the Words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ We have come to believe and know that You are the Holy One of God.”

⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, “Have I not chosen you as the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!”

⁷¹ He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For he was going to betray Him and he was one of the Twelve.

7

Jesus' secret journey to Jerusalem

¹ After this, Jesus went around in Galilee. For He did not want to go around in Judea, because the Jews were trying to kill Him. ² The Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near. ³ So, Jesus' brothers told Him, “Leave this place and go to Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing! ⁴ For no one goes on doing something in secret when he himself wants to be known publicly. Since You are doing these things, show Yourself to the world!”

⁵ For not even His brothers used to believe in Him.

⁶ Therefore, Jesus told them, “My time has not come yet. However, your time is always right. ⁷ The world cannot hate you but hates Me, because I testify about it, that its deeds are evil. ⁸ Go up to the Feast yourselves! I am not going up to this Feast, because My time has not yet been completed.”

⁹ After He had said this, He stayed in Galilee.

¹⁰ However, after His brothers had gone up to the feast, He also went up, not publicly, but, as it were, in secret.

Jesus' discussions with the Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles

¹¹ Therefore, the Jews kept looking for Jesus during the feast and asking, “Where is He?”

¹² There was much secret discussion about Him in the crowds. Some were saying: “He is a good Man,” but others were saying, “No. Rather, He is deceiving the crowd.”

¹³ However, no one would talk about Him in public for fear of the Jews. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, when the feast was already half over Jesus went up into the Temple and began to teach. ¹⁵ Then the Jews were astonished and asked, “How is He so well educated when He has not received instruction?”

¹⁶ Jesus answered them, “My teaching is not My own but belongs to Him who has sent Me. ¹⁷ If anyone wants to do His will, he will know whether the teach-

ing is from God or whether I am speaking it on My own authority. ¹⁸ He who speaks on his own authority tries to get glory for himself. However, He who wants to glorify the One who has sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. ¹⁹ Has not Moses given you the Law? Yet none of you is observing the Law. Why are you trying to kill Me?”

²⁰ The crowd answered, “You have a demon. Who is trying to kill You?”

²¹ Jesus answered them, “I have performed one work, and you are all astonished. ²² Because Moses has given you circumcision (not that it has come from Moses but from the fathers), — you circumcise a person even on the Sabbath. ²³ If a person receives circumcision on a Sabbath that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with Me because I have made a whole person well on a Sabbath? ²⁴ Stop judging by outward appearance! Rather, make a judgment that is just!”

²⁵ Then some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, “Is this not the Man whom they are trying to kill?”

²⁶ However, look! He is speaking openly, and they are not saying anything to Him. Can it possibly be that the authorities have actually realised that He is the Christ?

²⁷ However, we know where this One is from. However, when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from.”

²⁸ Then Jesus cried out as He was teaching in the Temple, “You both know Me and know where I am from. I have not come on My own authority either, but He who has sent Me is true, the One whom you do not know. ²⁹ I know Him, because I am from Him, and He has sent Me.”

³⁰ Therefore, they tried to arrest Him, but no one laid his hand on Him, because His time had not yet come.

³¹ However, many from the crowd began to believe in Him and were asking, “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more miraculous signs than the ones that this Man has performed, will He?”

³² The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering these things about Him, and the Chief Priests and the Pharisees sent servants to arrest Him. ³³ Then Jesus said, “I am still with you for a little while and then I am going to Him who has sent Me. ³⁴ You will search for Me and will not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.”

³⁵ Then the Jews asked one another, “Where does He intend to go, saying that we shall not find Him? Surely He does not intend to go to the Jews scattered among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? ³⁶ What does this statement mean, which He has said, ‘You will search for Me and will not find Me,’ and ‘Where I am, you cannot come?’”

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried aloud, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink! ³⁸ As the Scripture has said, ‘Streams of living water will flow from inside the person who

believes in Me.”³⁹ By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were going to receive. For the Spirit had not yet come, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

⁴⁰ After some people from the crowd heard Him say these Words, they began to say, “This is truly the **Prophet.**”⁴¹ Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “No! For the Christ does not come from Galilee, does He?”⁴² Has not the Scripture said that the Christ **is coming from the descendants of David and from Bethlehem**, the village where David was?”

⁴³ Therefore, a division arose in the crowd because of Jesus.⁴⁴ Some of them wanted to arrest Him, but no one laid his hands on Him.⁴⁵ Then the servants went to the Chief Priests and Pharisees, and they asked them, “Why have you not brought Him?”

⁴⁶ The servants answered, “No man has ever spoken in this way.”

⁴⁷ Then the Pharisees answered them, “Surely you have not also been deceived?”⁴⁸ No one from the rulers or from the Pharisees has become a believer in Him, has he?⁴⁹ However, this crowd, which does not know the Scriptures, is accursed.”

⁵⁰ Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus previously and who was one of them, said to them,⁵¹ “Our Law does not condemn a man unless it first hears him and knows what he is doing, does it?”

⁵² They asked him, “You are not from Galilee too, are you? Examine and see that a prophet does not arise from Galilee!”

[*179⁵³ Then each one went to his own home.

8

Jesus' treatment of the woman caught in adultery

¹ Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.² Early in the morning He came back into the Temple. All the people kept coming to Him, and He sat down and taught them.³ The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle.⁴ They told Him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act.⁵ In the Law Moses ordered us to stone such women. Now, what do You say?”

⁶ They were asking this to test Him, that they might have something for which to accuse Him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with His finger.⁷ However, when they kept on asking Him, He straightened up and told them, “The person who is without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her!”

⁸ Then He bent down again and kept writing on the ground.⁹ However, when they heard Jesus they began to go out one by one, as they were convicted by their consciences, beginning with the older men. Jesus was

left alone with the woman in the middle of the place.

¹⁰ Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

¹¹ She said, “No one, Lord.”

Jesus said, “I do not condemn you either. Go and from now on do not sin any longer!”]

Jesus' testimony to the Jews

¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again: “I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me will certainly not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.”

¹³ Therefore, the Pharisees told Him, “You are testifying about Yourself. Your testimony is not true.”

¹⁴ Jesus answered them, “Even if I am testifying about Myself, My testimony is true, because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I have come from or where I am going.

¹⁵ You are judging by human standards. I do not judge anyone.¹⁶ Yet, if I do judge, My judgment is valid, because I am not alone but with the Father, who has sent Me.¹⁷ It has also been written in your own Law that the testimony of two people is true.¹⁸ I am the One giving witness about Myself, and the Father, who has sent Me, is giving witness about Me.”

¹⁹ Then they asked Him, “Where is Your Father?”

Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father. If you knew Me, you would also know My Father.”

²⁰ He spoke these Words at the treasury while He was teaching in the Temple, and yet no one arrested Him, because His hour had not yet come.²¹ Then He told them again, “I am going away, and you will search for Me but will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.”

²² Therefore, the Jews asked, “He will not kill Himself, will He? For He is saying, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’”

²³ He told them, “You are from things below. I am from things above. You are from this world. I am not from this world.²⁴ Therefore, I have told you that you will die in your sins. For, if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

²⁵ Then they asked Him, “Who are You?”

Jesus asked them, “How is it that I even speak to you at all?²⁶ I have many things to say about you and to judge about you. However, He who has sent Me is true, and I am speaking to the world the things that I have heard from Him.”

²⁷ They did not understand that He was talking to them about the Father.

²⁸ Then Jesus told them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and that I do nothing on My own authority but that I am speaking these things as My Father has taught Me.²⁹ He who has sent Me is also with Me. He has not left Me alone, because I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

³⁰ While He was saying these things, many began to

¹⁷⁹ Some manuscripts do not contain 7:53-8:11.

believe in Him. ³¹ Therefore, Jesus said to those Jews who had become believers in Him, “If you remain in My Word, you are truly My disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

³³ They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been in slavery to anyone. How do You mean, ‘You will be made free?’”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I tell you that everyone who keeps on committing sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the family for ever. The son remains for ever. ³⁶ Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you will certainly be free. ³⁷ I know that you are Abraham’s descendants. However, you are trying to kill Me because My Word has no place in you. ³⁸ What I am saying is what I have seen at My Father’s side; and you therefore are doing what you have heard from your father.”

³⁹ They answered Him, “Our father is Abraham.” Jesus told them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing the things that Abraham did. ⁴⁰ However, now you are trying to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth, which I have heard from God. Abraham did not do this. ⁴¹ You are doing the things that your father does.”

Then they told Him, “We have not been born as illegitimate children. We have one Father, God.”

⁴² Jesus told them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me. For I have come out and have come here from God. For I have not come on My own authority either, but He has sent Me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand My way of speaking? Because you cannot hear My Word. ⁴⁴ You are of your father the Devil and want to do the things that your father desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he tells it from his own resources, because he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ However, because I am telling the truth, you do not believe Me. ⁴⁶ Which of you proves Me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why do you not believe Me? ⁴⁷ He who is from God listens to God’s Words. The reason why you do not listen is that you are not from God.”

⁴⁸ The Jews answered Him, “Are we not right when we say that You are a Samaritan and that You have a demon?”

⁴⁹ Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon but am honouring My Father, and you are dishonouring Me. ⁵⁰ I am also not trying to glorify Myself. There is One who wants Me to have glory and He is the Judge. ⁵¹ Truly, truly, I tell you, if anyone keeps My Word, he will certainly never see death.”

⁵² Then the Jews told Him, “Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets, but You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will certainly never taste death.’ ⁵³ Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham was? He died, and the prophets died. Whom are You making Yourself?”

⁵⁴ Jesus said, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father who glorifies Me, He of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ ⁵⁵ Yet you do not know Him, but I know Him. If I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar like you. Rather, I do know Him and keep His Word. ⁵⁶ Abraham, your father, rejoiced to see My day, saw it and was glad.”

⁵⁷ Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old and have You seen Abraham?”

⁵⁸ Jesus told them, “Truly, truly, I tell you, before Abraham came into being, **I am.**”

⁵⁹ Therefore, they took up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the Temple.

9

Jesus’ gift of sight to a blind man

¹ While Jesus was passing by, He saw a man who had been blind from his birth. ² His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

³ Jesus answered, “Neither has this man sinned, nor have his parents sinned. Rather, he is blind that the works of God may be revealed in him. ⁴ We must do the works of Him who has sent Me while it is day. The night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”

⁶ After He said this, He spat on the ground, made some mud with the saliva and anointed the man’s eyes with the mud. ⁷ He told him, “Go! Wash yourself in the Pool of Siloam!” (When translated, the name is “Sent”).

The man went, washed himself and came back seeing.

⁸ His neighbours, therefore, and those who used to see him previously as a beggar asked, “Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?”

⁹ Some said, “It is he.” Others said, “No, but he is like him.” He himself kept saying, “I am the one.”

¹⁰ Therefore, they kept asking him, “How, then, have your eyes been opened?”

¹¹ He answered, “The Man who is called Jesus made some mud, anointed my eyes and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash yourself!’ Therefore, I went and washed myself and I received sight.”

¹² They asked him, “Where is He?”

He answered, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought the man who had once been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ The day was a Sabbath when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Therefore, the Pharisees also kept asking him how he had received his sight. The man told them, “He put mud on my eyes, and I washed myself and I see!”

¹⁶ Therefore, some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath.” Others were asking, “How can a man who is a sinner do such miraculous signs?”

There was a division among them. ¹⁷ Therefore, they asked the blind man again, “What do you say about

Him? For He has opened your eyes.”

He answered, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ Therefore, the Jews did not believe that the man had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight. ¹⁹ They asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? So, how does he now see?”

²⁰ Therefore, his parents answered, “We know that he is our son and that he was born blind. ²¹ However, we do not know how it is that he now sees or who has opened his eyes. Ask him! He is of age. He will tell you about himself.”

²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews. For the Jews had already agreed to put out of the synagogue anyone who confessed that Jesus was the Christ. ²³ That is why his parents said, “He is of age. Ask him!”

²⁴ So, they called a second time the man who had been blind. They told him. “Give glory to God! We know this Man is a sinner.”

²⁵ He answered, “I do not know whether He is a sinner. One thing I know, that, although I was blind, now I see.”

²⁶ Therefore, they asked him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”

²⁷ He answered them, “I have already told you, and you have not listened. Why do you want to hear it again? Can it possibly be that you also want to become His disciples?”

²⁸ They answered him insultingly, “You are that Fellow’s disciple. We are Moses’ disciples. ²⁹ We know God has spoken to Moses, but as for this Fellow, we do not know where He is from.”

³⁰ The man answered them, “Well, the astonishing thing in this is that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but, if anyone worships God and does what God wants, God listens to him.

³² Since the beginning of time no one has ever heard that anyone has opened the eyes of a person who has been born blind. ³³ If this Man were not from God, He could not do anything.”

³⁴ They answered him, “You were completely born in sins and are you trying to teach us?”

Then they cast him out. ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out. When He had found him, He asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

³⁶ The man asked, “Who, then, is He, Sir, that I may believe in Him?”

³⁷ Jesus told him, “You have both seen Him, and He is the One who is talking with you.”

³⁸ He said, “I believe, Lord,” and worshipped Him.

³⁹ Then Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see and that those who see may become blind.”

⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard this. They asked Him, “Surely we are not blind, too?”

⁴¹ Jesus told them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin. However, now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

10

Jesus’ testimony to Himself as the Door and as the Good Shepherd

¹ “Truly, truly, I tell you, the man who does not come into the sheepfold through the door but climbs over somewhere else is a thief and a robber. ² However, the One who comes in through the door is the Shepherd of the sheep. ³ The doorkeeper opens the door for Him, and the sheep listen to His voice. He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out.

⁴ “When He brings out all His own sheep, He walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow Him because they know His voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger but will run away from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”

⁶ Jesus told them this dark saying, but they did not understand what He was telling them. ⁷ Therefore, Jesus spoke again: “Truly, truly, I tell you, I am the Door for the sheep. ⁸ All who have come before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. ⁹ I am the Door. If anyone comes in through Me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

¹¹ “I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. ¹² When the hired man, who is not the shepherd and who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf catches them and scatters them. ¹³ He runs away because he is a hired man and does not care about the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the Good Shepherd and I know My own, and My own know Me, ¹⁵ as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father and lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I also have other sheep, which are not in this fold. I must also lead them, they will listen to My voice, and there will be one flock and **one Shepherd**. ¹⁷ The reason why the Father loves Me is that I lay down My life, that I may take it back again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and have authority to take it back again. This command I have received from My Father.

¹⁹ There was a division again among the Jews because of these Words. ²⁰ Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?”

²¹ Others were saying, “These Words are not those of a demon-possessed man. A demon cannot open the eyes of blind people, can it?”

Jesus’ claim that He is one with the Father

²² Then the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem came. It was winter. ²³ Jesus was walking in the Temple, in Solomon’s Colonnade. ²⁴ The Jews gathered around Him and began to ask Him, “How long are You keep-

ing us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly!”

²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in the name of My Father give evidence about Me. ²⁶ However, you do not believe, because you do not belong to My sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, ²⁸ and I give them eternal life, and they will certainly not be lost, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of My Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

³¹ Again the Jews took up stones to stone Him.

³² Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. Because of which of these works do you stone Me?”

³³ The Jews answered Him, “We are not stoning You for a good work but for blasphemy, because, although You are a man, You are making Yourself God.”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I said, “You are gods”’? ³⁵ If He called them ‘gods’ to whom the Word of God came — and the Scripture cannot be broken — ³⁶ do you say about the One whom the Father has sanctified and has sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I have said, ‘I am the Son of God’? ³⁷ If I am not doing the works of My Father, do not believe Me! ³⁸ However, if I am doing them, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me and that I am in the Father!”

³⁹ Therefore, they again tried to arrest Him, but He escaped from their hands. ⁴⁰ Jesus went back again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptising at first and stayed there. ⁴¹ Many people came to Him. They were saying, “John did not perform any miraculous sign, but all the things that John said about this Man were true.”

⁴² Then many people became believers in Him there.

11

Jesus’ raising of Lazarus

¹ A man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped His feet with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick. ³ Therefore, his sisters sent someone to tell Jesus, “Lord, look! The one whom You love is sick.”

⁴ When Jesus heard that, He said, “This sickness will not end in death but is for the sake of the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

⁵ Jesus loved Martha, her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ Yet, when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He stayed in the place where He was for two more days. ⁷ After that, He told His disciples, “Let us go to Judea again!”

⁸ The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, recently the Jews

were trying to stone You. So, are You going back there?”

⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in a day? If anyone walks during the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

¹⁰ However, if anyone walks during the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

¹¹ After He said this, He told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going that I may wake him up.”

¹² Therefore, His disciples said to Him, “Lord, if he has gone asleep, he will be restored to health.”

¹³ However, Jesus had meant that he was dead, but His disciples thought He meant that Lazarus was taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴ Therefore, Jesus then told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, ¹⁵ and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. However, let us go to him!”

¹⁶ Therefore, Thomas, who was called “The Twin,” said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him!”

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, He found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem, about three kilometres away. ¹⁹ Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. ²⁰ Therefore, when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet Him, while Mary kept sitting in the house. ²¹ Martha told Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² However, even now I know that God will give You whatever You ask from God.”

²³ Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.”

²⁴ Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus told her, “I am the Resurrection and the Life. The person who believes in Me will live even if he dies, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in Me will assuredly never die. Do you believe this?”

²⁷ She told Him, “Yes, Lord, I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.”

²⁸ After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary. She told her in private, “The Teacher is here and is asking for you.”

²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to Him. ³⁰ Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still at the place where Martha had met Him.

³¹ Then the Jews who had been in the house with Mary and had been comforting her saw her get up quickly and leave. They followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb, to weep there. ³² So, when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw Him, she fell at His feet. She said to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”

³³ When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews weeping who had come with her, He was deeply moved in spir-

it and was troubled.

³⁴ He asked, “Where have you laid him?”

They said to Him, “Lord, come and see!”

³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Therefore, the Jews said, “See how He loved him!”

³⁷ However, some of them asked, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, also have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone had been laid against it.

³⁹ Jesus said, “Move the stone away!”

Martha, the dead man’s sister, told Him, “Lord, he smells already. He has been dead for four days.”

⁴⁰ Jesus asked her, “Did I not tell you, ‘If you believe, you will see the glory of God?’”

⁴¹ So, they moved the stone away. Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. ⁴² I know that You always hear Me but have spoken because of the crowd that is standing around Me, that they may believe that You have sent Me.”

⁴³ After Jesus had said this, He called out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out here!”

⁴⁴ The man who had died came out, with his feet and hands tied up with bandages and with his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!”

The plot of the Jews to put Jesus to death — Matthew 26:1-5, Mark 14:1-2, Luke 22:1-6

⁴⁵ Therefore, many of the Jews who had come to Mary and who had seen what Jesus did began to believe in Him. ⁴⁶ However, some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ Therefore, the Chief Priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council. They asked, “What are we accomplishing? For this Man is performing many miraculous signs. ⁴⁸ If we let Him go on like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”

⁴⁹ However, one of them, Caiaphas, who was the High Priest that year, told them, “You do not know anything ⁵⁰ or consider that it is better for you that one Man should die for the people, than that the whole nation should be lost.”

⁵¹ He did not say this on his own authority, but, as the High Priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, ⁵² and not only for that nation but also that Jesus would gather God’s scattered children together and make them one.

⁵³ From that day on they plotted to kill Him.

⁵⁴ Therefore, Jesus no longer moved about in public among the Jews. Instead, He went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and stayed there with His disciples.

⁵⁵ The Jewish Passover was near, and many people went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. ⁵⁶ Therefore, they

kept looking for Jesus. They were asking one another as they stood in the Temple, “What do you think, that He really will not come to the feast?”

⁵⁷ The Chief Priests and the Pharisees had given orders that, if anyone found out where Jesus was, he should report it, that they might arrest Him.

12

Mary’s anointing of Jesus at Bethany — Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9

¹ Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² People made a dinner for Jesus there. Martha was serving, and Lazarus was one of those who were reclining at the table with Him. ³ Then Mary took a third of a kilogram of perfume, pure and very expensive nard, and anointed Jesus’ feet. She wiped His feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, the one who was going to betray Him, asked, ⁵ “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor?”

⁶ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief. As the keeper of the moneybox, he used to pilfer what was put in it. ⁷ Then Jesus said, “Leave her alone! Let her keep it for the day of My burial! ⁸ For You always have the poor with you but do not always have Me.”

⁹ Then a large crowd of the Jews realised that He was there and came, not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ However, the Chief Priests resolved that they should also kill Lazarus. ¹¹ For he was the reason why many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and becoming believers in Him.

Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem — Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:29-44

¹² On the next day, the large crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

¹³ They took branches of palm-trees, went out to meet Him and began to shout, “**Hosanna!**” “**Blessed is He who is coming in the name of the Lord!**” and “the King of Israel!”

¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as Scripture has said: ¹⁵ “**Stop being afraid, daughter of Zion! Look! Your King is coming, sitting on the colt of a donkey.**”

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first, but, when Jesus had been glorified, they remembered that these things had been written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

¹⁷ Therefore, the crowd that had been with Him when He had called Lazarus out of the tomb and had raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. ¹⁸ This was also a reason why the crowd went to meet Him, that they heard that He had performed this miraculous sign. ¹⁹ Therefore, the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are not achieving anything. Look!

The world has gone after Him.”

The glorification of the Son of Man

²⁰ There were some Greeks among those who were coming up to worship at the Feast. ²¹ They approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

²² Philip went and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³ Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

²⁴ Truly, truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone, but, if it dies, it produces much grain.

²⁵ “The person who loves his life loses it, and the person who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves Me, he should follow Me, and where I am there also My servant will be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honour him.

²⁷ **Now My soul is troubled**, and what am I to say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour!’? No! For this reason, I have come to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify Your name!”

Then a voice came from heaven: “I both have glorified it and shall glorify it again.”

²⁹ Therefore, the crowd that was standing there and heard it began to say that it had thundered. Others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

³⁰ Jesus answered: “This voice has not come because of Me but because of you. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³² I, if I am lifted up from the earth, shall also draw all people to Myself.”

³³ He said this to indicate the kind of death that He was going to die.

³⁴ The crowd answered Him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains for ever. How, then, are You saying that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this ‘Son of Man’?”

³⁵ Then Jesus told them, “The Light is still among you for a little while. Walk while you have the Light, that darkness may not overtake you! The person who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.

³⁶ While you have the Light, believe in the Light that you may become children of light!”

After Jesus had said these things, He went away and hid from them. ³⁷ Although He had done so many miraculous signs in their presence, they would not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the Word that the prophet Isaiah had said might be fulfilled: “**Lord, who has believed our report? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?**”

³⁹ This was the reason why they could not believe. For Isaiah said again: ⁴⁰ “**He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, that they may not see with their eyes and that they may not understand with their hearts and may not be converted, that I should heal them.**”

⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw Jesus’ glory

and spoke about Him. ⁴² Nevertheless, even among the rulers many became believers in Him but would not confess it publicly because of the Pharisees, to avoid being put out of the synagogue. ⁴³ For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

⁴⁴ Jesus cried out, “The person who believes in Me does not believe only in Me but in Him who has sent Me. ⁴⁵ The person who sees Me also sees the One who has sent Me. ⁴⁶ I have come as Light into the world that no one who believes in Me may remain in darkness. ⁴⁷ If anyone hears My Words but does not keep them, I do not condemn him. For I have not come to judge the world but to save the world. ⁴⁸ The person who rejects Me and does not receive My Words has the thing that judges him. The Word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day, ⁴⁹ because I have not spoken on My own authority, but the Father, who has sent Me, has Himself given Me a Commandment, what I am to say and what I am to speak. ⁵⁰ I also know that His Commandment is eternal life. Therefore, as for the things that I am saying, I am saying them as the Father has told Me.”

13

The reception of the Word by the disciples (13:1-17:26)

Jesus’ washing of His disciples’ feet

¹ Before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knew that His hour had come to leave this world and go to the Father. He had loved His own who were in the world and loved them completely. ² The evening meal was being served, and the Devil had already put the idea of betraying Jesus into the mind of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into His hands and that He had come from God and was going back to God. ⁴ Jesus rose from the meal, laid aside His outer garments, took a towel and tied it around His waist. ⁵ Then He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet and to dry them with the towel that He had wrapped around Him. ⁶ When He came to Simon Peter, Peter asked Him, “Lord, are You going to wash my feet?”

⁷ Jesus answered him, “You do not understand now what I am doing but later you will know.”

⁸ Peter told Him. “You will assuredly never wash my feet.”

Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”

⁹ Simon Peter told Him, “Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and my head!”

¹⁰ Jesus told him, “The person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet. He is completely clean. You are clean, but not all of you.”

¹¹ For He knew who would betray Him. That was why He said, “Not all of you are clean.”

¹² After He had washed their feet and put on His outer garments, He reclined at the table again. He asked them, “Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You

call Me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because I am. ¹⁴ Therefore, if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet! ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I tell you, a slave is not greater than his master is, and one who is sent is not greater than the one who has sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them! ¹⁸ I am not talking about all of you. I know those whom I have chosen. Nevertheless, let the Scripture be fulfilled that says: **‘He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me!’** ¹⁹ From now on I am telling you these things before they happen so that, when they happen, you may believe that I am He. ²⁰ Truly, truly, I tell you, the person who receives anyone whom I send receives Me, and the person who receives Me receives Him who has sent Me.”

Jesus’ prediction of His betrayal — Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23

²¹ After He had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit. He testified, “Truly, truly, I tell you, one of you will betray Me.”

²² The disciples began to look at one another, at a loss to know whom Jesus meant. ²³ One of His disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table close to Him. ²⁴ Therefore, Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus which one He meant. ²⁵ Leaning back so that he was against Jesus’ chest, he asked Him, “Lord, who is it?”

²⁶ Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I shall give the piece of bread when I have dipped it.”

Then He dipped the piece of bread and gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ After Judas had taken the piece of bread, Satan entered him. So, Jesus told him, “Do quickly what you are doing!”

²⁸ None of those who were reclining at the table knew why Jesus had said this to him. ²⁹ For, since Judas had the moneybag, some thought that Jesus was telling him, “Buy the things that we need for the feast!” or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ After Judas had taken the piece of bread, he immediately went outside. It was night.

³¹ When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him. ³² If God has been glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself and will glorify Him immediately.

Jesus’ prophecy of Peter’s denials — Matthew 26:31-35, Mark 14:27-31, Luke 22:31-38

³³ “Little children, I shall be with you a little longer yet. You will look for Me, but, as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

³⁴ I am giving you a new Commandment, that you love one another. You also love one another, as I have loved you! ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

³⁶ Simon Peter asked Him, “Lord, where are You go-

ing?”

Jesus answered him, “You cannot follow Me now where I am going but will follow later.”

³⁷ Peter asked Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I shall lay down my life for You.”

³⁸ Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I tell you, a rooster will certainly not crow until you deny Me three times.

14

The meaning of Jesus’ going away

¹ “Let not your hearts be troubled! Believe in God and believe in Me! ² In My Father’s house there are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you, because I am going to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go to prepare a place for you, I shall also come again and take you to be with Me, that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to where I am going.”

⁵ Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going. How can we know the way?”

⁶ Jesus told him, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

⁷ If you have known Me, you will know My Father also and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

⁸ Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father! Then that is enough for us.”

⁹ Jesus asked him, “Have I been with you for such a long time, and have you not known Me, Philip? The person who has seen Me has seen the Father. How do you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in Me? These Words, which I am telling you, I am not speaking on My own authority, but the Father, who remains in Me, is doing His works. ¹¹ Believe Me, that I am in the Father and that the Father is in Me. Or else, believe because of the works themselves!

¹² “Truly, truly, I tell you, the person who believes in Me will also do the works that I am doing and do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ I shall also do whatever you ask in My name, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask Me for anything in My name, I shall do it.

¹⁵ “If you love Me, you will keep My Commandments. ¹⁶ I shall also ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. ¹⁷ He is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see or know Him. You know Him, because He remains with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I shall not leave you as orphans. I am coming back to you.

¹⁹ “Only a little while longer and the world will not see Me any longer, but you will see Me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in My Father, that you are in Me and that I am in you.

²¹ “The person who has My Commandments and

keeps them is the one who loves Me. The person who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I shall love him and show Myself to him.”

²² Judas, not Judas Iscariot, asked Him, “Then, Lord, what has happened that You are going to show Yourself to us and not to the world?”

²³ Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word, and My Father will love him, and We shall come to him and make Our home with him.

²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My Words. The Word that you hear is not Mine but the Father’s, who has sent Me. ²⁵ I have told you these things while I am still with you. ²⁶ However, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you everything and will remind you of everything that I have told you. ²⁷ Peace I am leaving with you. A peace that is My own I am giving to you. I am not giving it to you as the world gives it. Let not your hearts be troubled or afraid! ²⁸ You have heard Me telling you, ‘I am going away and am coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ Now I have told you before it happens, so that, when it happens, you may believe. ³⁰ I shall not say much to you any longer. For the ruler of the world is coming and has no hold on Me. ³¹ However, the world should realise that I love the Father and that I am doing as the Father has commanded Me! Get up! Let us be going from here!

15

Jesus’ allegory about the Vine and the branches

¹ “I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Gardener.

² He takes out every branch in Me that does not bear fruit and prunes every branch that bears fruit, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the Word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in Me, and I shall remain in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine, neither can you, unless you remain in Me. ⁵ I am the Vine. You are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit. For without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in Me, he is thrown away like the branch and withers. Such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burnt. ⁷ If you remain in Me, and My Words remain in you, ask for whatever you wish! It will be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and become My disciples. ⁹ “As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you. Remain in My love! ¹⁰ If you keep My Commandments, you will remain in My love, as I have also kept My Father’s Commandments and remain in His love. ¹¹ I have told you these things that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² This is My Commandment, that you should love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this,

to lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you continue to do what I command you.

¹⁵ I no longer call you ‘servants,’ because a servant does not know what his master is doing. However, I have called you ‘friends’ because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from My Father.

¹⁶ You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and appointed you that you may go and bear fruit and that your fruit may remain, that the Father may give you whatever you ask for in My name. ¹⁷ This is what I command you: Love one another!

¹⁸ “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, that is why the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the Word that I spoke to you: ‘A slave is not greater than his master’! If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they have observed My Word, they will also observe yours. ²¹ Now they will do all these things to you because of My name, because they do not know Him who has sent Me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ The person who hates Me also hates My Father. ²⁴ If I had not done the works among them that no one else has done, they would have no sin. However, now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵ However, this has happened that the Word may be fulfilled that has been written in their Law: ‘**They have hated Me without any reason.**’ ²⁶ When the Advocate comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me. ²⁷ You also must testify, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

16

Jesus’ promise that sorrow will turn to joy

¹ “I have spoken these things to you that you may not fall away. ² People will put you out of the synagogues. Yes, the time is coming when anyone who murders you will think that he is offering a service to God. ³ They will do these things because they have not known the Father or Me. ⁴ However, I have told you these things so that, when their time comes, you may remember them, because I have told you about them. I did not tell you these things at first, because I was with you. ⁵ However, now I am going away to Him who has sent Me, and none of you is asking Me, ‘Where are You going?’ ⁶ However, because I have told you these things, sorrow has filled your hearts. ⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is good for you that I am going away. For, if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you. However, if I go, I shall send Him to you. ⁸ When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness and judgment: ⁹ about sin, because they do not believe in Me,

¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you do not see Me any longer, ¹¹ about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

¹² “I still have many things to tell you, but you cannot endure them now. ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will lead you into the whole truth. For He will not speak on His own authority but will speak whatever He hears and will tell you what is coming. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, because He will take from what is Mine and will tell it to you. ¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine. That is why I have said, ‘He takes from what is Mine and will tell it to you.’

¹⁶ “A little while and you do not see Me any longer and, again, a little while, and you will see Me.”

¹⁷ Therefore, some of His disciples asked one another, “What does this mean that He is telling us, ‘A little while and you do not see Me and, again, a little while, and you will see Me’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father’?”

¹⁸ Therefore, they kept asking, “What does this mean that He is saying, ‘A little while’? We do not understand what He is saying.”

¹⁹ Jesus knew that they wanted to ask Him. He said to them, “Are you trying to find out among yourselves about this thing that I said, ‘A little while and you do not see Me and, again, a little while and you will see Me’? ²⁰ Truly, truly, I tell you that you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned to joy. ²¹ When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come. However, when she has given birth to her child, she does not remember her anguish any longer, because of her joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²² Therefore, you also have sorrow now, but I shall see you again, and **your hearts will rejoice**, and no one will take your joy away from you. ²³ In that day you will not ask Me any questions. Truly, truly, I tell you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be complete! ²⁵ I have been telling you these things in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures of speech but shall report to you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷ For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and because you have believed that I have come forth from God. ²⁸ I have come forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father.”

²⁹ His disciples said, “Look! Now You are speaking plainly and are not speaking any dark saying. ³⁰ Now we know that You know all things and do not need to have anyone ask You questions. By this we believe

that You have come forth from God.”

³¹ Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?”

³² Look! The hour is coming and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and you will leave Me alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³ I have spoken these things to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have distress. Nevertheless, have courage! I have overcome the world.”

17

Jesus' High Priestly prayer — prayer for Himself

¹ Jesus spoke these Words, looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You! ² For You have given Him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. ³ This is eternal life, to know You, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. ⁴ I have glorified You on the earth by finishing the work that You have given Me to do. ⁵ Now, Father, glorify Me at Your side with the glory that I had with You before the world existed!

Jesus' High Priestly prayer — prayer for His apostles

⁶ “I have made Your name known to the people whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your Word. ⁷ Now they know that all things that You have given Me come from You, ⁸ because I have given them the Words that You have given Me, and they have received them and learned the truth that I have come from You and have believed that You have sent Me. ⁹ I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me. For they are Yours. ¹⁰ All that are Mine are Yours, and what are Yours are Mine, and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹ I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name that You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are one! ¹² While I have been with them, I have kept them in Your name, which You have given Me. I have watched over them, and none of them has been lost except the one who will be lost, that the Scripture may be fulfilled. ¹³ Now I am coming to You and I say these things while I am in the world, that they may have a full measure of My joy in them. ¹⁴ I have given them Your Word, but the world has hated them, because they do not belong to the world, as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask You to take them out of the world but to keep them from the Evil One. ¹⁶ They do not belong to the world, as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷ Make them holy by the truth! Your Word is truth. ¹⁸ As You have sent Me into the world, I have also sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For their sakes I set Myself apart as holy, that they also may be set apart as holy by the truth.

Jesus' High Priestly prayer — prayer for believers of all times

²⁰ “I am not praying for these only but also for those

who believe in Me through their Word, ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I am in You. Let them also be in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent Me! ²² I have given them the glory that You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are one. ²³ I am in them, and You are in Me. Let them be brought to complete unity that the world may know that You have sent Me and that You have loved them as You have loved Me! ²⁴ Father, I desire that those also whom You have given to Me may be with Me where I am, that they may see My glory, which You have given to Me, because You have loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ Righteous Father, the world has not known You, but I have known You, and these have come to know that You have sent Me. ²⁶ I have made Your name known to them and shall make it known, that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them and that I may be in them.”

18

The Word's accomplishment of grace and truth through His passion, death and resurrection (18:1-20:31)

The arrest of Jesus — Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-52, Luke 22:47-54a

¹ After Jesus had said this, He went out with His disciples to the other side of the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden. He and His disciples went into it.

² Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew the place, because Jesus had often been meeting there with His disciples. ³ Then Judas took the troop of soldiers and assistants from the Chief Priests and Pharisees and came there with lanterns, torches and weapons.

⁴ Therefore, Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to Him, went out and asked them, “For whom are you looking?”

⁵ They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus told them, “I am He.”

Judas, who was betraying Him, was also standing with them. ⁶ When Jesus told them, “I am He,” they went backwards and fell to the ground.

⁷ Therefore, Jesus asked them again, “For whom are you looking?”

They said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

⁸ Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if I am the One for whom you are looking, let these men go!”

⁹ This happened that the statement that He had made might be fulfilled: “I have not lost any of those whom You have given Me.”

¹⁰ Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the High Priest's slave and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus.

¹¹ Jesus told Peter, “Put your sword into its scabbard! Shall I not indeed drink the cup that My Father has given Me?”

¹² Then the troop of soldiers, the commander and the Jewish assistants arrested Jesus and tied Him up.

¹³ They took Him to Annas first. For he was the fa-

ther-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the High Priest that year. ¹⁴ It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews, “It is better that one Man should die for the people.”

Peter's first denial — Matthew 26:69-75, Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:54b-62

¹⁵ Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. That disciple was known to the High Priest and went with Jesus into the High Priest's courtyard. ¹⁶ However, Peter was standing outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the High Priest, went out and spoke to the girl watching the door and brought Peter inside.

¹⁷ The servant-girl who was keeping the door asked Peter, “You are not one of this Man's disciples too, are you?”

He answered, “I am not.”

¹⁸ The slaves and the assistants were standing around and had made a heap of burning coals, because it was cold, and were warming themselves. Peter was also standing with them and warming himself.

Jesus' trial before Annas

¹⁹ Then the High Priest questioned Jesus about His disciples and His teaching.

²⁰ Jesus answered him, “I have been speaking openly to the world. I have always been teaching in the synagogue and in the Temple, where all the Jews come together, and have not been saying anything in secret.

²¹ Why do you question Me? Ask those who have heard what I have told them! Surely, they know what I have said.”

²² After He had said this, one of the assistants who was standing near Jesus slapped His face and asked, “Is that how You answer the High Priest?”

²³ Jesus answered him, “If I have said anything wrong, give evidence about what has been wrong! However, if I have said what is good, why do you hit Me?”

²⁴ Then Annas sent Him, still bound, to Caiaphas, the High Priest.

Peter's subsequent denials — Matthew 26:69-75, Mark 14:66-72, Luke 22:54b-62

²⁵ Simon Peter continued to stand and warm himself. People asked him, “You are not one of His disciples too, are you?”

He denied it, saying, “I am not.”

²⁶ One of the slaves of the High Priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?”

²⁷ Peter then denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.

Jesus' trial before Pilate — Matthew 27:11-14, Mark 15:1-5, Luke 23:1-4

²⁸ They took Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor's quarters. It was early in the morning. The Jews themselves did not go into the governor's quarters, to avoid becoming unclean and to enable them to eat the Passover. ²⁹ So, Pilate came outside to them and asked, “What accusation are you bringing against this Man?”

³⁰ They answered him, “If He were not a criminal, we would not have handed Him over to you.”

³¹ Pilate therefore told them, “You take Him and judge Him according to your Law!”

The Jews answered him, “We are not permitted to execute anyone.”

³² This happened that the statement that Jesus had made might be fulfilled, when He indicated the kind of death He was going to die.

³³ Then Pilate went into the governor’s quarters again and called for Jesus. He asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

³⁴ Jesus answered, “Are you saying this of yourself or have others told you about Me?”

³⁵ Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and the Chief Priests have handed You over to me. What have You done?”

³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingdom does not belong to this world. If My kingdom belonged to this world, My attendants would fight, to prevent Me from being handed over to the Jews. However, now My kingdom is not from here.”

³⁷ Therefore, Pilate asked Him, “Then are You a king?”

Jesus answered, “You are correct in saying that I am a king. I have been born for this reason and have come into the world for this reason, that I may testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to My voice.”

³⁸ Pilate asked Him, “What is truth?”

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, “I do not find any ground for complaint in Him. ³⁹ However, you have a custom for me to release one person for you at the Passover. So, would you like me to release the King of the Jews for you?”

⁴⁰ Then they shouted back: “No, not Him but Barabbas!” Barabbas was a revolutionary.

19

The scourging of Jesus and the soldiers’ mockery of Him — Matthew 27:27-30, Mark 15:16-19

¹ Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. ² The soldiers twisted a crown out of thorns and placed it on His head. They clothed Him in a purple robe ³ and kept going up to Him, saying, “Welcome, King of the Jews,” and slapped His face.

Pilate’s attempts to avoid putting Jesus to death

⁴ Pilate went outside again and told them, “Look! I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no cause for complaint in Him.”

⁵ Jesus came outside, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate told them, “Look at the Man!”

⁶ Therefore, when the Chief Priests and the attendants saw Him, they shouted, “Crucify, crucify!”

Pilate told them, “Take Him yourselves and crucify Him! For I do not find any basis for a charge against Him.”

⁷ The Jews answered him, “We have a Law, and according to the Law He ought to die, because He has made Himself the Son of God.”

⁸ When Pilate heard them say that, he was more afraid. ⁹ He went into the governor’s quarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are You from?”

However, Jesus did not give him an answer.

¹⁰ Therefore, Pilate asked Him, “Are You refusing to speak to me? Do You not realise that I have authority to free You and authority to crucify You?”

¹¹ Jesus answered him, “You would not have any authority at all over Me if it had not been given to you from above. That is why the man who has handed Me over to you has the greater sin.”

¹² From then on Pilate kept trying to release Jesus, but the Jews shouted out, “If you let this Man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king is speaking against Caesar.”

¹³ Therefore, when Pilate heard these words, he took Jesus outside and sat down in the judge’s seat at a place called “the Stone Pavement,” or “Gabbatha” in Aramaic. ¹⁴ It was the day of the Preparation of the Passover and about six in the morning. Pilate told the Jews, “Look at your King!”

¹⁵ Therefore, they shouted, “Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!”

Pilate asked them, “Am I to crucify your King?”

The Chief Priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

Jesus’ crucifixion — Matthew 27:31-44, Mark 15:20-32, Luke 23:26-38

¹⁶ Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. So, the soldiers took charge of Jesus.

¹⁷ Jesus went out, carrying His own cross, to the place that was called “the Place of the Skull,” which is called “Golgotha” in Aramaic. ¹⁸ There they crucified Him with two other men, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle.

¹⁹ Pilate also wrote a notice and put it on the cross. It read: “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”

²⁰ Therefore, many Jews read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. The notice had been written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek.

²¹ Therefore, the High Priests of the Jews told Pilate, “Do not write: ‘The King of the Jews,’ but: ‘He said, ‘I am the King of the Jews!’”

²² Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”

²³ When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took His outer garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier, and the undergarment. The undergarment was without a seam, woven from the top in one piece. ²⁴ Therefore, they said to one another, “Let us not tear it but let us throw dice for it, to decide who will get it!”

This happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled that says: “**They divided My outer garments among them and cast lots for My clothing.**”

So, that is what the soldiers did.

Jesus’ provision for the care of Mary

²⁵ Jesus’ mother, His mother’s sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene were standing near

the cross of Jesus.

²⁶ Therefore, when Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, “Woman, there is your son.” ²⁷ Then He said to the disciple, “There is your mother.”

From that time on, this disciple took her into his own home.

Jesus’ death on the cross — Matthew 27:45-56, Mark 15:33-41, Luke 23:44-49

²⁸ After this, knowing that everything had now been finished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, “**I am thirsty.**”

²⁹ A jar full of **sour wine** had been placed there. So, they put a sponge full of the sour wine on hyssop and lifted it to His mouth.

³⁰ When Jesus had taken the sour wine, He said, “**It is finished.**”

Then He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

The fulfilment of the command that no bone of the Passover lamb should be broken

³¹ Since it was the Day of Preparation, to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath, and because that Sabbath day was an important one, the Jews asked Pilate that the men’s legs should be broken, and the bodies taken away. ³² The soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and those of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus.

³³ However, when they came to Jesus and saw that He was dead already, they did not break His legs; ³⁴ but one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵ He who has seen it has been testifying about it. His testimony is true, and he knows he is telling the truth, that you also may believe.

³⁶ For these things happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “**None of His bones shall be broken!**”

³⁷ Again another Scripture-passage says: “**They will look at the One whom they have pierced.**”

Jesus’ burial — Matthew 27:57-61, Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56

³⁸ After this, Joseph from Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus but secretly because he was afraid of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave Joseph permission. So, he came and took Jesus’ body away. ³⁹ Nicodemus also came, the man who had come to Jesus by night at the beginning. He brought a mixture of about thirty kilograms of myrrh and aloes.

⁴⁰ Therefore, they took Jesus’ body and wrapped it in strips of linen with the spices according to the Jewish burial-custom.

⁴¹ There was a garden at the place where Jesus was crucified, and, in the garden, there was a new tomb, in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² They laid Jesus there, because it was the Jewish Day of Preparation and because the tomb was nearby.

20

Jesus’ resurrection from the dead — Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12

¹ Early on Sunday, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ² So, she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved. She told them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.”

³ Therefore, Peter and the other disciple went out and began to go to the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent over and saw the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.

⁶ Simon Peter, who was behind him, also arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, ⁷ as well as the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the strips of linen but wrapped up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who had arrived at the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and began to believe. ⁹ For they did not yet know the Scripture, that He had to rise from the dead.

¹⁰ So, the disciples went back again to their lodgings.

Jesus’ appearance to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ Mary was standing outside, facing the tomb and crying. While she was crying, she bent over to see into the tomb. ¹² She saw two angels in white clothes sitting where Jesus’ body had been lying, one at the head, and the other at the feet. ¹³ They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

She told them, “They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have laid Him.”

¹⁴ After she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there but did not realise that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ Jesus asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? For whom are you looking?”

She thought that He was the gardener and said to Him, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him! Then I shall take Him away.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!”

She turned and said to Him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (The word means “Teacher”).

¹⁷ Jesus told her, “Stop holding on to Me! For I have not yet gone up to the Father. Instead, go to My brothers and tell them, ‘I am going up to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God!’”

¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and that He had said these things to her.

Jesus’ appearance in the locked room and His commission to the apostles to forgive and retain sins — Luke 24:36-48

¹⁹ That Sunday evening the doors had been locked where the disciples were, because they were afraid of the Jews. Then Jesus came, stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you!”

²⁰ After He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent Me, I also am sending you.”

22 After He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit! 23 If you forgive any people's sins, they have been forgiven; if you retain any people's sins, they have been retained."

24 However, Thomas, one of the twelve, who was called "The Twin," was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord."

He told them, "Unless I see the marks of the nails in His hands and put my finger into the marks of the nails and put my hand into His side, I shall certainly not believe."

26 A week later, His disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors had been locked, Jesus came, stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

27 Next He told Thomas, "Put your finger here and look at My hands! Take your hand and put it into My side! Stop your unbelief and believe!"

28 Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus asked him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed!"

The purpose of the Gospel

30 Jesus also performed many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which have not been written in this book. 31 However, these things have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, you may have life in His name.

21

Appendix (21:1-25)

The Lord Jesus' breakfast with some disciples at the Sea of Tiberias

1 After this, Jesus showed Himself again to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. This is how He showed Himself: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas, who was called "The Twin," Nathanael, who was from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two other disciples of Jesus were together. 3 Simon Peter said to the others, "I am going fishing."

They told him, "We too are coming with you."

They went out and got into the boat but that night they caught nothing. 4 When morning had already come, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus asked them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?"

They answered Him, "No."

6 He told them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat! You will find some!"

So, they cast the net and could not pull it in again, because there were so many fish. 7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved told Peter, "It is the Lord."

When Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he put on the outer garment that he had taken off, fastened it with his belt and jumped into the sea. 8 The other disciples came in the small boat, towing the net

full of fish. For they were not far from the shore, only about a hundred metres away. 9 Then, when they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals set there, with fish laid on it and some bread.

10 Jesus told them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught!"

11 Then Simon Peter got into the boat and dragged the net ashore, full of one hundred and fifty-three large fish; and, although there were so many, the net had not been torn. 12 Jesus told them, "Come and have breakfast!"

None of the disciples dared to ask Him, "Who are You?"

They knew that it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them and the fish as well.

14 This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after He had been raised from the dead.

Jesus' restoration of Peter and the commission to him to feed His sheep

15 So, when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You."

Jesus told him, "Feed My lambs!"

16 Jesus asked him again, a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

He answered Him, "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You."

Jesus told him, "Be a shepherd to My sheep!"

17 Jesus asked him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"

Peter was saddened because He had asked him the third time, "Do you love Me?"

He answered Him, "Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You."

Jesus told him, "Feed My sheep! 18 Truly, truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to tie on your belt and walk where you wished. However, when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will tie on your belt and carry you where you do not wish."

19 Jesus said this to signify by what kind of death Peter would glorify God. After He had said this, He told him, "Follow Me!"

20 Peter turned around and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. He was the one who had also reclined at Jesus' chest at the supper and had asked, "Lord, who is the one who is betraying You?"

21 When Peter saw him, he asked Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?"

22 Jesus asked him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!"

23 Because of this, this saying spread among the brothers, that this disciple would not die. However, Jesus had not told him that he would not die but "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"

24 This is the disciple who is testifying about these

John

things and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

A declaration that much more could have been written

²⁵ There are also many other things that Jesus has

done and, if they were written one by one, I suppose that not even the world itself would have room for the books that would be written.

ACTS

1

Introduction and theme (1:1-8)

¹ In my former book, *Theophilus*, I have written about everything that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had given Instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen.

³ After His suffering, Jesus also showed these men, through many convincing proofs, that He was alive. He was seen by them during a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ While He was eating with them, He ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised. He said, "You have heard about this from Me. ⁵ For John baptised with water, but not many days from now you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

⁶ Therefore, when they met together, they asked Him, "Lord, are You at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He told them, "It is not for you to know the times or events that the Father has set by His own authority.

⁸ However, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the farthest parts of the world."

The Gospel in Jerusalem (1:9-7:60)

Jesus' ascension

⁹ After He had said this and while they were watching Him, He was lifted up and a cloud took Him away from their sight. ¹⁰ While they were gazing into the sky as He was going, suddenly two men in white clothes stood beside them. ¹¹ They asked, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing and looking up into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way as you have seen Him go into heaven."

¹² Then they went back to Jerusalem from what was called "the Mount of Olives," which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

The appointment of Matthias as an apostle

¹³ When they entered, they went to the second-floor room where they were staying. There were Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew; James, the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas, the son of James. ¹⁴ With one mind these all kept praying together, along with the women, Mary the mother of Jesus and His brothers.

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the disciples (the number of persons all together was about a hundred and twenty) and he said, ¹⁶ "Men, brothers, the passage of Scripture that the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David about Judas had to be fulfilled. He served as a guide for the men who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷ For Judas had been counted as one of us and had received his portion in this ministry. ¹⁸ With the reward that he got for his wickedness, Judas

bought a field. He fell headlong and burst open in the middle and all his intestines poured out. ¹⁹ All those who live in Jerusalem have heard about it; and so that piece of land is called 'Akel-Dama' in their language, that is, 'Field of Blood.' ²⁰ For Scripture has said in the book of Psalms: '**Let his home be deserted and let there be no one who lives in it!**' and '**Let someone else take his position of oversight!**'

²¹ Therefore, there must be one of the men who have accompanied us all through the time when the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² one of these men who have been with us, beginning with the baptism of John until the day when Jesus was taken up from us, to be a witness with us of His resurrection."

²³ They proposed two men: Joseph, called "Barsabbas," who was also known as "Justus," and Matthias. ²⁴ Then they prayed, "Lord, You know the hearts of all. Show which of these two You have chosen ²⁵ to take over the position of this ministry and office of apostle, from which Judas has transgressed, to go to his own place!"

²⁶ They cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias, and he was chosen by vote to be added to the eleven apostles.

2

The coming of the Holy Spirit

¹ When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like a violent blast of wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw tongues that separated, like flames, and one rested on each of them. ⁴ They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak.

⁵ Jews who feared God from every nation under heaven were staying in Jerusalem. ⁶ When that sound occurred, a crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard the disciples speaking in his own native language. ⁷ They were astonished and amazed and asked: "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ Then how is it that everyone of us hears in his own native language, ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites, people living in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and the province of Asia, ¹⁰ people living in Phrygia and Pamphilia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene, visitors from Rome, Jews as well as proselytes, ¹¹ and people from Crete and Arabia? We hear them declaring in our own languages the wonderful works of God."

¹² They were all amazed and puzzled. They asked one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ Others sneered: "They are full of new wine."

Peter's sermon at Pentecost

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: "Men who are Jews and all

of you who are living in Jerusalem, understand this and listen closely to what I say! ¹⁵ These men are not drunk, as you suppose. For it is only nine in the morning. ¹⁶ Rather, this is what has been spoken through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ ‘In the last days, **God says, “I shall pour out My Spirit on all people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸ Indeed, even on My male slaves and female slaves I shall pour out My Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. ¹⁹ I shall show wonders in the heaven above and miraculous signs on the earth below: blood, fire and a cloud of smoke. ²⁰ The sun will turn dark, and the moon turn to blood before the coming of the great and splendid day of the Lord, ²¹ and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”**’

²² “Men of Israel, listen to these words! Jesus of Nazareth was a Man whom God commended to you, as you yourselves know, by miracles, wonders and miraculous signs, which God worked among you through Him. ²³ This Man was handed over to you by God’s set plan and foreknowledge, and you, with the hands of wicked men, nailed Him to a cross and put Him to death. ²⁴ Nevertheless, God raised Him and loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible for death to hold Him. ²⁵ For David says about Him: **‘I have continually been foreseeing the Lord before Me. For He is at My right hand, that I may not be shaken. ²⁶ For this reason My heart is glad, and My tongue rejoices; yes, even My body will rest in hope. ²⁷ For You will not abandon My soul to Hades or allow Your Holy One to see decay. ²⁸ You have made the paths of life known to Me. You will fill Me with joy through Your presence.’**

²⁹ Brethren, I can tell you frankly that our ancestor David died and was buried, and his grave is with us to this day. ³⁰ Therefore, because David was a prophet and knew that **God had sworn to him by an oath to cause one of his descendants to sit on his throne,** ³¹ he saw what would come and said concerning the resurrection of the Christ that **He was not abandoned to the grave** and that His body **did not experience decay.** ³² This One, Jesus, God has raised, and of that fact we are all witnesses.

³³ “Therefore, after He has been lifted up by God’s right hand and has received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this, which you both see and hear. ³⁴ For it was not David who went up to heaven, but he says himself: **‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand, ³⁵ until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”’**

³⁶ “Therefore, all the people of Israel should know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, Lord and Christ!”

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart. They asked Peter and the rest of the apostles,

“Brethren, what are we to do?”

³⁸ Peter answered them: “Repent and let everyone of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For this promise is for you and for your children and for all **who are far away, all whom the Lord, our God, calls.**”

⁴⁰ With many other words he testified to them by argument. He urged them, “Be saved from this crooked kind of people!”

⁴¹ Those who received what he said were baptised, and that day about three thousand persons were added. *The manner of life of the first believers*

⁴² They continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles and in the fellowship, in the breaking of the bread and in the prayers. ⁴³ Fear came on everyone, and many wonders and miraculous signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and shared everything with one another. ⁴⁵ They used to sell their possessions and goods and divide them among them all, as anyone was in need. ⁴⁶ All were one at heart as they continued to go to the Temple every day. They used to break bread from house to house and eat their food with glad and generous hearts. ⁴⁷ They kept praising God and had the good will of all the people. Every day the Lord kept adding together those who were being saved.

3

The healing of the crippled man at the Temple

¹ Peter and John were going up to the Temple for the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. ² A certain man had been a cripple from his birth, and people used to carry him every day and lay him at the gate of the Temple that was called “Beautiful,” that he might beg for gifts from those who were entering the Temple. ³ When he saw that Peter and John were about to go into the Temple, he asked to receive a gift. ⁴ Peter and John looked straight at him and Peter said, “Look at us!”

⁵ The man gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. ⁶ Peter said, “I have no silver or gold but give you what I have: In the name of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, get up and walk!”

⁷ He took hold of him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately the man’s feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸ He jumped up, stood, began to walk and went with them into the Temple, walking, jumping and praising God. ⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God. ¹⁰ They recognised him as the man who had been sitting and begging at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple and were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

¹¹ As the man clung to Peter and John, all the people came running together to them at the porch that is called “Solomon’s,” greatly amazed.

Peter’s address in Solomon’s colonnade

¹² When Peter saw the people, he responded to them, “Men of Israel, why are you wondering about this or

why are you looking intently at us, as though we had made him walk by our own power or piety? ¹³ **The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**, the God of our fathers, has **glorified His Servant** Jesus, whom you handed over and denied before Pilate when he had decided to release Him. ¹⁴ You denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you. ¹⁵ You killed the Author of life, but God raised Him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ By faith in His name, His name has made this man, whom you see and know, strong. The faith that comes through Him has given him this perfect health in front of all of you.

¹⁷ “Yet now, fellow Jews, I know that you have acted in ignorance, as your rulers have also done. ¹⁸ However, in this way God has fulfilled what He had foretold by the mouths of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, therefore, and turn to God, that your sins may be wiped away, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰ and that He may send the Christ, whom He has previously appointed for you, namely, Jesus! ²¹ Heaven must receive Him until the times when everything is restored, as God has promised since the world began by the mouths of His holy prophets.

²² “Moses said: **‘The Lord, your God, will raise up for you a Prophet from among your brethren, who is like me. You shall listen to Him in everything that He tells you, ²³ and every person who does not listen to that Prophet will be completely cut off from the people.’** ²⁴ Indeed, Samuel and all the other prophets who have spoken after him have also proclaimed these days. ²⁵ You are the children of the prophets and of the Covenant that God made with your fathers, when He said to Abraham: **‘In your Offspring all the families of the earth will be blessed.’** ²⁶ God has raised up His Servant and has sent Him first to you, to bless you by turning each one of you from your wicked ways.”

4

The investigation of Peter and John by the Jewish council

¹ While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees approached them. ² They were extremely annoyed because Peter and John were teaching the people and preaching in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³ They laid their hands on them and put them in custody until the next day. For it was already evening. ⁴ However, many of those who had heard the Word had become believers, and the number of the men grew to about five thousand. ⁵ On the next day, their rulers, elders and scribes assembled in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the High Priest, Caiaphas, John and Alexander were there and all the other members of the High Priest’s family. ⁷ They made the two men stand in the middle and began to ask, “By what power or by what

name have you done this?”

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, replied to them, “Rulers of the people and elders! ⁹ If we are being examined today because of a good deed that we have done to a crippled man, by what means he has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God has raised from the dead, by Him this man is standing here before you in good health! ¹¹ This is **‘the Stone that was rejected by you builders, which has become the Cornerstone.’** ¹² There is also salvation in no one else. For there is no other name under heaven that has been given among human beings by which we must be saved.”

¹³ When they saw how boldly Peter and John spoke and perceived that they were unschooled laymen, they were astonished. Then they realised that these men had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ Since they saw the man who had been healed standing with them, they could not say anything against them. ¹⁵ So, they ordered them to go aside out of the council and then conferred together. ¹⁶ They asked, “What are we to do with these men? For it is evident to all who live in Jerusalem that a remarkable miraculous sign has been performed through them, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ However, that it may not spread any further among the people, let us threaten them not to speak to anyone any longer using this name!”

¹⁸ They called Peter and John and ordered them to give up altogether speaking and teaching by using the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ Peter and John answered them, “You judge whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God! ²⁰ For we cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard.”

²¹ However, they threatened them further and let them go, because they did not find any way of punishing them, because of the people. For they were all glorifying God for what had been done. ²² For the man on whom this miraculous sign had been performed was more than forty years old.

The prayer of the church for boldness

²³ When Peter and John had been released, they went to their own people and reported everything that the High Priests and elders had told them. ²⁴ After they heard it, they raised their voices to God with one accord and said, “Master, You, who **have made the heaven and the earth, the sea and everything in them,** ²⁵ You, who have said through the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father, Your servant David: **‘Why have the nations raged and why have the peoples plotted vain things? ²⁶ The kings of the earth have taken their stand and the rulers have gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ.’** — ²⁷ For truly, both Herod and Pontius Pilate have **gathered together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel** in this city against Your holy Servant

Jesus, **whom You have anointed**,²⁸ to do all the things that Your hand and Your plan had previously decided should be done.²⁹ Even now, Lord, look on their threats and grant to Your servants that they may keep speaking Your Word with all boldness,³⁰ as You stretch out Your hand to heal, and grant that miraculous signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus!”

³¹ After they had prayed, the place where they had assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the Word of God boldly.

The sharing of possessions by the first believers

³² The large number of believers was one in heart and soul, and no one said that any of his possessions was his own, but they possessed everything in common.

³³ With great power the apostles continued to give testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great good will rested on them all.

³⁴ For there was no one among them who was in need. For all who possessed pieces of land or houses used to sell them, bring the proceeds of the things that were sold³⁵ and lay them at the apostles’ feet. These used to be distributed to each one according to the need he had.³⁶ Joseph, the one whom the apostles called “Barnabas,” which is translated as “Son of Encouragement,” a Levite, born in Cyprus,³⁷ sold a field that he owned, brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet.

5

The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira for their deception

¹ A man by the name of Ananias also sold a piece of property together with his wife Sapphira.² He put aside part of the proceeds for himself and his wife was also aware of it. Then he brought a part of them and laid them at the apostles’ feet.³ Peter asked, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart that you tell a lie to the Holy Spirit and put aside for yourself some of the price of the land?⁴ While you had the land, did it not remain your own and, after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have put it into your heart to do this? You have not lied to men but to God.”

⁵ When Ananias heard these words, he fell and breathed out his life. Great fear came on all those who heard about it.⁶ The young men arose, wrapped him up, carried him out and buried him.⁷ There had been an interval of about three hours when his wife came in, without knowing what had happened.⁸ Peter asked her, “Tell me, did you two sell the piece of land for so much?”

She answered, “Yes, for so much.”

⁹ Peter asked her, “Why is it that you two have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.”

¹⁰ Immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her

last. When the young men came in, they found her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.¹¹ Great fear came on the whole church and on all who heard these things.

The performing of many miracles by the apostles

¹² Many miraculous signs and wonders were performed among the people by the apostles. All the brethren used to be in unanimity in Solomon’s Porch.

¹³ None of the others dared to join with them but regarded them highly.¹⁴ Many believers were increasingly being added to the Lord, both men and women.

¹⁵ As a result, people even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them down on beds and mats, so that, when Peter came, at least his shadow might fall on one of them.¹⁶ Many people used to gather even from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those whom unclean spirits troubled, and they were all healed.

The imprisonment of the apostles and their appearance before the Jewish council again

¹⁷ Then the High Priest and all those who were with him, who were members of the local party of the Sadducees, began to be filled with envy.¹⁸ They arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.

¹⁹ However, at night the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out. He said,²⁰ “Go and stand in the Temple and keep on telling the people the full message about this life!”

²¹ After they heard that, they went into the Temple at daybreak and began to teach. The High Priest and those who were with him came and called together the Jewish council, all the elders of the people of Israel. Then they sent some men to the prison to have the apostles brought.²² However, when the officers arrived, they did not find them in prison. They came back and reported,²³ “We found the prison very securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but, when we opened them, we found no one inside.”

²⁴ When the captain of the Temple and the High Priests heard these reports, they were puzzled about them, wondering what might come of this.²⁵ Then someone arrived and told them, “Look! The men whom you put in the prison are standing in the Temple and teaching the people.”

²⁶ Then the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles but without using force, because they were afraid that the people would stone them.²⁷ They brought them and made them stand before the Jewish Council, and the High Priest questioned them²⁸ and said, “Did we not give you strict orders not to teach using this name? Yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you want to bring this Man’s blood on us.”

²⁹ Peter and the other apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.³⁰ The God of our fathers has raised Jesus, whom you had murdered **by hanging Him on a tree**.³¹ God has exalted Him to His right hand as Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and

forgiveness of sins to Israel. ³² We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

Gamaliel's advice and the dismissal of the apostles

³³ When they heard this, they were infuriated and wanted to put them to death. ³⁴ However, a certain man in the council, a Pharisee by the name of Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, who was respected by all the people, stood up and ordered them to put the men outside for a little while. ³⁵ He told them, “Men of Israel, be careful what you intend to do with these men! ³⁶ For Theudas appeared some time ago, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was put to death, and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. ³⁷ After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and drew a host after him in a revolt. He also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. ³⁸ In the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and dismiss them! For, if this purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail, ³⁹ but, if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. Perhaps you will even be found to be fighting against God.”

⁴⁰ He persuaded them. Then they called the apostles in, flogged them, ordered them not to speak using the name of Jesus and let them go. ⁴¹ The apostles went away from the council, rejoicing that they had been thought worthy of being dishonoured for the sake of the Name. ⁴² Every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and telling the Good News that Jesus is the Christ.

6

The appointment of the seven assistants to serve the needs of Greek-speaking widows

¹ In those days, as the number of the disciples was multiplying, those who spoke Greek brought a complaint against those who spoke Aramaic, that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. ² The Twelve called the whole group of disciples together and said, “It is not satisfactory for us to give up the Word of God to serve at tables. ³ Brethren, select seven men from among you who have a good reputation and who are full of the Spirit and wisdom, and we shall put them in charge of this duty. ⁴ However, we shall devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word.”

⁵ The proposal pleased the whole group. So, they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolaus from Antioch, who had previously become a Jew. ⁶ They placed these men before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ The Word of God kept on spreading. The number of disciples in Jerusalem was growing very large. Even many of the priests were becoming believers, as God wanted them to.

The arrest of Stephen

⁸ Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, was working great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. ⁹ Some men of the Synagogue of the Freedmen, as it was called, men from Cyrene and Alexandria and men from Cilicia and Asia, rose up to argue with Stephen. ¹⁰ However, they could not resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.

¹¹ Then they secretly induced some men to say, “We have heard Stephen speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God.”

¹² They stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, went up to him, seized him and took him to the council. ¹³ They produced false witnesses, who said, “This man does not cease speaking words against this Holy Place and against the Law. ¹⁴ For we have heard him saying, ‘This Jesus of Nazareth will tear this place down and will change the customs that Moses has handed down to us.’”

¹⁵ All who sat in the council looked intently at Stephen and saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

7

Stephen's defence

¹ Then the High Priest asked, “Are these things so?”

² Stephen answered, “Fellow-Jews and fathers, listen! **The God of glory** appeared to our father Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. ³ **God told him, ‘Leave your country and your relatives and come to whichever land I shall show you!’**

⁴ “Then Abraham left the country of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. After his father died, God transferred him from there to this land, where you are now living. ⁵ Yet He did not **give** him any inheritance in it, **not even enough to set his foot on**, but, while Abraham had no child, He promised **to give it as a possession to him and to his descendants after him**.

⁶ However, God spoke in this way: that Abraham's **descendants would reside as strangers in a foreign country and that its people would make slaves of them and mistreat them for four hundred years**.

⁷ God said, **‘However, I shall judge the people to whom they will be slaves, and afterwards they will come out and worship Me in this place.’**

⁸ “God gave Abraham the **Covenant of circumcision**. In this situation he fathered Isaac and **circumcised him on the eighth day**. Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. ⁹ When the patriarchs **became jealous of Joseph, they sold him into Egypt**, but **God was with him**. ¹⁰ God rescued Joseph from all his troubles **and gave him favour and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt**, and **Pharaoh made him ruler over Egypt and of his whole household**. ¹¹ Then a **famine** with great misery **came over** all of Egypt and **Canaan**, and our fathers could not find any food. ¹² When **Jacob heard that**

there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers the first time.

¹³ “During the second time, **Joseph made himself known to his brothers**, and the Pharaoh learned about Joseph’s family. ¹⁴ Joseph sent to his father Jacob and asked him and all his relatives to come, consisting of **seventy-five persons**. ¹⁵ So, **Jacob went down to Egypt**. He and our fathers died ¹⁶ and **were brought back to Shechem and laid** in the tomb that **Abraham had bought** for a sum of money **from the sons of Hamor at Shechem**. ¹⁷ When the time of the promise that God had made to Abraham came near, the people **had increased and had become very numerous** in Egypt. ¹⁸ Then **a different king over Egypt arose, who did not know Joseph**. ¹⁹ **By trickery he took advantage of** our race and **mistreated** our fathers by making them expose their babies, that they might not be kept alive. ²⁰ At that time Moses was born and was **well pleasing** to God. For **three months** he was cared for in his father’s home. ²¹ When he was exposed, **Pharaoh’s daughter took him** for herself and brought him up **as her own son**. ²² Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in what he said and did. ²³ When he was in his fortieth year, the thought came to him that he would **visit his brothers, the Israelites**. ²⁴ When he saw a man being mistreated, he defended him. He avenged the man who was being oppressed by **striking down the Egyptian**. ²⁵ Moses thought that his fellow-Israelites would understand that God was giving them deliverance by his hand, but they did not understand. ²⁶ **On the next day he appeared** to them **as they were fighting**. He tried to reconcile them and restore peace by saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why are you doing wrong to one another?’

²⁷ “However, **the man who was doing wrong to his neighbour** pushed Moses away. **He asked**, ‘**Who appointed you to be a ruler and a judge over us?**

²⁸ **Surely you do not want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’**

²⁹ “Because he said that, **Moses fled and became a foreigner residing in the land of Midian** and there he had **two sons**. ³⁰ After forty years had passed, **an Angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning thorn-bush in the wilderness of Mount Sinai**.

³¹ When Moses saw it, he was astonished at the sight. **While he was approaching to observe it carefully, the voice of the Lord came to him:** ³² ‘**I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**’

“Moses began to tremble and **did not dare to look**.

³³ **The Lord told him, ‘Take your sandals off your feet! For the place on which you are standing is holy ground.** ³⁴ **I have clearly seen the oppression of My people, who are in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to rescue them.**

Now, come! Let Me send you to Egypt!’

³⁵ “This same Moses, whom they had rejected, saying, ‘**Who appointed you as a ruler and a judge?**’ God sent to be both a ruler and a redeemer, with the help of the Angel, the one who had appeared to him in the thorn-bush. ³⁶ This man led them out, performing **wonders and miraculous signs in the land of Egypt**, in the Red Sea and, **for forty years, in the wilderness**. ³⁷ This is the Moses who told the Israelites: ‘**God will raise up for you a Prophet like me, out of your brothers.**’ ³⁸ This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness, with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai and with our fathers and he received living oracles to give to us. ³⁹ However, our fathers were not willing to be obedient to him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts they **turned back to Egypt**. ⁴⁰ **They told Aaron, ‘Make gods for us who will go before us! For we do not know what has happened to this Moses, who has brought us out of the land of Egypt.’**

⁴¹ “In those days **they made a calf, offered a sacrifice** to the idol and **rejoiced** in what their hands had made. ⁴² Then God turned away and gave them over to worship **the heavenly bodies**, as Scripture has said in the Book of the Prophets: ‘**Family of Israel, you did not offer slaughtered animals and sacrifices to Me for forty years in the wilderness, did you?** ⁴³ **You took along the tabernacle of Moloch, the star of your god Rompha and the images that you had made to worship. I shall send you away to live beyond Babylon.**’

⁴⁴ “In the wilderness our fathers had the Tabernacle of the Testimony. It was made **according to the pattern that Moses had seen**, as the One who **spoke to Moses** had directed him **to make it**. ⁴⁵ Our fathers also received the Tabernacle in turn from Moses and brought it in, under Joshua, while they were taking possession of the land from the nations whom God drove out before our fathers. It remained until the time of David. ⁴⁶ He found favour before God and asked that he **might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob**. ⁴⁷ However, **Solomon built a house for Him**. ⁴⁸ However, the Most High does not dwell in things made by human hands, as the prophet says: ⁴⁹ “**Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. What kind of house will you build Me?**” asks **the Lord, “or what is the place where I rest?** ⁵⁰ Has not **My hand made all these things?**”

⁵¹ “**Stubborn people and uncircumcised in hearts and ears!** You are always **resisting the Holy Spirit**. As your fathers have done it, you are doing it too.

⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who announced that the Righteous One would come, and now you have become the ones who have betrayed and murdered Him. ⁵³ You were the people who received the Law through angels who were directed to transmit it, but you have

not kept it.”

The stoning of Stephen

⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they became furious and ground their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ However, full of the Holy Spirit, he looked intently up to heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ He said, “Look! I see heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

⁵⁷ However, they shouted aloud and held their ears shut. They rushed at him with one purpose, ⁵⁸ threw him out of the city and began to stone him. The witnesses laid their outer clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹ While they were stoning Stephen, he was making an invocation and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” ⁶⁰ Then he knelt and shouted aloud, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” When he had said this, he fell asleep.

8

The preaching of the Gospel in Samaria and Judea (8:1-12:25)

The persecution and dispersion of believers from Jerusalem

¹ Saul also approved of Stephen’s murder. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem. All except the apostles were scattered throughout districts of Judea and Samaria. ² Devout men took Stephen up for burial and mourned loudly over him. ³ Saul was ravaging the church. He kept going into one house after another, dragging off both men and women and handing them over to prison. ⁴ Therefore, the people who had been scattered went from place to place telling the Good News of the Word.

The preaching of the Gospel in Samaria

⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to the people. ⁶ The crowds kept paying close attention together to the things that were being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the miraculous signs that he was performing. ⁷ For unclean spirits were crying out aloud and were being cast out of many who had them, and many paralysed and crippled people were healed. ⁸ So, there was great joy in that city.

The insincere desire of Simon to impart the gift of the Spirit

⁹ A certain man by the name of Simon had previously been practising magic in the city and astonishing the people of Samaria. He claimed that he was someone great, ¹⁰ and they all, from the least to the greatest, were paying close attention to him and saying, “This man is the power of God that is called ‘Great.’”

¹¹ They were paying close attention to him because he had astonished them with his magic arts for a long time. ¹² However, when they believed Philip as he was telling the Good News about the kingdom of God and about the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptised, both men and women. ¹³ Simon himself also believed and, after he had been baptised, he attached himself to Philip. He continued to be amazed as he

saw the miraculous signs and great miracles that were being performed. ¹⁴ When the apostles, who were in Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ They went down and prayed for the people, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶ For He had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷ Then Peter and John kept laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ When Simon saw that the Spirit was being given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money. ¹⁹ He said, “Give me this authority also, that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit!”

²⁰ Peter told him, “May your money perish with you! For you thought that you could obtain the gift of God by means of money. ²¹ You have no part or share in this message. **For your heart is not right in the sight of God.** ²² Therefore, repent of this wickedness of yours and pray to the Lord, if He will perhaps forgive you for having this thought in your heart! ²³ For I see that you are becoming a **bitter poison and bound by wickedness.**”

²⁴ Simon answered, “You people, pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things that you have spoken about may come on me!”

²⁵ After Peter and John had given their testimony and spoken the Word of the Lord, they also continued to tell the Good News to many villages of the Samaritans as they were returning to Jerusalem.

The Spirit’s instruction to Philip to tell the Gospel to an Ethiopian eunuch

²⁶ An angel of the Lord told Philip, “Get up and go southwards on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza!”

This is desert. ²⁷ He got up and went. A man from Ethiopia was there, a eunuch, who was a high official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was on his way home. He was sitting in his chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, “Go up to this chariot and stay close to it!” ³⁰ Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

³¹ He answered, “How could I, unless someone guided me?”

He invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² The passage of the Scripture that the man was reading was this: **“He was led like a sheep to be slaughtered and, as a lamb is silent before its shearer, so He did not open His mouth. ³³ In His humiliation, His justice was taken away. Who will describe His descendants? For His life has been taken from the earth.”**

³⁴ The eunuch answered Philip, “I ask you, about whom is the prophet saying this, about himself or someone else?”

³⁵ Then Philip began to speak. He began from this passage of Scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. ³⁶ As they were travelling down the road, they came to some water. The eunuch said, "Look! Here is water. What is there to prevent me from being baptised?"

³⁸ He ordered the chariot to stop. Both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptised him. ³⁹ When they had come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ However, Philip was found at Ashdod. As he passed through all the cities, he kept telling the Good News, until he came to Caesarea.

9

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus

¹ Saul was still breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord. He went to the High Priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, that, if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them back to Jerusalem as prisoners. ³ On his journey, as he was coming near Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting Me?"

⁵ Saul asked, "Who are You, Lord?"

He said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

⁶ However, get up, go into the city! You will be told what you must do."

⁷ The men who were travelling with Saul were standing speechless. They heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground. However, when he opened his eyes, he could not see anything. So, they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he could not see and did not eat or drink.

The restoration of sight to Saul and his baptism

¹⁰ There was a certain disciple at Damascus by the name of Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision: "Ananias!"

He answered, "Yes, Lord, here I am."

¹¹ The Lord told him, "Get up, go to the street called 'Straight,' and in the home of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus by the name of Saul! For, you must know, he is praying. ¹² He has also seen in a vision that a man by the name of Ananias has come in and laid his hands on him, that he may get his sight back."

¹³ Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much wrong this man has done to Your holy people in Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and here he has authority from the Chief Priests to arrest all who call on Your name."

¹⁵ However, the Lord told Ananias, "Go! For this man is My chosen instrument, to carry My name before the Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel.

¹⁶ For I shall show him how much he must suffer for the sake of My name."

¹⁷ Ananias went and arrived at the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me, even Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here, that you may get your sight back and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

¹⁸ Immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptised. ¹⁹ Then he had something to eat and regained his strength.

The preaching of the Gospel by Saul at Damascus

Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus. ²⁰ At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. ²¹ All who heard him were amazed and asked, "Is he not the man who made havoc among those in Jerusalem who were calling on this name and has he not come here for this purpose, to take them as prisoners to the High Priests?"

²² However, Saul became stronger and stronger and was causing consternation in the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ. ²³ After many days had gone by, the Jews plotted to murder him, ²⁴ but Saul was informed about their plot. They were closely watching the gates day and night to murder him, ²⁵ but his disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall, by lowering him in a basket. ²⁶ After he had arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to associate with the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, because they did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷ However, Barnabas took an interest in him and brought him to the apostles. He related to them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road, what the Lord had told him and how in Damascus Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. ²⁸ Then he moved about freely with them in Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. ²⁹ He was talking with the Greek-speaking Jews and debating with them, but they attempted to murder him. ³⁰ When the fellow-disciples found out about it, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹ Therefore, the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria continued to have peace and be strengthened. It lived in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit and continued to grow in numbers.

Peter's activity in western Palestine and the healing of Aeneas and the raising of Dorcas

³² While Peter was travelling around everywhere, he also went down to God's holy people who were living in Lydda. ³³ There he found a man by the name of Aeneas who was paralysed and had been lying on a mat for eight years. ³⁴ Peter told him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your own bed."

Then Aeneas got up immediately. ³⁵ All who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

³⁶ In Joppa there was a woman-disciple by the name

of Tabitha. When the name is translated, it is “Dorcas.” She was always doing good works and giving help to poor people. ³⁷ However, in those days she became sick and died. People washed her and laid her in a room upstairs. ³⁸ Since Lydda is near Joppa, the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, sent two men to him and urged him: “Do not fail to come here to us!”

³⁹ Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived there, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing on themselves all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was still with them. ⁴⁰ However, Peter sent all the people out of the room. He knelt and prayed. Then he turned toward the body and said, “Tabitha, get up!”

She opened her eyes and, when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her stand up. Then he called God’s holy people, including the widows, and presented her to them alive. ⁴² This became known all over Joppa, and many people became believers in the Lord. ⁴³ Peter stayed in Joppa for many days with Simon, a tanner.

10

The vision seen by the centurion Cornelius at Caesarea

¹ In Caesarea there was a man by the name of Cornelius, a centurion in what was called “the Italian Regiment.” ² He was a devout man, who feared God together with all his family. He gave much to the poor among the people and used to pray to God continually. ³ About the ninth hour of the day he had a vision, in which he clearly saw an angel of God, who came in to him and said to him, “Cornelius!”

⁴ He stared at the angel and was terrified. He asked him, “What is it, Lord?”

The angel answered him, “Your prayers and your gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. ⁵ Now send some men to Joppa, to bring back a man named Simon, who is also called ‘Peter’! ⁶ He is a guest of Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea.”

⁷ When the angel who was speaking to him had gone away, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who used to wait on him. ⁸ He explained everything to them and sent them to Joppa.

Three visions that encouraged Peter to preach the Gospel to a Gentile family

⁹ The next day, while they were on their journey and getting close to the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. ¹⁰ However, he became hungry and wanted to eat, but, while they were preparing food, he fell into a trance. ¹¹ He saw heaven opened and an object like a large linen sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals, reptiles of the earth and birds of the sky. ¹³ A voice came to

him, “Get up, Peter! Kill and eat!”

¹⁴ Peter answered, “Surely not, Lord! For I have never eaten anything that is defiled or unclean.”

¹⁵ A voice spoke to him a second time: “Stop regarding as unclean the things that God has declared clean!”

¹⁶ This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into heaven.

The arrival at Joppa of the messengers from Cornelius

¹⁷ While Peter was greatly perplexed in his own mind about what the vision that he had seen might mean, the men who had been sent by Cornelius found out where Simon’s house was and stood at the gate.

¹⁸ They called and asked, “Is Simon, who is also called ‘Peter,’ staying here?”

¹⁹ While Peter was pondering about the vision, the Spirit told him, “Look! Three men are looking for you. ²⁰ Get up, go down and do not hesitate at all to go with them! For I have sent them.”

²¹ Peter went down to the men and said, “Yes, I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason why you are here?”

²² They answered, “Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous man, who fears God and who is well spoken of by the whole nation of the Jews, has had it revealed to him by a holy angel that he should summon you to his house and hear what you have to say.”

²³ Then Peter invited them to come in and made them his guests. The next day he went away with them, and some of the fellow-disciples from Joppa accompanied him.

Peter’s entry into the house of Cornelius

²⁴ On the following day he arrived at Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called his relatives and close friends together. ²⁵ When Peter was going in, Cornelius met him, fell at his feet and worshipped him. ²⁶ However, Peter made him get up and said, “Stand up! I myself am also a man.”

²⁷ While Peter was talking to him, he went inside and found that many people had come together. ²⁸ He told them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to associate with anyone from another nation or visit him. However, God has shown me that I should not call anyone defiled or unclean. ²⁹ That is also why I came without any objection when I was sent for. I ask, therefore, why have you sent for me?”

³⁰ Cornelius answered, “Three days ago until this hour, the ninth hour, I was praying in my house, when suddenly a man in shining clothes stood in front of me. ³¹ He said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your gifts to the poor have been remembered in the sight of God. ³² Therefore, send to Joppa and ask for Simon, who is also called ‘Peter,’ to come to you! He is a guest at the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’ ³³ Therefore, I sent to you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God to hear all the

things that have been commanded you by the Lord.”

Peter's preaching of the Good News to the Gentile family at Caesarea

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: “Now I realise that it is true that **God does not show favouritism**,³⁵ but that in every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him.³⁶ You know **the Word that God has sent** to the people of Israel to **tell the Good News of peace** through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.³⁷ You know what took place throughout Judea. It began in Galilee after the baptism that John preached.³⁸ It was about Jesus of Nazareth, how **God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit** and power. He went around doing good and healing all who were under the tyranny of the Devil, because God was with Him.³⁹ We are witnesses of all the things that He did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also executed Him **by hanging Him on a tree**.⁴⁰ This man God raised on the third day and caused Him to be seen.⁴¹ He was not seen by all the people but by witnesses whom God had selected beforehand, by us, who ate and drank with Him after He had risen from the dead.⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that this is the One whom God has appointed to be the judge of the living and the dead.⁴³ All the prophets testify about Him, that, through His name, everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.”

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all who were hearing the Word.⁴⁵ The believers who had been circumcised, namely, all those who had come with Peter, were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and glorifying God. Then Peter said,⁴⁷ “Surely no one can refuse water, that these people should not be baptised? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we also have.”

⁴⁸ He ordered that they should be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for a few days.

11

Peter's defence of his visit to the Gentile family at Caesarea

¹ The apostles and other fellow-disciples throughout Judea heard that even the Gentiles had received the Word of God.² However, when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those who belonged to the circumcision disputed with him.³ They said, “Why have you gone to visit uncircumcised men and eaten with them?”

⁴ Then Peter began and explained it to them point by point. He said,⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying and, in a trance, I saw a vision. An object like a large linen sheet was coming down, being lowered by its four corners out of heaven and came right down to me.⁶ When I looked at it intently, I examined it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, reptiles and birds of the sky.⁷ I also heard a voice tell-

ing me, ‘Get up, Peter! Kill and eat.’⁸ However, I answered, ‘Surely not, Lord! For nothing defiled or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’⁹ A voice spoke from heaven a second time, ‘Stop regarding as unclean the things that God has declared clean!’¹⁰ This happened three times. Then it was all drawn up into heaven again.¹¹ At that very moment three men stood at the house where we were, the ones who had been sent to me from Caesarea.¹² The Spirit told me to go with them without making any distinction. These six fellow-disciples also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house.¹³ He reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa and ask Simon, who is also called “Peter,” to come!’¹⁴ He will speak a message to you by which you and all your family will be saved.’

¹⁵ “When I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them as He also did on us at the beginning.¹⁶ Then I remembered the Word of the Lord, how He used to say: ‘John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.’¹⁷ Therefore, if God has given to them the same gift as He gave to us too when we became believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?”

¹⁸ When they had heard this, they became silent and began to glorify God, saying, “Therefore, God has given repentance to life even to the Gentiles.”

The life at the church at Antioch where there were many Gentiles

¹⁹ The people who were scattered because of the persecution that broke out in connection with Stephen went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch but spoke the Word only to Jews.²⁰ However, there were some men among them from Cyprus and Cyrene. They came to Antioch and began to speak also to the Greeks, telling them the Good News about the Lord Jesus.²¹ The hand of the Lord was with them, and many became believers and turned to the Lord.

²² The local church at Jerusalem heard the news about them and sent Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.²³ When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to purpose in their hearts to remain in the Lord.²⁴ For Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith; and many people were added to the Lord.

²⁵ Then he left for Tarsus to look for Saul.²⁶ He found him and brought him to Antioch. Then they met with the church for a whole year and taught many of people. It was at Antioch that the disciples were first commonly known as “Christians.”

The help provided by believers at Antioch to relieve famine in Judea

²⁷ During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.²⁸ One of them by the name of Agabus stood up and by the Spirit showed that there was going to be a severe famine all over the world (This happened during the time of Claudius).²⁹ Each one of the disciples arranged, as he had plenty, to send relief to the fellow-Christians living in Judea.³⁰ They

did this and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

12

The martyrdom of James and the imprisonment and escape of Peter

¹ At about that time King Herod laid his hands on some who belonged to the church, to harm them. ² He executed James, the brother of John, with the sword.

³ When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he arrested Peter as well. It happened during the days of Unleavened Bread. ⁴ When Herod had taken Peter also into custody, he put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of four soldiers each to guard him. Herod wanted to bring him up before the people after the Passover. ⁵ Peter was therefore being kept in prison, and the church was continuously making fervent prayer to God for him. ⁶ The night before Herod was intending to bring Peter before the people, he was sleeping between two soldiers, tied up with two chains, and guards were watching the prison in front of the door. ⁷ Suddenly an angel of the Lord stood near him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him. He said, "Get up, quickly!" and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. ⁸ The angel told him, "Put on your clothes and your sandals!" Peter did this. Then the angel told him, "Wrap your outer-garment around yourself and follow me!"

⁹ Peter went outside and began to follow and did not realise that what was being done by the agency of the angel was real. He thought he was seeing a vision.

¹⁰ They passed through the first guard and the second guard and came to the iron gate that led into the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went outside and walked along one street. There the angel suddenly left him. ¹¹ Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel and has rescued me from the hand of Herod and from everything that the Jewish people have been anticipating."

¹² When he realised what had happened, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was also called "Mark." Many people had gathered there and were praying. ¹³ Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl by the name of Rhoda came to answer the door. ¹⁴ When she recognised Peter's voice, she was so glad that she ran inside without opening the gate and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate. ¹⁵ They told her, "You are out of your mind!"

However, she kept on insisting that it was so. Then they said, "It is his angel."

¹⁶ However, Peter kept on knocking, and, when they opened the gate and saw him, they were astonished.

¹⁷ Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. He said, "Tell these things to James and the other fellow-Christians!"

Then he left and travelled to another place.

¹⁸ When daylight came, there was considerable consternation among the soldiers as they asked what had become of Peter. ¹⁹ After Herod had made a thorough search for Peter without finding him, he examined the guards and commanded that they should be led away to execution.

The death of Herod Agrippa

Then Herod went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there. ²⁰ He had been very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon, but they came to him in a group. After they had won over Blastus, who was the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because the king's country used to provide food for their country.

²¹ On the day that had been arranged, Herod put on his royal robe, sat on the platform and delivered a public address to them. ²² The populace kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!"

²³ Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he had not given the glory to God. He was eaten by worms and died.

²⁴ However, the Word of God continued to spread and win many followers.

The return to Antioch of the delegation that had been sent to Jerusalem

²⁵ Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem after they had completed the distribution of aid. They brought along with them John, who was also called "Mark."

13

The extension of the Gospel to the ends of the earth (13:1-28:31)

The sending of Barnabas and Saul to proclaim the Gospel in Gentile areas

¹ In the local church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon (called "Niger"), Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.

² While they were performing service to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set Barnabas and Saul apart for Me for the work to which I have called them!"

³ Then, after they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

The proclamation of the Gospel by Barnabas and Saul in Cyprus

⁴ So, Barnabas and Saul, sent by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus. ⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they began to preach the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as their assistant. ⁶ They went through the whole island as far as Paphos. There they found a sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew named Barjesus. ⁷ He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. The proconsul sent for Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the Word of God. ⁸ However, the sorcerer Elymas (that was what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from his faith.

⁹ However, Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked steadily at Elymas, ¹⁰ and said, "O you who are full of all deceit and villainy, son of

the Devil, enemy of all that is right! Will you not stop twisting **the straight ways of the Lord?**¹¹ Now, the Lord's hand is also on you. You will be blind and not see the sun for a while."

Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he went around looking for people to lead him by the hand.¹² When the proconsul saw what had happened, he began to believe. For he was amazed at the teaching of the Lord.

Paul's sermon at Antioch in Pisidia

¹³ Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and went to Perga in Pamphylia. There John left them and returned to Jerusalem.¹⁴ However, they themselves went across from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. On the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.¹⁵ After the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent a message to them, saying: "Fellow-Jews, if you have any word of encouragement for the people, say it!"

¹⁶ Paul stood up, motioned with his hand and said, "Men of Israel, and you Gentiles who fear God, listen to me.¹⁷ The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made them a great people while they lived as foreign residents in Egypt and, **with an uplifted arm, He led them out of it.**¹⁸ **He put up with their ways** for about forty years **in the wilderness.**¹⁹ Then **He destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan** and **gave** them their **land as their inheritance.**²⁰ He did this in about four hundred and fifty years. After that, He gave them judges, until the prophet Samuel.

²¹ "After that, the people asked for a king for themselves, and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years.

²² However, when God had removed him, He raised David up as their king. He testified concerning him: '**I have found David, the son of Jesse, to be a man after My own heart, who will do everything that I want him to do.**'

²³ "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus, as He had promised.²⁴ Before the coming of Jesus, John had first preached to all the people of Israel that they should repent and be baptised.²⁵ As John was completing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the One. No, but He is coming after me, and I am not worthy to untie the sandals on His feet.'

²⁶ "Fellow-Jews, sons of the family of Abraham and the Gentiles among you who fear God, it is **to us** that **the message** of this salvation **has been sent.**²⁷ The people who live in Jerusalem and their rulers did not know Him; and, by condemning Him, they fulfilled the messages of the prophets, who are read every Sabbath.²⁸ Although they found no reason to kill Him, they asked Pilate to have Him executed.²⁹ When they had fulfilled everything that had been written about Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.³⁰ However, God raised Him from the

dead;³¹ and for many days He appeared to those who had come up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now His witnesses to the people.³² We are also telling you the Good News about what God has promised the fathers,³³ that God has fulfilled it for us, their children, by raising Jesus, as the Scriptures have also said in the second Psalm: '**You are My Son. To-day I have begotten You.**'³⁴ That He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to **decay**, He has spoken like this: '**I shall give you the holy and sure blessings of David.**'³⁵ Therefore, He says, in a second place: '**You will not allow Your Holy One to see decay.**'³⁶ After **David** had served the people of his own time, he, by God's will, **fell asleep**, was gathered **to his forefathers** and saw decay;³⁷ but the One whom God raised did not see decay.

³⁸ "Therefore, let it be known to you, fellow-Jews, that through this Man forgiveness of sins is being announced to you,³⁹ even from everything from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses! Through Him everyone who believes is justified.⁴⁰ Therefore, beware that what has been spoken in the prophets does not come on you:⁴¹ '**Look, scorners, marvel and perish! For I am doing something in your days that you will never believe if anyone tells you!**'"

⁴² As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people urged them that these things should be told them on the next Sabbath.⁴³ When the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and Gentile converts who feared God followed Paul and Barnabas. They spoke to them and kept urging them to continue in God's grace.

The arousal of envy among Jews because of Gentile interest at Antioch

⁴⁴ The next Sabbath almost the whole city assembled to hear God's Word.⁴⁵ When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. They contradicted the things that were being said by Paul and spoke abusively.

⁴⁶ Paul and Barnabas boldly declared: "It was necessary for us to speak the Word of God to you first. Since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, look! We are turning to the Gentiles.

⁴⁷ For that is what the Lord has commanded us: '**I have set You as the Light of the Gentiles, that You may bring salvation as far as the ends of the earth.**'"

⁴⁸ When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and kept praising what the Lord had said, and all who had been appointed to eternal life became believers.

⁴⁹ The Word of the Lord kept spreading throughout the whole region.⁵⁰ However, the Jews incited the women of high social standing who feared God and the leading men of the city. They instigated persecution against Paul and Barnabas and drove them out of their region.⁵¹ However, Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Ico-

nium; ⁵² and the disciples continued to be filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

14

The proclamation of the Gospel by Paul and Barnabas at Iconium

¹ In Iconium Paul and Barnabas went to the synagogue of the Jews in the same manner and spoke in such a way that a large crowd of Jews and Gentiles became believers. ² However, the Jews who had refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the Christians. ³ So, Paul and Barnabas stayed there for a long time and continued to speak boldly in the Lord, who bore witness to the message of His grace by granting that miraculous signs and wonders should be done through their hands. ⁴ However, the people of the town were divided. Some sided with the Jews, and others with the apostles. ⁵ However, when both the Gentiles and the Jews with their rulers made an attempt to mistreat and stone Paul and Barnabas, ⁶ they found out about it and escaped to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding district. ⁷ They continued to tell the Good News there.

Paul's healing of a lame man at Lystra

⁸ There was a man in Lystra who was sitting down, because his feet had no strength. He had been lame from his birth and had never walked. ⁹ This man heard Paul speaking. Paul watched him and, when he saw that the man had faith to be healed, ¹⁰ he said with a loud voice, "**Stand up straight on your feet!**"

The man jumped up and began to walk. ¹¹ When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us!" ¹² They were calling Barnabas "Zeus" and Paul "Hermes," because Paul was the chief speaker. ¹³ The priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought bulls and garlands to the gates, because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices. ¹⁴ When the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard about this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting, ¹⁵ "Men, why are you doing this? We too are just human beings, and our feelings are like yours. We are telling you the Good News, that you may turn away from these worthless things to the living God, **who has made the heaven, the earth, the sea and everything in them.**" ¹⁶ In the generations that have gone by He allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷ Yet He did not leave Himself without witness, by doing good, giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling you with food and your hearts with happiness."

¹⁸ Although they said these things, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

The stoning of Paul at Lystra, the visit to Derbe and the return to Antioch in Syria

¹⁹ However, then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the people over. They stoned Paul

and dragged him outside of the city, thinking that he was dead. ²⁰ However, when the disciples gathered around him, he got up and went into the city.

²⁰ The next day Paul set out with Barnabas for Derbe.

²¹ After they had told the Good News to that city and had made many disciples, they went back to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. ²² They strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

²³ Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church. When they had prayed for them with fasting, they committed them to the Lord, in whom they had become believers. ²⁴ They passed through Pisidia and came into Pamphylia. ²⁵ After they had spoken the Word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.

²⁶ From there they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work that they had now completed. ²⁷ When they arrived there, they gathered the church together and reported all the things that God had done with them, and that He had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. ²⁸ Then they spent a considerable time with the disciples.

15

The meeting at Jerusalem about whether the Gentiles had to observe the Law of Moses

¹ Some men came down from Judea and began to teach the fellow-Christians: "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

² When Paul and Barnabas had considerable conflict and debate with them, it was arranged that Paul, Barnabas and some of their other people should go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about this question. ³ When they had been sent on their way by the church, and, as they were going through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told in detail about the conversion of the Gentiles and made all the fellow-Christians very glad. ⁴ When they arrived at Jerusalem, the church, the apostles and the elders welcomed them, and they reported all the things that God had been doing with them. ⁵ However, some of the party of the Pharisees who had become believers stood up and said that it was necessary to circumcise them and command them to keep the Law of Moses. ⁶ The apostles and elders assembled to consider this question. ⁷ After there had been much discussion, Peter stood up and said to them, "Men and fellow-Jews, you know that in the first days God made a choice among you that the Gentiles should, through my mouth, hear the Word of the Good News and become believers. ⁸ Then God, who knows the hearts, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He had also done to us. ⁹ He made no distinction between us and them, when He purified their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now then, why are you testing God by putting a yoke on the necks of the

disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹ No! Through the grace of the Lord Jesus we believe to be saved, just as they also do.”

¹² The whole assembly became silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they described all the miraculous signs and wonders that God had been performing among the Gentiles through them.

¹³ After they had finished speaking, James responded, “Men and brethren, listen to me. ¹⁴ Simon has described how God first concerned Himself about winning a people from among the Gentiles for His name.

¹⁵ The Words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as Scripture has said: ¹⁶ **‘After this I shall return and rebuild the tent of David, which has fallen, and rebuild and restore the parts of it that have been torn down, ¹⁷ that the rest of mankind, even all the Gentiles on whom My name has been called, may be intent on the Lord. This is what the Lord says, who is doing these things, things that have been known from eternity.’** ¹⁹ Therefore, I for my part judge that we should stop making it difficult for the people from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, ²⁰ but that we should send a letter to them, that they should abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from what has been strangled and from blood. ²¹ For Moses has had people who preach him in every city from generations long ago and he is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.”

²² Then the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: Judas, called Barsabbas, and Silas, men who were leaders among the fellow-Christians. ²³ They wrote this letter for them to deliver: “The apostles and the elders, Christians, To the fellow-Christians who come from the Gentiles throughout Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings! ²⁴ Since we have heard that some men have gone out from us without our instructions and have been subverting you by what they have been saying and continue to unsettle your souls, ²⁵ we have met together unanimously and decided to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ Therefore, we are sending Judas and Silas, who also will themselves deliver the same report to you by word of mouth. ²⁸ For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these necessary things: ²⁹ that you should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will be doing well if you keep yourselves free from these things. Farewell!”

³⁰ Therefore, the men were sent on their way and went down to Antioch. They gathered the community together and handed over the letter. ³¹ The people read it and rejoiced over its encouraging message. ³² Judas

and Silas, who were themselves also prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the fellow-Christians. ³³ After they had spent some time, they were sent on their way with a greeting of peace from the fellow-Christians to those who had sent them.

[³⁴] ³⁵ However, Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch and, along with many others, they kept on teaching and telling the Good News of the Word of the Lord.

The beginning of the second mission-journey by Paul and Silas

³⁶ After some days Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit our fellow-Christians in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord and see how they are!”

³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, who was called “Mark,” along with them too. ³⁸ However, Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them into the work. ³⁹ Such a sharp disagreement arose that they separated from each other; and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. ⁴⁰ However, Paul chose Silas and, after the fellow-Christians had committed him to the grace of the Lord, he departed. ⁴¹ He kept going through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

16

The joining of Timothy to Paul and Silas at Lystra

¹ Paul also arrived at Derbe and Lystra. Here there was a disciple by the name of Timothy. His mother was a Jewess and a believer, but his father was a Greek. ² The Christians at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. ³ Paul wanted Timothy to go along with him, so he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, because they all knew that his father had been a Greek. ⁴ As they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decisions to observe that the apostles and elders in Jerusalem had made. ⁵ Therefore, the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew in number every day.

The call of Paul and Silas to preach the Gospel in Macedonia and the addition of Luke

⁶ They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, but the Holy Spirit had prevented them from speaking the Word in Asia. ⁷ They went down to Mysia and tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them. ⁸ After they passed by Mysia, they went down to Troas. ⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia, who was standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” ¹⁰ As soon as Paul had seen the vision, we immediately looked for a way to go to Macedonia, since we concluded that God had called us to tell them the Good News.

The baptism of Lydia, the imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi and the conversion of a jailer and his family

¹¹ After we had put out to sea from Troas, we sailed straight to Samothrace and the next day to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a city belong-

ing to the first part of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We continued to stay in that city for some days.

¹³ On the Sabbath day we went outside of the gate and along the river, where we thought there was a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had assembled there. ¹⁴ There was a woman by the name of Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth, who came from the city of Thyatira and who was a worshipper of God. As she was listening, the Lord opened her heart to take heed of the things that were being said by Paul. ¹⁵ When she and her family had been baptised, she urged us, "If you are convinced that I believe in the Lord, come to my house and stay!" She urged us strongly.

¹⁶ Once while we were going to the place of prayer, a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future met us. She made great profit for her owners by fortune telling. ¹⁷ She used to follow Paul and us and shout, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."

¹⁸ She continued to do this for many days. However, Paul was greatly annoyed, turned to her and told the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!"

The spirit came out at that very hour. ¹⁹ When her owners saw that their hope of making a profit had gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the marketplace before the magistrates. ²⁰ They brought them before the chief magistrates and said, "These men are Jews and are throwing our city into confusion. ²¹ They are announcing customs that are not lawful for us, who are Romans, to adopt or practise."

²² The crowd joined in the attack against them. Then the chief magistrates tore the clothes off Paul and Silas and ordered that they should be beaten with rods.

²³ After they had flogged them severely, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to guard them securely. ²⁴ Since he had received such an order, the jailer put them in the inmost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. ²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. Immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened. ²⁷ The jailer woke from sleep and, when he saw that the prison doors had been opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ However, Paul shouted aloud, "Do not harm yourself at all! For we are all here."

²⁹ The jailer asked for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He took them outside and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹ They answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your family."

³² They spoke the Word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³ He took them with him at that hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he and all his family were baptised.

³⁴ He brought them up into his home and set a meal before them. He rejoiced that he had come to believe in God and so did everyone in his household. ³⁵ When daylight came, the chief magistrates sent their police with the order: "Release those men!"

³⁶ The jailer reported these words to Paul. He said, "The chief magistrates have sent word that you and Silas should be released. So, come out now and **go in peace!**"

³⁷ However, Paul told them, "They have beaten us publicly, although we have not been found guilty and although we are Roman citizens and they have thrown us into prison. Are they now trying to throw us out secretly? No indeed! Rather, let them come themselves and conduct us out!"

³⁸ The police reported these words to the chief magistrates. When they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were afraid. ³⁹ They came and pleaded with them, escorted them out and requested them to leave the city. ⁴⁰ After Paul and Silas had left the prison, they went to Lydia; and, when they had seen the fellow-Christians and encouraged them, they departed.

17

The proclamation of the Gospel at Thessalonica

¹ Paul and Silas took the road through Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica. There the Jews had a synagogue. ² As his custom was, Paul went in to them and on three Sabbaths had discussions with them based on the Scriptures. ³ He explained the Scriptures and demonstrated to the Jews that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and rise from the dead. He said, "This One is the Christ, Jesus, whom I am proclaiming to you."

⁴ Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas. A large crowd of the God-fearing Greeks also did and a considerable number of the wives of the chief men. ⁵ However, the Jews became jealous, took some wicked men from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They approached Jason's home and tried to bring Paul and Silas out to the people. ⁶ When they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other Christians before the city officials, shouting, "These men, who have made trouble all over the world, have come here, too. ⁷ Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all acting contrary to Caesar's decrees by saying that there is another King, Jesus."

⁸ They stirred up the crowd and the city officials who heard these things. ⁹ After the officials had taken security from Jason and the others, they let them go.

¹⁰ The Christians immediately sent Paul and Silas

away by night to Berea.

The reception of the Gospel by the people at Berea

When they arrived there, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹ These people were nobler than those at Thessalonica were. For they received the Word with all eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if these things were so. ¹² Therefore, many of them became believers, and a considerable number of well-to-do Greek women and Greek men also did. ¹³ However, when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that the Word of God had been preached by Paul at Berea also, they went there too, caused the crowds to waver and stirred them up. ¹⁴ Then the Christians immediately sent Paul away to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea.

The attempt by Paul to make disciples at Athens

¹⁵ The men who escorted Paul took him as far as Athens. They received an instruction for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible and left.

¹⁶ While Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was irritated in him when he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ Therefore, he had discussions in the synagogue with the Jews and with the God-fearing Greeks and in the marketplace every day with people who happened to be there. ¹⁸ Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also had conversations with him, but some were asking, "What might this scrap-collector want to say?" Others were saying, "He seems to be one who proclaims foreign divinities," because he was telling the Good News about Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ They took an interest in him, brought him to the Areopagus and asked, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting?" ²⁰ For you are introducing some astonishingly strange things into our ears. Therefore, we want to know what these things mean."

²¹ All the Athenians and the foreigners who were living there spent their time doing nothing but either saying or listening to something quite new.

²² Paul stood in the meeting of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. ²³ For, as I walked around and carefully observed your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: 'To an unknown god.' Therefore, I am telling you about what you are worshipping, although you do not know about it. ²⁴ **God, who made** the world and everything in it, is the Lord of **heaven and earth**. He does not live in temples made by human hands, ²⁵ and human hands do not serve Him as if He needed anything. He Himself **gives** everyone **life, breath** and everything else. ²⁶ From one man He has made every nation of mankind to live all over the earth. He has set the times allotted to them and the boundaries inside which they should live, ²⁷ that they may search for God and perhaps feel their way to Him and find Him, although He is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ For in Him we live, move and exist, as even some of your poets have said, 'For, we also

are His offspring.' ²⁹ Therefore, since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the Divine Being is like gold, silver or stone, like an image that the art and the imagination of a human being have formed. ³⁰ Although in past times God overlooked such ignorance, He now commands people everywhere that they should all repent, ³¹ because He has set a day when **He is going to judge the world justly**, by a Man whom He has appointed. He has provided everyone reason to believe this by raising Him from the dead."

³² When they heard about a resurrection of the dead, some began to mock, and others said, "We shall listen to you again about this."

³³ In that situation Paul went out from among them.

³⁴ However, some men joined him and became believers. Among them were also Dionysius, who was a member of the Areopagus, a woman by the name of Damaris and some others with them.

18

The proclamation of the Gospel by Paul at Corinth

After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. ² He found a Jew by the name of Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to them, ³ and, because he had the same trade, he stayed with them and worked. For by occupation they were tent-makers. ⁴ He used to have discussions in the synagogue every Sabbath and tried to persuade both Jews and Greeks. ⁵ However, when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself entirely to the Word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. ⁶ However, when the Jews opposed Paul and blasphemed, he shook off his garments and told them, "Let your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I shall go to the Gentiles."

⁷ Then he moved away from there and went to the home of a man by the name of Titius Justus, who worshipped God and whose house was next door to the synagogue. ⁸ Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, became a believer in the Lord, with his whole family, and many other people in Corinth who heard Paul were becoming believers and being baptised. ⁹ One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision, "**Stop being afraid** but keep speaking and do not be silent! ¹⁰ For **I am with you**, and no one will attack you to harm you, because I have many people in this city."

¹¹ Paul remained there for a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them. ¹² However, while Gallio was the proconsul of Achaia, the Jews united in an attack on Paul and brought him to the judicial platform. ¹³ They said, "This man is persuading the people to worship God in ways that are contrary to the Law."

¹⁴ When Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio

told the Jews, “You Jews, if there were some misdemeanour or wicked crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to your complaint. ¹⁵ However, since there are questions about words, names and your own Law, see to it yourselves! I do not want to be a judge of these matters.”

¹⁶ Then he drove them away from the judicial platform. ¹⁷ Then all of them took hold of Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and began to beat him in front of the judicial platform, but Gallio was not concerned about these things at all.

Paul's hasty visit to Palestine

¹⁸ Paul remained for a considerable time. Then he said farewell to the fellow-Christians and sailed for Syria. Priscilla and Aquila went with him. At Cenchrea Paul had his hair cut, because he had taken a vow. ¹⁹ They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and had discussions with the Jews. ²⁰ They asked him to stay longer, but he declined. ²¹ However, when he said farewell to them, he told them, “I shall come back to you if it is God’s will,” and sailed from Ephesus. ²² After Paul had landed at Caesarea and had gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch.

Paul's third mission-journey and the proclamation by Apollos at Ephesus

²³ After Paul had spent some time there, he set out and travelled to one place after the other through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. ²⁴ A Jew by the name of Apollos, a native of Alexandria, had arrived at Ephesus. He was a learned man and mighty in the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord and used to speak with burning zeal, teaching the story of Jesus accurately but knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him to their home and explained the way of God to him more accurately. ²⁷ When Apollos wished to cross over to Achaia, the fellow-Christians encouraged him to do so and wrote to the disciples there that they should welcome him. When he arrived, he gave much help to those who through grace had become believers. ²⁸ For he used to completely refute the Jews vigorously and in public, showing through the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

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The administration of Christian baptism to about twelve men at Ephesus

¹ While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul travelled through the higher country and came down to Ephesus. There he found some disciples, ² and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?”

They replied to him, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

³ He asked them, “Into what, then, were you baptised?”

They answered, “Into John’s baptism.”

⁴ Paul said, “John baptised with the baptism of repentance and told the people to believe in the One who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”

⁵ When they heard this, they were baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit also came on them, and they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all. ⁸ Paul went into the synagogue and continued to speak boldly for three months, having discussions, and trying to convince people about matters related to the kingdom of God.

⁹ When some became obstinate, refused to believe and slandered the Way before the congregation, Paul left them, withdrew his disciples and held daily discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the Word of the Lord. ¹¹ God kept performing extraordinary miracles through Paul’s hands, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were taken to the sick, and they were freed from their diseases, and the evil spirits came out of them. ¹³ Some of the Jewish exorcists who used to travel around even attempted to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits. They were saying, “I order you to come out, by the Jesus whom Paul is preaching!” ¹⁴ There were seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish Chief Priest, who were doing this. ¹⁵ However, the evil spirit answered them, “I know about Jesus and I know Paul, but who are you?”

¹⁶ Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them, got the better of them and overpowered them all, so that they ran away from that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became known to all, both the Jews and the Greeks who were living in Ephesus. Fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus began to be magnified. ¹⁸ Many of those who had become believers came and made confession and revealed their spells. ¹⁹ Many of those who had practised magic gathered their scrolls and began to burn them in front of everybody. People added up the value of these books and found that they were worth fifty thousand drachmas. ²⁰ In this way the Word of the Lord kept growing strongly and having power.

The riot at Ephesus

²¹ After these things had happened, Paul decided in the Spirit to go through Macedonia and Achaia and journey to Jerusalem. He said, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.”

²² He sent two of his assistants, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed for a while in Asia.

²³ About that time there was a considerable disturbance about the Way. ²⁴ A silversmith by the name of Demetrius used to provide considerable business for his fellow-craftsmen by making silver shrines of Artemis. ²⁵ He called a meeting of these men and others

who made similar things and said, “Men, you know that we get our prosperity from this business, ²⁶ and you see and hear that this Paul has convinced and led astray many of people, not only in Ephesus but almost all over the province of Asia. He has been telling them, ‘Gods that have been made by human hands are not gods.’ ²⁷ Not only is there this risk for us, that our line of business will get a bad name but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be despised and that the goddess, whom all Asia and the world worship, is even about to be cast down from her majesty.”

²⁸ When they heard this, they became furious and began to shout, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”

²⁹ The city was filled with the uproar. They dragged along with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul’s travelling-companions from Macedonia, and rushed into the theatre together. ³⁰ Although Paul wanted to go into the assembly, the other disciples would not allow him.

³¹ Even some of the officials of the province of Asia, who were friendly to Paul, sent some men to him to plead with him not to risk going into the theatre.

³² Some were shouting one thing, some another, because the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together. ³³ The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd instructed him what to do. Alexander motioned with his hand and wanted to make a defence to the people. ³⁴ However, when they found out he was a Jew, they all with one voice kept shouting for about two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”

³⁵ After the city clerk had quietened the crowd, he said: “Men of Ephesus, yes, who in the world does not know that this city of the Ephesians is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of the image that fell from Zeus? ³⁶ Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you must be calm and not do anything rash.

³⁷ For you have brought these men here although they have neither robbed temples nor insulted our goddess.

³⁸ Therefore, if Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a case against anyone, court sessions are conducted, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another! ³⁹ If there is anything further that you want to know, it will be settled in the legal assembly. ⁴⁰ For, as it is, we are in danger of being charged with a riot because of today’s events, when there is no good reason for them, and shall not be able to account for this disorderly gathering.”

⁴¹ After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

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Paul’s visit to Macedonia and Greece

¹ When the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the other disciples and encouraged them. He took his leave of them and left to travel to Macedonia. ² He went through those districts and spoke many words of encouragement to the people and then he went to

Greece, ³ and stayed there three months.

Paul’s farewell at Troas

Because the Jews plotted against Paul, as he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to go back through Macedonia. ⁴ Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus from Berea, was accompanying him, together with Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe and Timothy, Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. ⁵ These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas. ⁶ However, we sailed away from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread and in five days joined the others in Troas and stayed there for seven days. ⁷ On the first day of the week, when we had gathered together to break bread, Paul had a conversation with the people. Since he intended to leave on the next day, he continued his Message until midnight.

⁸ There were many torches in the upstairs room where we had assembled. ⁹ A certain young man by the name of Eutychus was sitting at the window and was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul continued to talk. When he was sound asleep, he fell from the third story and was taken up dead. ¹⁰ However, Paul went down, fell on him, threw his arms around him and said, “Stop making a fuss! For his life is in him.”

¹¹ Paul went up and broke the bread and took food. Then he had a long talk until daylight and so departed.

¹² The people took the boy along alive and were greatly comforted.

The journey from Troas to Miletus

¹³ We went ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos. We were intending to take Paul on board from there. For he had arranged it in that way, since he was planning to go on foot. ¹⁴ When he met us at Assos, we took him on board and arrived at Mitylene. ¹⁵ We sailed from there and on the following day arrived opposite Chios. On the next day we crossed over to Samos and on the day after that we arrived at Miletus. ¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, to avoid spending time in the province of Asia. For he was hurrying to arrive at Jerusalem, if it should be possible, for the day of Pentecost.

Paul’s address to the elders of Ephesus

¹⁷ From Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus and asked the elders of the church to come to him. ¹⁸ When they came to him, he said to them: “You know how I lived with you all the time, from the first day when I came into the province of Asia, ¹⁹ how I have served the Lord with all humility, with tears and in the trials that I endured because the Jews plotted against me, ²⁰ how I have kept back nothing that was helpful but have proclaimed it to you and have taught you publicly and in your homes. ²¹ You know how I have earnestly warned both Jews and Greeks to turn to God in repentance and to believe in our Lord Jesus. ²² So now, you see, the Spirit has constrained me to go to Jerusalem. I do not know what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit keeps testifying in every city, telling me that chains and troubles are waiting for

me. ²⁴ However, I do not account my life as worth anything to me. I want only to finish running my race and to finish the ministry that I have received from the Lord Jesus, testifying to the Good News of the grace of God.

²⁵ “Now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom, will see my face any longer. ²⁶ Therefore, I testify to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all people, ²⁷ because I have not shrunk from proclaiming to you the whole plan of God. ²⁸ Keep watch over yourselves and the whole flock among whom the Holy Spirit has made you bishops! You are to shepherd **the church of God, which He has purchased** for Himself with His own blood! ²⁹ I know that, after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰ Even from among yourselves men will stand up and say perverse things, to draw the disciples away after themselves. ³¹ Therefore, stay awake! Remember that for three years I did not cease day and night to warn every single one with tears! ³² Now I entrust you to God and to the Word of His grace, which can build you up and **give you the inheritance among all those who have been made holy**. ³³ I have not coveted anyone’s silver, gold or clothes. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands have worked for my own needs and for those who were with me. ³⁵ In every way I have shown you that, by this kind of hard work, we must help the weak and that we should remember the Words that the Lord Jesus Himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

³⁶ When he had said this, he knelt and prayed with them all. ³⁷ They all wept very much as they embraced Paul and kissed him. ³⁸ What grieved them most was his statement that they would not see his face any longer. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

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The arrival of Paul at Tyre

¹ When we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea, ran a straight course and came to Cos, on the next day to Rhodes and from there to Patara.

² We found a ship going across to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. ³ We came in sight of Cyprus and, leaving it on our left, we sailed on to Syria and landed at Tyre, because the ship was to unload its cargo there.

⁴ We looked for the disciples and stayed there for seven days. They kept telling Paul through the Spirit to stop going on to Jerusalem. ⁵ When our time was over, we left on our journey. All of them, with their wives and children, accompanied us until we were outside of the city. Then we knelt on the shore and prayed. ⁶ We said farewell to one another and then we went on board the ship, and they returned to their own homes.

The arrival of Paul at Caesarea

⁷ We continued our voyage from Tyre and arrived at Ptolemais. We greeted the fellow-Christians and stayed with them for one day. ⁸ On the next day we left and came to Caesarea. We went into the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven, and stayed with him. ⁹ He had four virgin daughters who prophesied. ¹⁰ While we were staying there for several days, a prophet by the name of Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ He came to us, took Paul’s belt and tied up his own feet and hands. He said, “The Holy Spirit says this, ‘This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up the man to whom this belt belongs and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’”

¹² When we heard this, we and the people at that place kept pleading with Paul to stop going up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be tied up but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

¹⁴ As he would not be persuaded, we ceased speaking and said, “Let the Lord’s will be done!”

Paul’s arrival at Jerusalem and his attempt to show Jewish Christians his respect for the Law of Moses

¹⁵ After these days we prepared and went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁶ Some of the disciples from Caesarea also accompanied us and took us to the home of Mnason, to be his guests. He was a man from Cyprus and an early disciple. ¹⁷ When we arrived at Jerusalem, the fellow-Christians gladly welcomed us. ¹⁸ On the next day Paul went in together with us to James and all the elders were present. ¹⁹ Paul greeted them and reported in detail all the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰ When they heard about it, they kept glorifying God. They told Paul, “You see, brother, how many tens of thousands there are among the Jews who have become believers and are all zealous for the Law. ²¹ They have been informed that you are teaching all the Jews living among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them to stop circumcising their children and living according to our customs. ²² Therefore, what is there to do about it? They will certainly hear that you have come. ²³ So, do what we tell you! We have four men who are under a vow on their own initiative. ²⁴ Take these men with you, purify yourself with them and pay their expenses, that they may **shave their heads** and that all may know that there is no truth in what they have been informed about you but that you yourself are also in agreement as one who keeps the Law! ²⁵ However, concerning the Gentiles who have become believers, we have written in a letter our decision they should keep away from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what has been strangled and from sexual immorality.”

²⁶ Then Paul took the men with him and on the next day he purified himself with them and went to the Temple to give notice of the time when **the days** of

purification **would be over**, at which time the sacrifice would be offered for each one of them. ²⁷ When the seven days were almost over, the Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the Temple and stirred up the whole crowd. They laid their hands on him, ²⁸ shouting, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who is teaching all people everywhere against our people, the Law and this place. Besides, he has also brought Greeks into the Temple and has defiled this Holy Place.”

²⁹ For they had previously seen Trophimus from Ephesus in the city with Paul and assumed that Paul had taken him into the Temple. ³⁰ The whole city was aroused and the people rushed together. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the Temple, and immediately the doors were shut. ³¹ While they were trying to kill him, a report was taken up to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was being stirred up. ³² He immediately took some soldiers and centurions with him and ran down to them. When they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³ Then the commander went up to Paul, arrested him and ordered that he should be tied up with two chains. The commander tried to find out who Paul was and what he had done. ³⁴ Some in the crowd kept shouting one thing, and others something else. Since the commander could not ascertain the truth because of the uproar, he ordered that Paul should be taken into the barracks. ³⁵ When Paul came to the stairs, the soldiers were actually carrying him because of the violence of the mob. ³⁶ For the large number of people followed and kept shouting, “Away with him!”

Paul's address to the crowd near the Temple

³⁷ As Paul was about to be led into the barracks, he asked the commander, “Am I permitted to say something to you?”

He asked, “Can you speak Greek? ³⁸ Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago instigated a revolt and led the four thousand men of the assassins out into the wilderness?”

³⁹ Paul answered, “I am a Jewish man from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city. I ask you, permit me to speak to the people!”

⁴⁰ The commander gave permission, and Paul stood on the steps and motioned with his hand to the people. When there was a great silence, he addressed them in the Aramaic language:

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¹ “Fellow-Jews and fathers, listen to the defence I make to you!”

² When they heard that he was addressing them in the Aramaic language, they quietened down still more. Then Paul said: ³ “I am a Jewish man, born at Tarsus in Cilicia but was brought up in this city, trained at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict letter of the Law of our fathers. I was zealous for God, as all of

you are today. ⁴ I persecuted this Way to the death, tying up both men and women and delivering them into prisons, ⁵ as the High Priest also and the whole council of elders bear me witness. From them I even obtained letters to their fellow-Jews at Damascus and was going there to bring the people who were there as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished. ⁶ As I was travelling and approaching Damascus about noon, suddenly a very bright light from heaven flashed around me. ⁷ I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting Me?’

⁸ “I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’

“He replied to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’

⁹ “The men who were with me saw the light but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me. ¹⁰ Then I asked, ‘What am I to do, Lord?’

“The Lord told me, ‘Get up! Go into Damascus! There you will be told about all the things that have been assigned for you to do.’

¹¹ “Since I could not see, because of the brilliance of that light, I came into Damascus led by the hands of the men who were with me. ¹² A certain Ananias was there, a devout man, who observed the Law and who was well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there. ¹³ He came to me, stood next to me and said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight again!’

“At that very moment I could see him. ¹⁴ He said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you to know His will, to see the Righteous One and to hear words from His mouth, ¹⁵ because you will be a witness to Him to tell all people about the things that you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ Now, why do you delay? Get up, be baptised and wash away your sins, invoking His name!’

¹⁷ “After I had returned to Jerusalem and while I was praying in the Temple, I was in a trance ¹⁸ and saw Him. He was telling me, ‘Hurry, get out of Jerusalem quickly! For they will not accept your testimony about Me.’

¹⁹ “I said, ‘Lord, they know that I used to put in prison people in every synagogue who were believers in You and flog them. ²⁰ When the blood of Your witness Stephen was being shed, I myself was also standing near, giving my approval and minding the clothes of those who were murdering him.’

²¹ “The Lord told me, ‘Go! For I shall send you far away to the Gentiles.’”

²² They continued to listen to him until he said this. Then they raised their voices and said, “Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he is not fit to live.”

²³ While they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks and throwing dust into the air, ²⁴ the commander ordered Paul to be taken into the barracks. He told his men to examine him by scourging him, that he might find out the reason why the people were shouting at him like this. ²⁵ However, after the men had stretched

him out with the straps, Paul asked the centurion who was standing there, "Is it legal for you to scourge a Roman citizen who has not even been found guilty?"

²⁶ When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and reported it. He asked, "What do you intend to do? For this man is a Roman citizen."

²⁷ The commander went to Paul and asked him, "Tell me! Are you a Roman citizen?"

Paul said, "Yes."

²⁸ The commander answered, "I obtained this citizenship by paying a large sum of money."

Paul said, "However, I have indeed been born as a citizen."

²⁹ Those who were about to examine him immediately withdrew from him. When the commander found out, he was also afraid, because Paul was a Roman citizen and because he had tied him up.

Paul's appearance before the Jewish council at Jerusalem

³⁰ The next day, since the commander wanted to find out for certain why the Jews were accusing Paul, he released him and ordered the Chief Priests and the whole Jewish council to assemble. Then he brought Paul down and made him stand before them.

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¹ Paul looked intently at the Jewish council and said, "Fellow-Jews, I have been living my life before God with a clear conscience to this very day."

² However, the High Priest, Ananias, ordered the men who were standing near Paul to strike him on the mouth. ³ Then Paul told him, "God is going to strike you, whitewashed wall! Do you actually sit there to judge me according to the Law and yet break the Law by ordering that I should be struck?"

⁴ The men who were standing near Paul asked, "Do you insult God's High Priest?"

⁵ Paul answered, "I did not realise, fellow-Jews, that he is the High Priest. For Scripture says: **'You shall not speak evil about a ruler of your people.'**"

⁶ When Paul became aware that some of them were Sadducees and others Pharisees, he began to call out in the council, "Fellow-Jews, I am a Pharisee and a son of Pharisees. It is about the hope of the resurrection of the dead that I am being put on trial."

⁷ When he had said that, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. ⁸ For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, angel or spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all. ⁹ There was a great uproar, and some of the scribes who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and argued vigorously: "We find nothing wrong in this man. Suppose a spirit has spoken to him or an angel!"

¹⁰ When the quarrel was becoming violent, the commander was afraid that they would tear Paul to pieces. So, he ordered the soldiers to come down, snatch Paul away from them and take him into the barracks.

¹¹ The next night the Lord stood over Paul and said,

"Have courage! For, as you have given witness to the things about Me in Jerusalem, so you must also give witness in Rome."

A Jewish plot to kill Paul

¹² When day came, the Jews made a conspiracy and laid themselves under a curse. They said that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.

¹³ There were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy. ¹⁴ They went to the Chief Priests and elders and said, "We have solemnly bound ourselves with an oath not to taste any food until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ Now therefore, you, together with the council, bring formal charges to the commander, that he may bring him down to you, as if you meant to obtain more exact information about matters concerning him! However, we are ready to kill him before he gets near you."

¹⁶ However, when the son of Paul's sister heard about the conspiracy, as he had been present, he entered the barracks and reported it to Paul. ¹⁷ Then Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the commander! For he has something to report to him."

¹⁸ The centurion took him to the commander and said, "The prisoner, Paul, has sent for me and has asked me to bring this young man to you. For he has something to tell you."

¹⁹ The commander took the young man by the hand, went aside to be alone with him and asked, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

²⁰ He answered, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down into the council tomorrow as if they meant to obtain more accurate information about him.

²¹ Therefore, they should not persuade you! For more than forty of them are waiting in ambush for him. They have bound themselves with an oath neither to eat nor to drink until they have murdered him. They are ready now, waiting for your consent to their request."

²² Therefore, the commander dismissed the young man. He commanded him, "Do not tell anyone that you have reported this to me!"

²³ Then he sent for two of his centurions and said, "Prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy cavalrymen and two hundred spearmen to go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night! ²⁴ Provide mounts that they may have Paul ride on them and take him safely through to Felix the Governor!"

²⁵ The commander wrote a letter as follows:

²⁶ "Claudius Lysias, To the excellent Governor Felix: Greetings! ²⁷ The Jews had seized this man and were about to murder him, but I came with the soldiers and rescued him. When I found out that he was a Roman citizen, ²⁸ and when I wanted to know the reason why they were accusing him, I took him down into their council. ²⁹ I found that he was being accused about questions concerning their Law but that there was no

charge at all against him that deserved death or imprisonment. ³⁰ Since I have been informed that there will be a plot against the man, I am immediately sending him to you. I have also ordered his accusers to state before you what they have against him.”

The transfer of Paul to prison in Caesarea

³¹ Therefore, the soldiers, as they had been ordered, took Paul with them and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³² The next day they let the cavalry go on with him and returned to their barracks. ³³ When the cavalry arrived at Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and handed Paul over to him. ³⁴ The governor read the letter and asked which province Paul was from. When he found out that he was from Cilicia, ³⁵ he said, “I shall hear your case when your accusers have also come.”

Then he ordered that Paul should be kept under guard in Herod’s palace.

24

The accusations against Paul before Felix

¹ After five days, the High Priest, Ananias, came down with some elders and Tertullus, an attorney, and they brought formal charges against Paul before the governor. ² When Paul had been called in, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, “Since, through you, we are enjoying a long period of peace and since reforms are being achieved for this nation through your foresight, ³ we welcome them in every way and in every place, most excellent Felix, with all gratitude. ⁴ However, not to detain you any further, I ask you to listen to us briefly with your usual graciousness. ⁵ For we have found that this man is a troublemaker, stirring up dissensions among all the Jews throughout the world and that he is a ringleader of the party of the Nazarenes. ⁶ He even tried to desecrate the Temple, and so we arrested him. ⁷ ¹⁸⁰ ⁸ When you examine him yourself, you will be able to get at the facts from him about all the accusations that we are making against him.”

⁹ The Jews also joined with Tertullus in attacking Paul, by asserting that these things were so.

Paul’s defence before Felix

¹⁰ When the governor nodded to him to speak, Paul answered, “Since I know that you have been a judge of this nation for many years, I gladly make my defence. ¹¹ For you can confirm that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. ¹² My accusers did not find me arguing with anyone in the Temple or stirring up a crowd, either in the synagogues or throughout the city. ¹³ They also cannot provide proof to you for the accusations that they are now making against me. ¹⁴ However, I confess this to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers. I believe all the things that have been written in the Law and in the

Prophets. ¹⁵ I have hope in God, which these men also wait for, that there is going to be a resurrection of both those who are righteous and those who are wicked.

¹⁶ Therefore, I myself also do my best always to have a clear conscience before God and human beings.

¹⁷ After several years, I came to my people to bring gifts for the poor and to present offerings. ¹⁸ People found me in the Temple occupied with these things after I had been purified. However, I was not with a crowd or involved in any disturbance. ¹⁹ There were some Jews from Asia, who should have been here before you and accusing me if they had anything against me. ²⁰ Or these men should themselves state what crime they found in me when I stood before their council, ²¹ unless it concerns this one thing that I cried out when I was standing among them: ‘It is about the resurrection of the dead that I am being put on trial before you today.’”

²² However, Felix, who had very accurate knowledge about the matters concerning the Way, gave them a postponement. He said, “When the commander Lysias comes down I shall examine your case.”

²³ He ordered the centurion to guard Paul but that Paul should have some liberty and that none of his friends should be prevented from attending to his needs.

Paul’s interview with Felix and Drusilla

²⁴ Some days later Felix came again with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him about the faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ While Paul was discussing righteousness, self-control and the coming judgment, Felix became afraid and answered, “Enough for the present! Leave! When I have some spare time I shall send for you.”

²⁶ At the same time he was also hoping that Paul would give him money. For that reason he used to send for him very often and converse with him.

²⁷ After two years had passed, Porcius Festus succeeded Felix. Because Felix wanted to do the Jews a favour, he left Paul in prison.

25

Paul’s appeal to the emperor

¹ Three days after Festus had begun his duties in the province, he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem.

² The High Priests and the chief men of the Jews made formal charges against Paul to Festus. They made a request to Festus, ³ asking for a sign of favour against Paul, that he would send for him to come to Jerusalem. They were laying an ambush along the road to kill him. ⁴ Festus, however, answered that Paul was being kept at Caesarea and that he himself intended to go there shortly. ⁵ He said, “Therefore, those among you who have the authority should come down with me and should accuse him, if the man has done anything improper.”

⁶ Festus stayed with them for no more than eight or ten days and then went down to Caesarea. The next

¹⁸⁰ Most manuscripts do not contain chapter 24:7.

day he sat down at the judicial bench and ordered that Paul should be brought in. ⁷ When Paul appeared, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him and kept bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove. ⁸ Paul defended himself: "I have not sinned in any way either against the Law of the Jews, against the Temple or against Caesar."

⁹ Since Festus wanted to do the Jews a favour, he asked Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me about these things?"

¹⁰ Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's judicial bench, where I ought to be tried. I have not done anything wrong to the Jews, as you also know very well.

¹¹ Therefore, if I am guilty and have done something for which I deserve to die, I do not try to escape death. However, if there is nothing at all in the things about which these men are accusing me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

¹² Then Festus conferred with his council and answered, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

A report by Festus about Paul to King Agrippa and Bernice

¹³ After some days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and paid their respects to Festus. ¹⁴ Since they were spending many days there, Festus laid Paul's case before the king. He said, "There is a man here whom Felix has left as a prisoner. ¹⁵ When I went to Jerusalem, the Chief Priests and the elders of the Jews laid formal charges against him and asked me to condemn him. ¹⁶ I answered them, 'It is not customary for Romans to hand over any accused man before he faces his accusers and has an opportunity to defend himself against the accusation.'

¹⁷ Therefore, after they had assembled here, I did not delay the case but sat down at the judicial bench on the next day and ordered that the man should be brought in. ¹⁸ When his accusers stood up, they did not accuse him of the crimes that I was suspecting.

¹⁹ However, they had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus who had died but whom Paul alleged to be alive.

²⁰ Because I was at a loss how to investigate these things, I asked if he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried about these matters. ²¹ However, when Paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of His Majesty, I ordered that he should continue to be held until I remanded him to Caesar."

²² Agrippa told Festus, "I myself should also like to hear the man."

He replied, "Tomorrow you will hear him."

Paul's hearing before Agrippa

²³ Therefore, on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience-room with the military commanders and prominent men of the city. Then Festus gave the order, and Paul was brought in. ²⁴ Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you men present with us, you see this man. The whole

community of the Jews in Jerusalem and here has petitioned me about him, shouting that he must not live any longer. ²⁵ I have found that he has not done anything to deserve to die; but, when he appealed to His Majesty, I decided to send him. ²⁶ I have nothing definite to write to our master about him. Therefore, I have brought him before you people, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after the inquiry has taken place, I may have something to write. ²⁷ For I think it is unreasonable to send a prisoner without also indicating the charges against him."

26

Paul's defence before Agrippa

¹ Agrippa told Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself."

Then Paul stretched out his hand and began to make his defence. ² "King Agrippa, I think that I am favoured in that I am about to defend myself before you today about all the things about which the Jews are accusing me, ³ especially since you are familiar with all the customs and disputes that have to do with the Jews. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

⁴ Well then, the Jews all know how I have been living since I was young. For from the beginning I have lived among my own nation and in Jerusalem. ⁵ They have known me previously from long ago and can testify, if they wish to, that I lived as a Pharisee, according to the strictest party of our religion. ⁶ Now I am standing here on trial because of my hope in what God has promised to our fathers. ⁷ Our twelve tribes hope to attain to this promise, earnestly serving God day and night. It is about this hope, O King, that the Jews are accusing me. ⁸ Why is it considered incredible on the part of you people that God raises the dead?

⁹ I myself indeed thought that I had to do many things in opposition to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

¹⁰ That was just what I did in Jerusalem. I obtained the authority from the Chief Priests and locked up many of God's holy people in prisons and, when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹ In all the synagogues I often punished them and tried to compel them to blaspheme. In my furious rage against them I used to persecute them, going even as far as foreign cities. ¹² While I was occupied with this, I was travelling to Damascus, with the authority and commission of the Chief Priests. ¹³ At midday, O King, while I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and around the men who were travelling with me. ¹⁴ All of us fell on the ground, and I heard a voice speaking to me in the Aramaic language, 'Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

¹⁵ "I asked, 'Who are You, Lord?' "The Lord answered, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ Get up and **stand on your feet!** For I

¹⁵ "I asked, 'Who are You, Lord?'"

"The Lord answered, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ Get up and **stand on your feet!** For I

have appeared to you for this purpose, to choose you as a servant and a witness, both about the things that you have seen in Me and about the things in which I shall appear to you. ¹⁷ **I shall rescue you** from your people and **from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you**, ¹⁸ **to open their eyes**, to turn them **from darkness to light** and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins and a share among those who have been made holy by faith in Me.’

¹⁹ “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰ Rather, I began to proclaim, first to the people in Damascus, then in Jerusalem, then throughout the country of Judea and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and perform deeds that were in keeping with repentance. ²¹ For these reasons, the Jews seized me when I was in the Temple and tried to murder me. ²² Therefore, I have been obtaining help from God up to this day and stand and bear witness to both small and great. I say nothing except the things that the prophets and Moses said were going to happen, ²³ whether the Christ had to suffer and whether, as the first to rise from the dead, as a Light, He was going to make proclamation to His own people and to the Gentiles.”

²⁴ While Paul was defending himself in this way, Festus shouted aloud, “You are insane, Paul. Much learning is driving you mad.”

²⁵ Paul said, “I am not insane, excellent Festus, but am speaking true and rational words. ²⁶ Yes, the king knows about these things, and I am also speaking frankly before him. For I am convinced that nothing at all of these things has escaped his notice, since this has not been done in a corner. ²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe them.”

²⁸ However, Agrippa said to Paul: “You are trying, in a short time, to persuade me, to make me a Christian.”

²⁹ Paul said, “I should like to pray to God that, both in a short time and in a long time, not only you but also all those who are listening to me today will become the kind of man I am, except for these chains.”

³⁰ The king stood up and with him the governor, Bernice and the others who were sitting with them.

³¹ When they had withdrawn, they began to say to one another, “This man is not doing anything for which he deserves to die or to be in chains.”

³² Agrippa told Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

27

Paul's departure for Rome

¹ When it had been decided that we should sail to Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion by the name of Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. ² We boarded a ship from

Adramyttium that was about to sail to the places in the province of Asia and put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. ³ On the next day we put in at Sidon. Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to go to his friends to be cared for. ⁴ When we had put out to sea from there, we sailed on the sheltered side of Cyprus, because the winds were against us. ⁵ We sailed over the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia and landed at Myra in Lycia. ⁶ There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy and put us on board. ⁷ We were sailing slowly for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. The wind would not allow us to proceed, and so we sailed on the sheltered side of Crete, opposite Salmone. ⁸ We sailed past it with difficulty and came to a place called “Fair Havens,” which is near the city of Lasea. ⁹ After we had spent much time, sailing was already dangerous, because even the Fast had already gone by. So, Paul advised them, ¹⁰ “Men, I see that the voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss, not only to the cargo and the ship but also to our lives.”

¹¹ However, the centurion was persuaded by the pilot and the owner of the ship rather than by what Paul said. ¹² Because the harbour was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to set out to sea from there, hoping that they could somehow reach Phoenix, to spend the winter there. It is a harbour in Crete, open to the southwest and the northwest. ¹³ When a south wind began to blow, they thought that they had obtained what they wanted. They weighed anchor and sailed along close to the shore of Crete. ¹⁴ However, not long afterwards a wind of hurricane force, called “the North-Easter,” rushed down from Crete. ¹⁵ Because it caught the ship so that it could not face the wind, we gave way to it and kept being driven along. ¹⁶ When we ran into the shelter of a small island called Cauda, we were able, with a struggle, to get the dinghy under control. ¹⁷ The men pulled it up on the deck. Then they used cables under the ship to reinforce it. Because they were afraid that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the gear and kept being driven along. ¹⁸ Because we continued to be tossed violently by the storm, the next day the men began to throw the cargo overboard. ¹⁹ On the third day they threw the ship's rigging overboard with their own hands. ²⁰ For many days neither sun nor stars appeared. Because a great storm continued to lie over us, at last all hope that we would be saved was gradually abandoned. ²¹ Since hardly anyone wanted to eat, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete, with the result that you have incurred this damage and loss. ²² However, now I urge you to keep up your courage, because there will be no loss of life among you but only of the ship. ²³ For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong

and whom I also serve, stood beside me. ²⁴ He said, ‘Stop being afraid, Paul! You must stand before Caesar, and look! God has graciously given you all who are sailing with you.’ ²⁵ Therefore, keep up your courage, men! For I trust God that it will be just as it has been told me. ²⁶ Nevertheless, we must be cast ashore on some island.”

The wreck of the ship taking Paul to Rome

²⁷ When the fourteenth night had come and while we were drifting through the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that some land was coming closer to them. ²⁸ They took soundings and found that the water was forty-four metres deep. After they had sailed a short distance farther, they took soundings again and found that it was thirty-three metres. ²⁹ Because the men were afraid that we would run aground against rocky places, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight to come. ³⁰ The sailors attempted to escape from the ship. They let the dinghy down into the sea, pretending that they were going to let out anchors from the bow. ³¹ Paul told the centurion and the soldiers, “If these men do not remain in the ship, you cannot be saved.”

³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes that held the dinghy and allowed it to drift away. ³³ When daylight was about to dawn, Paul began to urge all of them to eat something. He said, “Today is the fourteenth day that you have been in constant suspense, going without food, without eating at all. ³⁴ Therefore, I urge you to take some food. For this is essential for your survival. For none of you will lose a hair of his head.”

³⁵ After he said this, he took some bread, gave thanks to God in front of them all, broke it and began to eat. ³⁶ They were all encouraged and also had something to eat. ³⁷ Altogether we were two hundred and seventy six persons on the ship. ³⁸ After they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by dumping the wheat into the sea. ³⁹ When daylight came, they did not recognise the land but began to notice a bay with a beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. ⁴⁰ They cast off the anchors and left them in the sea. At the same time they untied the ropes that held the rudders, hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. ⁴¹ They came to a place between two seas and ran the ship aground. The bow jammed fast and remained immovable, and the stern began to be broken up by the force of the waves. ⁴² The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any from swimming away and escaping. ⁴³ However, because the centurion wanted to save Paul, he kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to leap off first and get to the land, ⁴⁴ and the rest to get there, some on planks and others on some pieces from the ship. In this way it turned out that all of them reached the land in safety.

The honoured treatment of Paul at Malta after miracles there

¹ Only after we had been brought through safely did we find out that the island was called Malta. ² The natives showed us unusual kindness. For they lit a fire and brought us all to it, because of the rain that had set in and because it was cold. ³ When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, the heat caused a viper to come out and it fastened itself on his hand. ⁴ When the natives saw the snake hanging from his hand, they began to say to one another, “This man is certainly a murderer. Although he has escaped from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live.”

⁵ However, then Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶ The people were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall dead; but, after they had been waiting a long time and had seen nothing unusual happening to him, they changed their minds and kept saying that he was a god. ⁷ In the district around that place there was an estate belonging to the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius. He welcomed us and treated us kindly as his guests for three days. ⁸ The father of Publius happened to be sick in bed, suffering from attacks of fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him, prayed, laid his hands on him and healed him. ⁹ After that had happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also began to come to Paul and were healed. ¹⁰ They also honoured us in many ways and, when we were going to sail, they provided us with the things that we needed.

The journey from Malta to Rome

¹¹ After three months we put out to sea on a ship from Alexandria that had stayed at the island for the winter. It had the twin sons of Zeus as its figurehead. ¹² We put in at Syracuse and stayed there for three days. ¹³ We cast off from there and reached Rhegium. One day later, a south wind came up, and on the following day we came to Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found fellow-Christians and were invited to stay with them for seven days. So, we came to Rome. ¹⁵ From there the fellow-Christians heard about us and came as far as the Forum of Appius and The Three Taverns to welcome us. When Paul saw them, he gave thanks to God and took courage.

Paul's discussions with the Jews in Rome

¹⁶ When we came into Rome, Paul was permitted to live by himself with the soldier who was guarding him. ¹⁷ After three days, Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. When they had assembled, he proceeded to tell them, “Men and fellow-Jews, although I have not done anything against our people or the customs of our fathers, I was handed over as a prisoner into the hands of the Romans at Jerusalem. ¹⁸ They examined me and wanted to release me, because there was no reason why I should be put to death. ¹⁹ However, because the Jews kept objecting, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar — not that I had any accusation against my people. ²⁰ The reason why I

have asked you to come is that I may see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain.”

²¹ They told him, “Neither have we received any letters from Judea about you, nor has any of our fellow-Jews come here and reported or spoken anything bad about you. ²² We consider it right to hear from you what you think. For this much we know about this party, that people everywhere are talking against it.”

²³ They appointed a day for him, and more of them came to him at the place where he was staying. From morning until evening he kept explaining and solemnly testifying to them about the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and the Prophets. ²⁴ Some of them were being convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. ²⁵ When they did not agree with one another, they began to break up, and Paul added one more statement: “The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your fathers through the prophet Isaiah ²⁶ when He said: **‘Go to this people and say: “You will indeed hear but will certainly not understand. You will indeed see but will certainly not perceive. ²⁷ For the hearts of these people have become dull. Their ears have become hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, that they may not see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, that I may heal them.’**” ²⁸ Therefore, let it be known to you that this **salvation**, which comes **from God**, has been sent **to the Gentiles!** They will listen.”

[²⁹ When Paul had said these words, the Jews departed and argued vigorously among themselves. *181]

The unhindered advance of the Gospel at Rome

³⁰ For two whole years Paul lived at his own expense and continued to welcome all who came to him, ³¹ preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things about the Lord Jesus Christ, with all freedom of speech. and no one prevented him.

¹⁸¹ Some manuscripts do not contain 28:29.

ROMANS

1

Introduction (1:1-15)

Paul's greeting to the Christians at Rome

¹ Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle and set apart for the Good News of God. ² He promised this Gospel in advance through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures. ³ It is about His Son, who was born a descendant of David according to His human nature, ⁴ but who, according to His holy divinity, was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. He is Jesus Christ, our Lord. ⁵ Through Him and for His name's sake, we have received the grace of holding the apostolic office among all the Gentiles, that they may be obedient by believing. ⁶ Among them, you also have been called to belong to Jesus Christ. ⁷ To all who are in Rome whom God loves and has called to be His holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Paul's wish to see the Christians at Rome

⁸ First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. ⁹ For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the Good News of His Son, is my witness how I constantly make mention of you ¹⁰ whenever I pray, as I keep asking that, somehow, by the will of God, the way may now at last be opened for me to come to you. ¹¹ For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, that you may be strengthened, ¹² that is, that, when I am among you, we may be mutually encouraged, I by your faith, and you by mine. ¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, fellow-Christians, that I have often planned to come to you (although I have been hindered until now), that I may have some fruit among you also, just as I have had among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴ I have an obligation to both Greeks and non-Greeks, to both wise people and foolish people. ¹⁵ That is why I am eager to tell the Good News also to you who are at Rome.

The theme of the epistle (1:16-17)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the Good News. For it is the power of God to save everyone who believes it, the Jew first and also the Gentile. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith with a view to faith, as Scripture has said, "**He who is righteous by faith will live.**"

The revelation of the wrath of God (1:18-3:20)

The wrath of God against the unrighteousness of the heathen (1:18-32)

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth by unrighteousness, ¹⁹ because what can be known about God is plain to them. For God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been perceived and understood by means of the things that have been made. Therefore, they have no excuse, ²¹ because, although they know God, they have not glorified Him as God or

been thankful. Instead, they have become futile in their thinking, and their senseless hearts have been darkened.

The revelation of God's wrath against heathen wickedness

²² Although they claim that they are wise, they have become fools ²³ and have **exchanged** the glory of the imperishable God for **a likeness** that resembles a perishable human being, birds, four-footed animals and reptiles. ²⁴ Therefore, God has handed them over to uncleanness, in the sinful desires of their hearts, to degrade their bodies with one another. ²⁵ They have exchanged the truth of God for the lie and have worshipped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen! ²⁶ For this reason, God has handed them over to shameful passions. For even their females have exchanged their natural function for what is unnatural. ²⁷ Similarly, the males have also abandoned the natural function of the female and have been inflamed with lust for one another. Males have committed shameful acts with other males and have received in themselves the penalty that they have deserved for their error. ²⁸ As they have not seen fit to retain a true knowledge of God, God has also handed them over to an unfit mind, to do things that ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, ³⁰ they slander, they hate God and are insolent, arrogant and boastful. They contrive evil deeds. They disobey their parents. ³¹ They are senseless, unreliable, unloving and unmerciful. ³² Although they know God's just Requirement, that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do them but also approve of others who do them.

2

The revelation of the wrath of God against the righteousness of the Law (2:1-3:20)

¹ Therefore, you have no excuse, O human being, whoever you are, when you judge others. For at the point where you judge the other person, you are condemning yourself. For you, who are judging, are doing the same things. ² We know that God's judgment against those who do such things is right. ³ Man, you who judge those who do such things, when you do them yourself, do you think that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you despise God's rich kindness, tolerance and patience because you do not realise that God's kindness is leading you to repentance?

The failure of the Law to protect against the wrath of God

⁵ Nevertheless, because you are stubborn and your heart is unrepentant, you are treasuring up wrath against yourself on the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment is revealed. ⁶ **He "will give what is due to every person according to what he has done."**

⁷ He will give eternal life to those who, by persistently doing good, are intent on glory, honour and immortality; ⁸ but there will be wrath and fury for those who,

because of selfishness, both disobey the truth and obey unrighteousness. ⁹ There will be tribulation and distress for every human soul who does evil, first for the Jew and also for the Gentile; ¹⁰ but there will be glory, honour and peace for every person who does good, first for the Jew and also for the Gentile. ¹¹ For God does not favour one person over another. ¹² For all who have sinned without having the Law will also perish without the Law. All who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law. ¹³ For it is not those who only hear the Law who are righteous in God's sight, but those who observe the Law will be declared righteous. ¹⁴ Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the Law, do by nature what the Law requires, they are a law to themselves, although they do not have the Law. ¹⁵ They show that what the Law requires them to do is written in their hearts. Their consciences also bear witness and between themselves their thoughts accuse them or even defend them, ¹⁶ with reference to the day when, according to my Good News, God judges people's secrets through Christ Jesus.

The question who a Jew really is

¹⁷ If you call yourself a Jew, rely on the Law and boast about God, ¹⁸ if you know what He wants and approve of the things that really matter, since you are instructed by the Law, ¹⁹ if you are confident that you are a guide for blind people and a light for those who are in darkness, ²⁰ that you are an instructor of foolish people and a teacher of infants, because you have in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and truth, ²¹ you then, who teach someone else, do you fail to teach yourself? You, who preach, "Do not steal!" do you steal? ²² You who say, "Do not commit adultery!" do you commit adultery? You, who detest idols, do you rob temples? ²³ You who boast about the Law, do you dishonour God by breaking the Law? ²⁴ For, as the Scripture has said, "**Because of you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles.**"

The failure of circumcision to shield from the wrath of God

²⁵ For circumcision benefits you if you are observing the Law, but, if you are breaking the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. ²⁶ Therefore, if those who are not circumcised keep the righteous Requirements of the Law, will their uncircumcision not be reckoned as though they were circumcised? ²⁷ If a man who is not physically circumcised fulfils the Law, he will condemn you for transgressing the Law, although you have the written Law and circumcision. ²⁸ For he is not a Jew who is one merely outwardly, nor is circumcision what is only outward in the body. ²⁹ Rather, a Jew is one who is a Jew inwardly, and circumcision is a circumcision of the heart. It is in the Spirit, not in writing. A Jew is one who is praised, not by men but by God.

3

The result, that the whole world is guilty and subject to God's wrath

¹ Therefore, what advantage does the Jew have? Or

what benefit is there in being circumcised? ² Much in every way! For the most important advantage is that they have been entrusted with the Words of God. ³ What if some have been unfaithful? Surely their unfaithfulness will not nullify the faithfulness of God? ⁴ Certainly not! Let God be true, and "**every man a liar,**" as Scripture has said, "**That You may be declared right when You speak and prevail when You engage in a legal suit.**" ⁵ However, if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Surely not that God, who inflicts His wrath, is unjust? (I am talking in a human way). ⁶ Certainly not! For, otherwise, how will God judge the world? ⁷ If by means of my falsehood the truthfulness of God has shown itself to be supremely great, to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? ⁸ Then surely, it will not be, as we are slanderously reported and as some people allege that we are saying, "Let us do evil that good may result"? They deserve their condemnation. ⁹ What then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the accusation that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin, ¹⁰ as Scripture has said: "**There is no one righteous, not even one.**" ¹¹ **There is no one who understands, there is no one who searches for God.** ¹² **All have turned away, they have together become worthless. There is no one who does good, there is not even one.**" ¹³ "**Their throats are an open grave. With their tongues they have been practising deceit.**" "**The poison of vipers is under their lips.**" ¹⁴ "**Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.**" ¹⁵ "**Their feet run quickly to shed blood.**" ¹⁶ "**There is destruction and misery on their roads,** ¹⁷ **and they have not learned the way of peace.**" ¹⁸ "**There is no fear of God before their eyes.**" ¹⁹ We know that, whatever the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ Therefore, **no human being will be justified in His sight** by doing what the Law says. For through the Law comes the recognition of sin.

The revelation of the grace of God, which shows the righteousness of God through Christ (3:21-4:25)

The righteousness of God that is not by the law but through faith

²¹ Now, however, the righteousness of God apart from the Law has been made known, and the Law and the Prophets testify to it. ²² It is the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ, to all who believe. For there is no difference. ²³ For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. ²⁴ They are justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God has publicly displayed Him as the **propitiatory-cover** through faith in His blood, to show His righteousness, because He had let go unpunished the sins that had been committed in the past, ²⁶ in His patience. God has done this to show His righteousness at the present time, that He may be righteous and the One who declares righteous is the person who believes in Je-

sus.

The exclusion of all boasting by the righteousness of faith

²⁷ Therefore, where is boasting? It has been excluded. Through what principle? Through the principle of works? No, rather, it is excluded through the principle of faith. ²⁸ For we conclude that a person is justified by faith, apart from the works of the Law. ²⁹ Or is God only the God of the Jews? Is He not the God of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰ since there is **one God**, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through the same faith. ³¹ Therefore, do we make the Law invalid through faith? Certainly not! Rather, we establish the Law.

4

The righteousness of God, to which the Law and the prophets testify (4:1-25)

A declaration that Abraham's righteousness was the righteousness of faith

¹ Therefore, what shall we say that Abraham, the ancestor of our race, has found? ² For, if Abraham was justified by works, he had something about which to boast. However, he could not boast before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? "**Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.**" ⁴ When a person works, his wages are not credited as grace but as a debt. ⁵ However, to the person who, instead of working, believes in God, who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness. ⁶ In the same way, David also speaks about the blessedness of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "**Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven and whose sins have been covered!**" ⁸ **Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will certainly not credit his sin!"**

The righteousness credited to Abraham apart from circumcision.

⁹ Therefore, does this blessing come only on those who are circumcised, or does it also come on those who are uncircumcised? For we are saying, "**Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness.**" ¹⁰ What was the situation when it was credited to him? Was he circumcised at that time or not? It was before he was circumcised, not after he was. ¹¹ He also received the **sign of circumcision** as a seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had when he was still uncircumcised. As a result, he is the father of all who believe although they are not circumcised, that righteousness may be credited to them also. ¹² As a result, he is also the father of circumcised people who not only have been circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had when he was still uncircumcised.

The righteousness credited to Abraham apart from the Law

¹³ It was not through the Law that Abraham or his descendants received the promise that he would be the heir of the world but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For, if those who belong to the Law are the heirs, then faith has been made worthless, and the promise has been made ineffective. ¹⁵ For the Law works God's anger, and where there is no Law there is no transgres-

sion either.

Abraham as the type of the person who is righteous through faith

¹⁶ Therefore, the promise belongs to faith, that it may be according to grace, that the promise may be sure to all Abraham's descendants, not only to those who belong to the Law but also to those who belong to the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all, ¹⁷ as the Scriptures have said, "**I have made you the father of many nations.**" He is our father in the presence of God, in whom he believed, the God who makes the dead live and calls what does not exist into existence.

¹⁸ Abraham, contrary to hope, in hope believed and so became a **father of many nations**, as he had been told: "**That is how many descendants you will have.**"

¹⁹ Without becoming weak in faith, he considered that, since he was about a hundred years old, his own body was already dead, and that Sarah's womb was also dead. ²⁰ There was no unbelief to make him doubt what God had promised, but his faith was made strong, and he gave glory to God. ²¹ He was fully convinced that God also had the power to do what He had promised. ²² That is why his faith "was **reckoned to him as righteousness.**" ²³ However, the Words "**It was reckoned to him**" were not written for him alone, ²⁴ but also for us. God is about to **reckon righteousness** to us, who **believe** in Him who has raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was **handed over** because of our offences and was raised for the sake of our justification.

5

He who is righteous through faith will live (5:1-8:39)

Freedom from the wrath of God by God's love (5:1-21)

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we also glory in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance, ⁴ and perseverance produces character, and character, hope. ⁵ **Hope does not disappoint** us either, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to us. ⁶ For, while we were still helpless, at the set time Christ died for ungodly people. ⁷ For very rarely will someone die for a righteous person, although someone might perhaps even dare to die for a good person. ⁸ However, God shows His own love for us by this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more, therefore, now that we have been justified by His blood, we shall be saved through Him from God's wrath. ¹⁰ For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, now that we have been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The contrast between Adam and Christ

¹² Therefore, as sin came into the world through one

man and death through sin, so death also spread to all people, since all have sinned. ¹³ For until the Law sin was in the world. However, sin is not charged against anyone's account when there is no Law. ¹⁴ Yet death ruled from Adam to Moses, also over those who had not sinned in the same way as Adam did when he broke the Command (Adam was a type of Him who was to come). ¹⁵ However, the free gift is not like the transgression. For, if the many died as the result of the one man's transgression, much more, God's grace and the gracious gift of the One Man, Jesus Christ, have overflowed to the many. ¹⁶ The gift is also different from what came through the one man who sinned. For the judgment came from one man and resulted in condemnation, but the free gift came after many transgressions and resulted in justification. ¹⁷ For if, by the transgression of the one man, death reigned through the one man, much more, those who have received God's overflowing grace and His gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One Man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man's transgression judgment came to all people, resulting in condemnation, so also, through One Man's righteous act, the free gift came to all people, resulting in justification, which brings life. ¹⁹ For as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many became sinners, so also through the obedience of the One Man, the many will become righteous. ²⁰ The Law was added that the transgression might increase. However, where sin increased, God's grace overflowed even more. ²¹ This happened that, as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign, through righteousness, resulting in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6

Freedom from sin through baptism (6:1-23)

¹ Therefore, what shall we say? "Shall we go on sinning that God may be more gracious to us?" ² Certainly not! How shall we, who died to sin, live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death? ⁴ Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, so that, as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might begin to live a new life. ⁵ If we have been planted together with Him in the likeness of His death, then we shall be planted together with Him also in the likeness of His resurrection. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with Him, that our sinful bodies might be rendered powerless, that we might not be slaves to sin any longer. ⁷ For the one who has died has been declared free from sin. ⁸ If we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ because we know that, since Christ was raised from the dead, He will not die again. Death no longer has any mastery over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all, but the life that He lives He lives to God. ¹¹ So you too, reckon yourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus!

¹² Therefore, let sin not keep on reigning in your mortal bodies with the result that you obey their sinful desires! ¹³ Stop presenting the parts of your bodies to sin as weapons of unrighteousness! Rather, present yourselves to God, as people who are alive from the dead, and present the parts of your bodies to God as weapons of righteousness! ¹⁴ For sin will not be master over you. For you are not under Law but under grace.

Freedom from sin opens the way to service of righteousness

¹⁵ What then? Are we to sin because we are not under Law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Do you not know that, when you present yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are the slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which results in death or of obedience, which results in righteousness? ¹⁷ However, thanks be to God that, although you used to be the slaves of sin, you have obeyed from the heart the pattern of teaching to which you were entrusted! ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have been made the slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I am speaking in a human way because your human nature is weak. For, as you presented the members of your bodies as slaves of uncleanness and lawlessness, leading to more lawlessness, so now, present your members as slaves of righteousness, leading to holiness! ²⁰ For, when you were the slaves of sin, you were free concerning righteousness. ²¹ Therefore, what harvest did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? None, for the end of those things is death. ²² Rather, now, after you have been set free from sin and have been made the slaves of God, you have your harvest leading to holiness, and the end will be eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7

Freedom from the Law through Christ (7:1-25)

¹ Or do you not know, fellow-Christians (for I am speaking to people who know the Law) that the Law controls a person only while he is still alive? ² For the woman who has a husband has been bound by the Law to her husband while he is alive. However, if her husband dies, she has been released from the Law that binds her to her husband. ³ Therefore, while her husband is alive, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man. However, if her husband dies, she is free from the Law, with the result that she is not an adulteress if she marries another man. ⁴ Therefore, fellow-Christians, you too have been put to death in relation to the Law through the body of Christ, with the result that you have begun to belong to Another, to Him who has been raised from the dead, that we may bear fruit to God. ⁵ For, while we were in the sinful human nature, the sinful passions that were aroused by the Law were at work in our members, that we produced fruit for death. ⁶ However, now we have been released from the Law, because we have died to what we were being bound by, with the result that we serve in the new

way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

The power of the holy Law to provoke and increase sin

⁷ What shall we say, then? Is the Law sin? Certainly not! Rather, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law. For I would not have known covetousness if the Law had not said, “**You shall not covet!**”

⁸ However, sin took an opportunity through the Commandment and produced in me every kind of covetousness. For sin is dead without the Law. ⁹ Once I used to be alive without the Law; but, when the Commandment came, sin became alive, and I died. ¹⁰ The very Commandment that was intended to lead to life was found in my case to lead to death. ¹¹ For sin took an opportunity through the Commandment, deceived me and through the Commandment killed me. ¹² Therefore, the Law is holy, and the Commandment is holy, righteous and good. ¹³ So, did this good thing cause death for me? Certainly not! Rather, that sin might be recognised as sin, it was producing death for me through what is good, that sin might become extremely sinful through the Commandment.

The powerlessness of the Law to call forth what is good; he who is justified through faith is saint and sinner at the same time

¹⁴ For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I have sinful human nature and am sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand what I am doing. For I do not do what I want to do but do what I hate. ¹⁶ If I do what I do not want to do, I also agree that the Law is good. ¹⁷ However, now it is no longer I who am doing it, but it is the sin that is living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful human nature. For the willingness is present with me but doing what is good is not. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good that I want to do. Instead, I do the evil that I do not want to do. ²⁰ If I am doing what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who am doing it, but the sin that is living in me. ²¹ Therefore, I find this to be the rule: Although I want to do what is good, evil is present with me. ²² For according to the inward human being I delight in God’s Law, ²³ but in the members of my body I see another law, which is waging war against the Law of my mind and making me a prisoner to the law of sin that is in the members of my body. ²⁴ What a wretched person I am! Who will rescue me from this body, which is bringing death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Therefore, with my mind I myself serve the Law of God but with my sinful nature I serve the law of sin.

8

Freedom from condemnation and death through the Spirit (8:1-39)

¹ Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the principle of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the principle of sin and death. ³ For what the Law could not do, because it was weak through the sinful human nature, God has done, by sending His own Son to be like sinful human nature, to be a sin-offering. He has condemned

sin in human nature, ⁴ that the just Requirements of the Law may be fulfilled in us, who do not live according to the sinful human nature but according to the Spirit.

⁵ For those who live according to the sinful nature set their minds on the things that belong to the sinful nature, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things that belong to the Spirit. ⁶ For the way of thinking that belongs to the sinful nature is death, but the way of thinking that belongs to the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ This is so, because the way of thinking that belongs to the sinful nature is hostile to God. For it is not subordinate to God’s Law. Indeed, it cannot be. ⁸ Those who are in the sinful nature cannot please God. ⁹ You, however, are not in the sinful nature but in the Spirit, if God’s Spirit dwells in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ; ¹⁰ but, if Christ is in you, your bodies are dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is dwelling in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who dwells in you.

God’s children are free from death and heirs with Christ

¹² Therefore, fellow-Christians, we are in debt, not to the sinful nature, to live according to the sinful nature. ¹³ For, if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die. However, if, by the Spirit, you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by God’s Spirit are God’s children. ¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery again, to make you afraid but have received the Spirit, who adopts, by whom we cry, “Abba, Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirits that we are God’s children, ¹⁷ and that, if we are children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, since indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified with Him.

The suffering of the present age as it waits for the glory of the age to come

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time do not deserve to be compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation is waiting with eager expectation to see the revealing of God’s children. ²⁰ For this created world has been subjected to futility, not by its own choice but because of the One who subjected it; in hope, ²¹ because the created world itself will also be freed from its slavery to decay, to have the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² For we know that all the creation has been groaning together with them and labouring with birth-pangs together with them until now.

The Christians’ groaning as they wait for redemption

²³ Not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as His children, for the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For we have been saved by hope. If hope is seen, it is not hope. Who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ However, if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it, with patience.

The intercession of the Spirit for believers

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit also helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what we are to pray for as we ought to, but the Spirit Himself pleads for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. ²⁷ He who searches our hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is. For the Spirit pleads for God's holy people according to God's will.

The consummation of God's eternal purpose

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, for those whom He has called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For He also predestined those whom He had foreknown, to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brothers. ³⁰ He also called those whom He had predestined. He also justified those whom He had called, and He also glorified those whom He had justified.

³¹ Therefore, what shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² How will He not, who did not spare His own Son but handed Him over for us all, along with Him, also freely give us all things? ³³ Who will accuse those whom God has chosen? It is God **who justifies**. ³⁴ **Who will condemn?** Christ Jesus, who died and, more than that, has been raised, is the One who is even at the right hand of God, who is also interceding for us.

Victory through the love of God in Christ

³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As Scripture has said: "**For Your sake we are being killed all day long. We have been considered as sheep to be slaughtered.**" ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who has loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor present circumstances nor future circumstances, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9

The consistency between the righteousness of faith and the promise of God (9:1-11:36)

God's faithfulness to His promise to believers (9:1-29)

¹ I am telling the truth in Christ. I am not lying, as my conscience bears witness to me by the Holy Spirit, ² that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those who are my own flesh and blood. ⁴ They are Israelites. To them belong the adoption as sons, the glory, the Covenants, the receiving of the Law, the worship and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the fathers, and from them, according to His human nature, the Christ came, who is God over everything, blessed for ever! Amen.

⁶ This does not mean that the Word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel,

⁷ and not all who are the offspring of Abraham are for

that reason his children. Rather, "**Isaac's children will be called your offspring.**" ⁸ This means that the children of God are not those who are children by natural birth. Rather, the children of the promise are reckoned as Abraham's offspring. ⁹ For this is how the promise was worded: "**I shall come at this appointed time, and Sarah will have a son.**" ¹⁰ Not only this, but, Rebecca also conceived by one man, our father Isaac ¹¹ For the children had not yet been born and had not done anything good or bad, that God's purpose according to election might remain, ¹² which does not depend on works but on Him who calls, and yet she was told: "**The elder one will serve the younger one.**" ¹³ It is as Scripture has said, "**I have loved Jacob but have hated Esau.**"

The right of God to choose in mercy

¹⁴ What shall we say, then? Surely there is no injustice on God's part? Certainly not! ¹⁵ For He says to Moses: "**I shall be merciful to anyone to whom I am merciful and have compassion on anyone on whom I have compassion.**" ¹⁶ Therefore, it does not depend on the one who wills or the one who runs but on God, who shows mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "**I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I may display My power in you and that My name may be proclaimed in all the earth.**" ¹⁸ Therefore, He has mercy on the one on whom He wants to have mercy and makes stubborn the one whom He wishes to make stubborn. ¹⁹ You will ask me, therefore, "Then why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" ²⁰ However, now, man, who are you to answer back to God? Surely **the thing that is formed will not ask the one who has formed it**, "Why have you made me like this?" ²¹ Or does not the **potter** have the right over **his clay** to make out of the same lump of clay one jar for a noble purpose and another for a lowly purpose?

God's choice of the Gentiles

²² What if God, although He wanted to show His wrath and to make His power known, **endured** with great patience the **vessels of wrath**, who had prepared themselves **for destruction**? ²³ What if He also did this to make known His rich glory on the vessels of mercy, whom He had prepared in advance for glory, ²⁴ even us, whom He has called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? ²⁵ It is as He also says in Hosea: "**Him who is not My people I shall call 'My people,' and her who has not been loved I shall call 'My loved one.'**" ²⁶ **In the place where they were told: 'You are not My people,' there they will be called 'the sons of the living God.'**" ²⁷ Isaiah exclaims concerning Israel: "**Although the number of the people of Israel is like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. For the Lord will act on the earth by accomplishing His Word and by shortening it.**" ²⁹ It is as Isaiah said long ago: "**If the Lord of hosts had not left us descendants, we would have become like Sodom and caused to resemble Gomorrah.**"

The fault of Israel for its rejection (9:30-10:21)

³⁰ What shall we say, then? That the Gentiles who were not pursuing righteousness have obtained righteousness, a righteousness that is by faith, ³¹ but that Israel, who was pursuing the Law of righteousness, has not attained the Law.

³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the “**Stumbling Stone**,” ³³ as Scripture has said: “**See, I am putting in Zion a Stone over which people will stumble and a Rock over which they will fall. However, the person who believes in Him will not be put to shame.**”

10

The faith that is open to both Jews and Gentiles

¹ Fellow-Christians, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. ² I bear them witness that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³ For, because they do not know the righteousness of God and are trying to establish their own, they have not been subordinate to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes. ⁵ For Moses writes about the righteousness that is by the Law, “**The person who has done these things will live by them.**” ⁶ However, the righteousness that is by faith speaks in this way, “**Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’**” (which means, to bring Christ down) ⁷ or, “**Who will descend into the depths?’**” (which means, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ Rather, what does it say? “**The Word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.**” This is the Word of faith, which we are preaching, ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart a person believes, so that he is counted righteous and with the mouth a person confesses and then he is saved. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “**The person who believes in Him will not be put to shame.**” ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is over them all and gives His riches to all who call on Him. ¹³ For “**Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**” ¹⁴ How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? Moreover, how are they to believe in Him of whom they have not heard? How are they to hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ How are they to preach unless they are sent? As Scripture has said: “**How beautiful are the feet of those who tell good things as Good News!**” ¹⁶ However, they have not all obeyed the Good News. For Isaiah asks: “**Lord, who has believed our message?**” ¹⁷ Therefore, faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ. ¹⁸ However, I ask, “They certainly have heard, have they not?” Indeed, they have! “**Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of**

the world.” ¹⁹ However, I ask, “Israel has certainly known, have they not?” First Moses says, “**I shall make you jealous by those who are not a nation. I shall make you angry by a people that has no understanding.**” ²⁰ Isaiah also boldly says, “**I have been found by those who were not searching for Me. I have been revealed to those who were not asking for Me.**” ²¹ He also says concerning Israel: “**All day long I have been stretching out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.**”

11

The continuing existence of a remnant of grace

¹ Therefore, I ask, “**God has not rejected His people, has He?**” Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. ² **God has not rejected His people**, whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah when he pleads with God against Israel: ³ “**Lord, they have killed Your prophets, they have torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they are trying to kill me?**” ⁴ However, what was **God’s answer** to him? “**I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed their knees to Baal.**” ⁵ Therefore, in this way also at the present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. ⁶ Moreover, if it is by grace, it is no longer by works. Otherwise, grace would no longer be grace.

God’s way of saving “all Israel”

⁷ What then? Israel has not obtained what it is searching for, but the elect have obtained it, and the others have been hardened. ⁸ It is as Scripture has said, “**God has given them a spirit of deep sleep, eyes so that they do not see and ears so that they do not hear, to this very day.**”

⁹ David also says: “**Let their table become a snare, a trap, a stumbling-block and a retribution for them!**” ¹⁰ **Let their eyes be darkened so they may not see, and let their backs always be bent!**”

Salvation for the Gentiles, which has resulted from the fall of Israel

¹¹ Therefore, I ask, “They have not stumbled that they might fall, have they?” Certainly not! Rather, by their own transgression, to **make them jealous**, salvation has come to the Gentiles. ¹² Moreover, if their transgression has made the world rich and their loss has made the Gentiles rich, how much greater riches will their fulfilment bring! ¹³ I am speaking to you Gentiles. Since I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I continue to glorify my ministry, ¹⁴ in the hope that I may somehow **arouse** my own people **to envy** and save some of them. ¹⁵ For, if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

¹⁶ If the part of the dough offered as first-fruits is holy, so is the whole dough. If the root is holy, so are the branches. ¹⁷ However, if some of the branches have been broken off and you, a wild olive, have been graft-

ed in among them and have become one who shares the rich sap from the root of the olive-tree, ¹⁸ do not boast over the other branches! Moreover, if you do boast, consider that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹ Therefore, you will say: "Branches have been broken off that I may be grafted in." ²⁰ Right! They have been broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant but be afraid! ²¹ For, if God has not spared the natural branches, be afraid that somehow He will not spare you, either! ²² Consider therefore how kind and how severe God is. He has been severe to those who have fallen but is kind to you, if you continue in His kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. ²³ If those people do not continue in their unbelief, they will be grafted in. For God can graft them in again. ²⁴ For, if you have been cut from the olive-tree that is wild by nature and have, contrary to nature, been grafted into a cultivated olive-tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive-tree!

God's will that rejection should lead to Israel's salvation

²⁵ For I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, fellow-Christians, that you may not be conceited: Hardening has come on Israel in part until the full number of the Gentiles comes in. ²⁶ In this way all Israel will be saved, as Scripture has said: "**The Deliverer will come out of Zion, He will turn ungodliness away from Jacob.**" ²⁷ **This will also be My Covenant with them when I take away their sins.**" ²⁸ From the viewpoint of the Good News, they are enemies on your account, but, from the viewpoint of election, they are dearly loved because of their fathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God cannot be revoked. ³⁰ For, as you were once disobedient to God, yet you have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, ³¹ so also these people have become disobedient now, while you enjoy mercy, that they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has locked all people into disobedience that He may be merciful to all people.

³³ How deep are the riches of God's wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is to search out His Decisions and to trace His ways! ³⁴ **For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His adviser? ³⁵ Or who has first given God something that He should pay him back?** ³⁶ For all things are from Him and through Him and for Him. To Him be the glory for ever! Amen!

12

The life of the person who through faith is righteous (12:1-15:13)

God's mercy as the motive for ethics

¹ Therefore, I appeal to you, fellow-Christians, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual worship. ² Do not conform to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, that you may approve of what God wants, namely, what is good,

pleasing and perfect!

Admonitions to live for others in Christ

³ For I tell everyone among you, through the grace that God has given to me: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought to think! Rather, think of yourself with sober judgment, as God has given a measure of faith to each one! ⁴ For, as we have many members in one body and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. ⁶ We have charismatic gifts that are different according to the grace that has been given to us. If we have prophecy, let us use it in agreement with the faith! ⁷ If we have ministry, let us use it in our ministering! If anyone is a teacher, let him use it in teaching! ⁸ If anyone encourages others, let him use it in encouraging! If anyone shares, let him be generous! If anyone is a leader, let him do it diligently! If anyone shows mercy, let him do it cheerfully!

Specific forms of conduct that are prompted by love

⁹ Love must be sincere! Hate what is evil! Cling to what is good! ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another with brotherly love! Honour one another above yourselves! ¹¹ Do not be timid in your zeal! Be fervent in spirit and serve the Lord! ¹² Be joyful in your hope! Be patient in trouble and persevere in prayer! ¹³ Share with God's holy people who are in need! Eagerly welcome strangers as guests! ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you! Bless and do not curse them! ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice! Weep with those who weep! ¹⁶ Agree with one another! Do not be proud but accommodate yourselves to humble people! **Do not think that you are wise!** ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil! **Take into consideration what all people regard as good!** ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people! ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, dearly loved people, but leave room for God's wrath! For Scripture has said: "**Vengeance belongs to Me. I shall repay,**" says the Lord. ²⁰ Rather, "**If your enemy is hungry, feed him! If he is thirsty, give him a drink! If you do this, you will heap burning coals on his head.**" ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good!

13

The proper conduct of the Christian in the orders of this world

¹ Let everyone be subordinate to the governing authorities! For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist have been ordained by God. ² Therefore, he who refuses to subordinate himself to the authority resists God's ordinance, and those who resist it will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the governing authority? Do what is right, and it will praise you! ⁴ For it is God's servant for your benefit. However, if you do wrong, you should be afraid! For it does not bear the sword for nothing. It is God's servant, an avenger that is an agent of wrath to anyone who does

wrong. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to subordinate oneself, not only because of God's wrath but also because of conscience. ⁶ For that is why you also pay taxes. For they are God's servants, who attend continually to this work. ⁷ Pay to all what you owe them! If you owe anyone tribute, pay tribute; if taxes, then taxes; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour!

The fulfilment of the Law through love

⁸ Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another! For the person who loves the other person has fulfilled the Law. ⁹ For the Commandments, "**You shall not commit adultery!**" "**You shall not murder!**" "**You shall not steal!**" "**You shall not covet!**" and whatever other Commandment there may be are summed up in this: "**You shall love your neighbour as yourself!**" ¹⁰ Love does no harm to the neighbour. Therefore, love is the fulfilment of the Law.

Admonitions to lay aside indecent living and to put on the Lord Jesus Christ

¹¹ Do this, since you know the time, that now it is the hour for you to wake up from sleep! For our salvation is nearer now than when we first began to believe.

¹² The night has advanced, and the day is almost here. Therefore, let us lay aside the works of darkness and let us put on the weapons of light! ¹³ Let us live decently as in the daytime, not in excessive feasting or getting drunk, not in sinning sexually and living wildly, not in quarrelling and being jealous! ¹⁴ Rather, put on the Lord Jesus Christ and do not be concerned to gratify the desires of the sinful nature!

14

The relationship of strong Christians and weak Christians to each other (14:1-15:13)

¹ Welcome the person who is weak in the faith but not that you may get into quarrels about opinions! ² One person believes he may eat anything, but another person, who is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The person who eats should not despise the person who does not eat, and the person who does not eat should not criticise the person who eats! For God has accepted him. ⁴ Who are you to criticise someone else's servant? It is with reference to his own master that he succeeds or fails. He will also succeed. For the Lord can make him succeed. ⁵ For one person thinks that one day is better than another is, and another person thinks that every day is alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind! ⁶ The person who observes the day observes it to the Lord. The person who eats eats to the Lord. For he gives thanks to God. The person who does not eat refrains from eating to the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. ⁸ For, if we live, we live to the Lord; and, if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹ For Christ died and became alive again for this purpose: that He might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ However, why do you criticise your fellow-Christian? Or why do you too despise your fellow-Christian? For we shall all

stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For Scripture has said: "**As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before Me, and every tongue will make confession to God.'**" ¹² So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. ¹³ Therefore, let us not criticise one another any longer! Rather, make up your minds not to lay any stumbling-block or obstacle in the way of a fellow-Christian! ¹⁴ I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; except that, when a person thinks that something is unclean, it is unclean to him. ¹⁵ For, if your fellow-Christian is distressed because of what you eat, you are not living in love any longer. Do not, by what you eat, destroy the person for whom Christ has died! ¹⁶ Therefore, let your good thing not be spoken of as evil! ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ For the person who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by human beings. ¹⁹ Therefore, let us pursue the things that make for peace and the things by which we build one another up! ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food! All things are clean, but it is an evil thing if a person eats something when it causes someone else to stumble. ²¹ It is a good thing not to eat meat, drink wine or do anything else that causes your fellow-Christian to stumble. ²² Keep for yourself before God the conviction that you have! Blessed is the person who does not condemn himself because of something that he regards as right! ²³ However, the person who has doubts has been condemned if he eats, because he has not done it out of conviction. Anything that does not come from conviction is sin.

15

¹ However, we who are strong ought to be patient with the scruples of the weak and ought not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbour for his good, to build him up! ³ For even Christ did not please Himself, but, as Scripture has said: "**The insults of those who were insulting You have fallen on Me.**" ⁴ For all the things that were written long ago were written to teach us, that we might have hope through the patient endurance and encouragement that the Scriptures give us. ⁵ May God, who gives you patient endurance and encouragement, give you harmony with one another according to Christ Jesus, ⁶ that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! ⁷ Therefore, receive one another, as Christ has also received you, to glorify God! ⁸ For I say that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, ⁹ that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy, as Scripture has said: "**Therefore, I shall praise You among the Gentiles and sing psalms to Your name.**" ¹⁰ Again it says, "**Rejoice, Gentiles, together with His people!**" ¹¹ Again: "**Praise the**

Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples commend Him.” ¹² Again Isaiah says, **“The Root of Jesse will come, even One who will arise to rule over the Gentiles. The Gentiles will hope in Him.”** ¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe, that you may be very hopeful, by the power of the Holy Spirit!

Conclusion (15:14-16:27)

Paul's travel-plans

¹⁴ I myself am confident about you, my fellow-Christians, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to admonish one another. ¹⁵ However, I am writing to you rather boldly in some places, as if I were reminding you, because of the gracious privilege that has been given to me by God, ¹⁶ that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles in the priestly service of the Good News of God, that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, having been made holy by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁷ Therefore, I have this reason for boasting in Christ Jesus about my relationship to God. ¹⁸ For I shall not dare to speak about anything that Christ has not accomplished through me, in Word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient, ¹⁹ by the power of miraculous signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that I have fully proclaimed the Good News of Christ from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum. ²⁰ In this way, it has been my ambition to tell the Good News only where the name of Christ has not been known, that I may not build on someone else's foundation. ²¹ Rather, as Scripture has said: **“Those who have not had it announced to them about Him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.”** ²² That is also why I have so often been prevented from coming to you. ²³ However, now I have no more opportunity in these regions and have been longing for many years to come to you, ²⁴ whenever it is that I journey to Spain. For I hope to see you while I am passing through and, if I have first enjoyed being with you for a while, I hope to be sent on my way there by you. ²⁵ Now, however, I am going to Jerusalem in the service of God's holy people. ²⁶ For Macedonia and Greece have kindly decided to contribute for those who are poor among God's holy people in Jerusalem. ²⁷ They have indeed kindly decided it and are in debt to them. For, if the Gentiles have had a share of the Jews' spiritual goods, the Gentiles owe it to the Jews to serve them with their material goods. ²⁸ Therefore, when I have completed this and have safely delivered this harvest to them, I shall come to you on my way to Spain. ²⁹ I know that, when I come to you, I shall come with the full blessing of Christ. ³⁰ I urge you, fellow-Christians, through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me, ³¹ that I may be rescued from those in Judea who do not believe and that my service to Jerusalem may be acceptable to God's holy people, ³² so that, by the will

of God, I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. ³³ May the God of peace be with you all! Amen.

16

Fellowship-greetings to house-churches in Rome and a warning to avoid errorists (16:1-27)

¹ I commend to you Phoebe, our fellow-Christian. She is also a servant of the church at Cenchreae. ² Welcome her in the Lord in a way that is worthy of God's holy people and give her help in whatever matter she needs it from you! For indeed she has been a helper of many people and of myself also. ³ Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴ who have risked their own necks for my life! Not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. ⁵ Greet also the church that meets in their house! Greet my dear Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia! ⁶ Greet Mary, who has worked very hard for you! ⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives, who have been in prison with me! They are well known to the apostles. They also were in Christ before I was. ⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord! ⁹ Greet Urbanus our fellow-worker in Christ and my dear Stachys! ¹⁰ Greet Apelles, a tried and true Christian! Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus! ¹¹ Greet my relative Herodion! Greet those people in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord! ¹² Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who have worked hard in the Lord! Greet dearly loved Persis, who has worked very hard in the Lord! ¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me too! ¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the fellow-Christians who are with them! ¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister and Olympas and all God's holy people who are with them! ¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss! All the churches of Christ greet you. ¹⁷ I urge you, fellow-Christians, to watch out for those who cause the divisions and the obstacles that are contrary to the teaching that you have learned and turn away from them. ¹⁸ For such people are not serving Christ our Lord but their own appetites and by their smooth words and flattering talk are deceiving the hearts of unsuspecting people. ¹⁹ For the report about your obedience has reached everyone. Therefore, I am glad about you but want you to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. ²⁰ The God of peace will soon **crush** Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you! ²¹ My fellow-worker Timothy greets you. So do Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, my relatives. ²² I, Tertius, who have written down this letter, greet you in the Lord. ²³ Gaius, my host and the host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city-treasurer, greets you and Quartus, our fellow-Christian. ^{*182}

¹⁸² Later manuscripts have a verse Romans 16:24, most of the words of which are at the end of verse 20.

Romans

²⁵ To Him who can make you strong according to my Good News and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that has been kept in silence for long ages, ²⁶ but has now been revealed and made known through the writings of the prophets, as the eternal God has commanded, that all the nations may be obedient by believing, ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory for ever! Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS

1

Congregational problems reported to Paul (1:1-6:20)
Factions in the church (1:1-4:21)

¹ Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, together with Sosthenes, our fellow-Christian, ² to the church of God at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called, holy people, with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: ³ Grace and peace to you from God, our Father and the Lord, Jesus Christ! ⁴ I am always thanking my God for you for the grace of God, which has been given to you in Christ Jesus. ⁵ For in Him you have been made rich in every way, in all speech and all knowledge, ⁶ just as the testimony about Christ has been confirmed in you. ⁷ Therefore, you do not lack any charismatic gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ⁸ He will also make you firm until the end, that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God, who has called you into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

¹⁰ I appeal to you, fellow-Christians, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree with one another, that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united with the same mind and with the same judgment! ¹¹ For, my fellow-Christians, Chloe's people have informed me about you, that there are quarrels among you. ¹² What I mean is this: Each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Surely Paul was not crucified for you? Or were you baptised into the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I did not baptise any of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ that none of you may say that you have been baptised into my name. ¹⁶ Yes, I also baptised the family of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptised anyone else. ¹⁷ For Christ has not sent me to baptise but to tell the Good News, not with wise words, that the cross of Christ may not be emptied of its power.

The crucified Christ as the wisdom and power of God

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For Scripture says: "**I shall destroy the wisdom of wise people and frustrate the intelligence of intelligent people.**" ²⁰ **Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe?** Where is the debater of this age? Has God not **made foolish the wisdom** of the world? ²¹ For, since the world by its wisdom has not come to know God, God has graciously resolved, in His wisdom, to use the foolishness of the preached message to save those who believe. ²² For Jews ask for miraculous signs, and Greeks look for wisdom.

²³ However, we preach a crucified Christ, to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness; ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, we preach Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ For see what you were, fellow-Christians, when God called you! Not many of you were wise from a human point of view, not many were influential and not many were born of noble parents. ²⁷ However, God has chosen the foolish things in the world to put those who are wise to shame. God has chosen the weak things in the world to put those who are strong to shame. ²⁸ God has chosen the lowly things in the world, the things that are despised and the things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹ that no one may boast before God. ³⁰ However, you are from Him in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God and righteousness, holiness and redemption, ³¹ that it may be as Scripture has said, "**Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord!**"

2

¹ When I came to you, fellow-Christians, to proclaim the testimony of God to you, I did not come as a person who was superior in speech or wisdom. ² For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. ³ I came to you in weakness, in fear and with much trembling. ⁴ I did not speak and preach with persuasive words of wisdom but with the demonstration of the Spirit and power, ⁵ that your faith might not rest on human wisdom but on the power of God.

The wisdom that comes from the Spirit of God

⁶ However, we speak wisdom to those who are mature but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷ No, we tell about the wisdom of God in a mystery, a wisdom that has been hidden but that God ordained before the ages for our glory. ⁸ None of those who rule this world has known it. For, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ Rather, as Scripture has said, "**No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has comprehended what God has prepared for those who love Him.**" ¹⁰ Nevertheless, God has revealed it to us through His Spirit. The Spirit searches out all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what human being knows the things that belong to the human being except the human being's spirit in him? In the same way, no one knows the things that belong to God except the Spirit of God. ¹² We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who comes from God, that we may know the things that God has freely given to us. ¹³ We

speak about these things in words not taught by human wisdom but in Words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who have the Spirit. ¹⁴ However, an unspiritual person does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. For they are foolishness to him, and he cannot know them because they are discerned spiritually. ¹⁵ The spiritual person judges all things but he himself is not judged by anyone. ¹⁶ For **“who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?”** However, we have the mind of Christ.

3

God's use of ministers to plant and build

¹ Fellow-Christians, I could not speak to you as spiritual people but as worldly people, as infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, because you could not receive it yet. Indeed, even now you cannot receive it. ³ For you are still influenced by your sinful natures. For, when there are jealousy and quarrelling among you, are you not influenced by your sinful natures and living by human standards? ⁴ When one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not being like ordinary human beings? ⁵ What is Apollos? Or what is Paul? They are ministers through whom you have become believers, and each one has had what the Lord has assigned him. ⁶ I have planted, Apollos has watered, but God has caused the growth. ⁷ Therefore, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything but God, who causes the growth. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters are one, and each will receive his own reward according to his own labour. ⁹ For we are God's fellow-workers. You are God's field. You are God's building. ¹⁰ In accordance with the grace that God has given me, I have laid a foundation as an expert master-builder, and somebody else is continuing to build on it. However, each one should be careful how he builds on it! ¹¹ For no one can lay any other foundation than the one that has already been laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver or precious stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ each one's work will become evident. For that day will show it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If anyone's work that he has built on it survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burnt, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved but only as one escaping through fire. ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, and you are that temple. ¹⁸ No one should deceive himself! If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this world, he should become a fool, that he may become wise! ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For Scripture has said, **“He catches the wise people by their own craftiness;”** ²⁰ and again, **“The Lord knows that**

the thoughts of wise people are futile.” ²¹ Therefore, let no one boast about human beings! For all things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future. All are yours, ²³ and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

4

The ministry of Christ's apostles

¹ Let a person regard us as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries! ² In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that a person should be found faithful. ³ However, with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. Indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ I am not conscious of anything against myself, but this does not justify me. He who judges me is the Lord. ⁵ Therefore, do not judge anything before the appointed time, before the Lord comes! He will bring to light the things that are hidden in darkness and will expose the plans in people's hearts. Then each one will receive his praise from God. ⁶ Fellow-Christians, I have applied these things to myself and to Apollos for your benefit, that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what Scripture has said!” that none of you may be puffed up in favour of one against the other.

⁷ For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you have not received? Moreover, if you have received it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? ⁸ So, you have already received all you could wish! You have already become rich! You have become kings without us! I only wish you had become kings, that we too might be kings with you! ⁹ For I think that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die, because we have been made a spectacle for the world, to angels as well as to men. ¹⁰ We are fools because of Christ, but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are distinguished, but we are dishonoured! ¹¹ Up to the present hour we are hungry, are thirsty, are poorly clothed, are roughly treated, are homeless ¹² and work hard, toiling with our hands. When we are insulted, we bless. When we are persecuted, we endure it. ¹³ When we are slandered, we entreat. We have until now become the refuse of the world, the scum of all things.

¹⁴ I am not writing these things to make you feel ashamed but to warn you as my dear children. ¹⁵ For, although you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, because in Christ Jesus I have become your father through the Good News. ¹⁶ Therefore, I urge you, be imitators of me! ¹⁷ That is why I am sending Timothy to you. He is my dear and faithful son in the Lord. He will remind you about my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church. ¹⁸ Some people have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. ¹⁹ However, I shall

come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and shall find out, not what the arrogant people are saying but what power they have. ²⁰ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. ²¹ Which do you prefer? Am I to come to you with a rod or with love and a gentle spirit?

5

The need to deal with public immorality in people who have the reputation of being fellow-Christians (5:1-6:20)

An admonition to expel a wicked member

¹ It is actually reported that there is sexual sin among you, and such sexual sin as does not occur even among the Gentiles, that a man has his father's wife. ² You have even become arrogant and have not mourned instead, that the man who has done this deed may be removed from among you. ³ For, although I am absent physically, I am present in spirit; and, as though I were present, I have already judged the man who has committed this in this way. ⁴ In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you have gathered together and when my spirit is with you, together with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵ hand the person who is like this over to Satan, to destroy his sinful flesh, that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord! ⁶ Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷ Clean away the old yeast, that you may be a new batch of dough, just as you are unleavened! For indeed Christ, our **Passover, has been sacrificed.** ⁸ Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven and not with the leaven of vice and wickedness but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth! ⁹ I have written to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people — ¹⁰ I did not mean that you should altogether keep away from people of this world who live in sexual sin or from those who are greedy, who are swindlers or who worship idols; since, in that case, you would have had to get out of the world. ¹¹ However, now I am writing to you that you should not associate with anyone who calls himself a fellow-Christian and yet is sexually immoral or greedy or worships idols or is a slanderer or a drunkard or a swindler. Do not even eat with the person who is like this! ¹² For what business is it of mine to judge those who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? ¹³ God will judge those who are outside. **“Expel the wicked man from among yourselves!”**

6

A warning against lawsuits against fellow-Christians

¹ When one of you has a case against another, does he dare to go to law before unrighteous people instead of before God's holy people? ² Or do you not know that God's holy people will judge the world? If the world will be judged by you, are you incompetent to decide very insignificant cases? ³ Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more the things that belong to this life? ⁴ Therefore, if you have matters to decide that belong to this life, do you appoint as judges

men who are of no account in the church? ⁵ I say this to shame you. Is it so that there is no one among you who will be wise enough to decide a matter between his fellow-Christians? ⁶ Instead, one Christian goes to law against another, and this happens in front of unbelievers! ⁷ The fact that you have lawsuits against one another means that you have completely failed already. Why do you not rather be wronged? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? ⁸ Instead, you yourselves are doing wrong and cheating and are doing this to fellow-Christians.

⁹ Or do you not know that wicked people will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor people used by homosexuals nor homosexuals ¹⁰ nor thieves nor greedy people nor drunkards nor slanderers nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ Indeed, that is what some of you were. Nevertheless, you have been washed, you have been made holy, you have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

An admonition to flee sexual immorality

¹² “All things are permissible for me” — but not all things are beneficial. “All things are permissible for me” — but I shall not be brought under anyone's control. ¹³ “Foods are for the stomach, and the stomach is for foods” — but God will put an end to both it and them. The body is not for sexual sin but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. ¹⁴ God has both raised the Lord and will also raise us by His power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them the members of a prostitute? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one body with her? For God says: **“The two will become one flesh.”** ¹⁷ However, he who is united with the Lord is one spirit with Him. ¹⁸ Flee from sexual sin! Every other sin that a person commits is outside the body. However, the person who sins sexually sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you have been bought at a price. Therefore, glorify God with your bodies!

7

Questions raised by the Corinthian Christians (7:1-15:58)

1. marriage and celibacy (7:1-40)

¹ Concerning the things about which you have written: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. ² Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband! ³ The husband should fulfil his duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband! ⁴ The wife does not have power over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife does. ⁵ Do not deprive one another unless you agree to do so for a

time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and that you may come together again, that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control! ⁶ However, I say this as a concession, not as a command. ⁷ I wish that all people were just like me. However, each one has his own gift from God, one in this way, and another in that way. ⁸ Nevertheless, I say to those who are not married and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain just like me; ⁹ but, if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry! For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. ¹⁰ To those who have married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband! ¹¹ However, if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband! A husband must also not divorce his wife!

Advice to Christians who are married to unbelievers

¹² To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If a Christian man has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her! ¹³ If a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must also not divorce her husband! ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband has been consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been consecrated through her husband. For otherwise your children would be unclean but now are holy. ¹⁵ However, if the unbelieving person separates, let him separate! A Christian man or woman has not been bound like a slave in such cases. However, God has called us in peace. ¹⁶ For, wife, what do you know, whether you will save your husband? Or, husband, what do you know, whether you will save your wife?

Advice to Christians to continue as they were when God called them

¹⁷ Nevertheless, each one should live as the Lord has assigned to him, as God has called each one! This is the rule that I am making in all the churches. ¹⁸ Has anyone been called after he has been circumcised? Let him not get rid of his circumcision! Has anyone been called when he has been uncircumcised? He should not be circumcised! ¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the Commandments of God is what matters. ²⁰ Each one should remain in the calling he was in when he was called! ²¹ Were you a slave when you were called? Do not be concerned about it! However, if you can become a free man, rather, make use of your freedom! ²² For he who has been called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman. Similarly, he who has been called while a free man is a slave of Christ. ²³ You have been bought for a price. Do not become the slaves of human beings! ²⁴ Fellow-Christians, let each one remain with God in the situation he was in when he was called!

Advice to unmarried and widowed people

²⁵ Now concerning virgins I have no command from the Lord but am giving you a judgment as a person who has been shown mercy by the Lord, so that I am trustworthy. ²⁶ I think, therefore, that this is good because of the present crisis: that it is a fine thing for a person to

remain as he is. ²⁷ Have you been bound to a wife? Do not try to get a divorce! Are you free from a wife? Do not try to get a wife! ²⁸ However, if you do get married, you have not sinned; and, if a virgin gets married, she has not sinned. However, I would like to spare you the trouble that such people will have in this physical life.

²⁹ This is what I am saying, my fellow-Christians: the time has been shortened. From now on even those who have wives should be as if they had none! ³⁰ Those who weep should be as though they were not weeping! Those who rejoice should be as though they were not rejoicing! Those who buy should be as though they did not possess! ³¹ Those who use the world should be as though they were not using it! For the form of this world is passing away. ³² However, I want you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the affairs of the Lord, how he may please the Lord. ³³ However, he who has married is concerned about the affairs of the world, how he may please his wife, ³⁴ and his interests have been divided. The unmarried woman or the virgin is concerned about the affairs of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit. However, the woman who has married is concerned about the affairs of the world, how she may please her husband. ³⁵ I am saying this for your own good, not to throw a noose on you but with a view to good order and that you may be devoted to the Lord without being distracted. ³⁶ If anyone thinks that he is acting improperly toward his fiancée if she is past the bloom of youth and that he ought to get married, he should do what he wishes! He is not sinning. They should get married! ³⁷ However, the man who stands firm in his own mind, who is under no compulsion, but who has control over his own will and who has made up his mind to keep his fiancée as she is, will be doing right. ³⁸ Therefore, both the man who gives his own daughter in marriage is doing right and he who does not give her in marriage will be doing better. ³⁹ A wife has been bound to her husband while he is alive. If her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone whom she wishes but only in the Lord. ⁴⁰ However, she is more blessed if she remains as she is, in my judgment, and I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

8

The question of weak consciences when food has been sacrificed to idols (8:1-10:33)

¹ Now concerning the meat sacrificed to idols: We know that all of us have some knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² The person who thinks that he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. ³ However, if anyone loves God, God knows him. ⁴ Therefore, about eating meat that has been sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is no other God but one. ⁵ For, even if there are so-called "gods," either in heaven or on earth (as there are many "gods" and many "lords"), ⁶ yet for us there is only one God, the Father, from

whom all things come, and we exist for Him, and there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come, and we exist through Him.

⁷ However, not everyone knows this. Some are still now so accustomed to an idol that they think about the meat that they eat as something that has been sacrificed to an idol and, since their consciences are weak, they are defiled. ⁸ Food will not commend us to God. We lose nothing if we do not eat and gain nothing if we do eat. ⁹ However, beware that somehow this liberty of yours does not become the thing that causes weak people to stumble! ¹⁰ For, if anyone who is weak sees you, who have this knowledge, sitting at a meal in a temple of an idol, will not his conscience be encouraged to eat the meat that has been sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ For the weak person is being destroyed by your knowledge, your fellow-Christian, for whom Christ died. ¹² However, when you sin against your fellow-Christians in this way and wound their weak consciences, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food causes my fellow-Christian to stumble, I shall certainly never eat meat, that I may not cause my fellow-Christian to stumble.

9

Paul's surrender of his right to receive remuneration

¹ Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? ² If I am not an apostle to others, I certainly am one to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. ³ This is my defence to those who sit in judgment on me. ⁴ Surely it is not so that we have no right to eat and drink? ⁵ Surely it is not so that we have no right to take along a Christian wife like the rest of the apostles, the brothers of the Lord and Peter? ⁶ Or is it only Barnabas and I who do not have a right to refrain from working? ⁷ Does a soldier ever pay his own expenses? Does anyone plant a vineyard and not eat its grapes? Or does anyone take care of a flock and not drink any milk from it? ⁸ Am I merely stating a man-made rule? Does the Law not say the same thing? ⁹ For the Law of Moses says, "**Do not muzzle an ox when he is treading out grain.**" God is certainly not concerned about oxen, is He? ¹⁰ His Words have only us in mind, do they not? This has been written to show us that the person who ploughs or threshes ought to do so with the expectation that he will receive a share of the crop. ¹¹ If we have sown spiritual life in you, is it too much if we reap your earthly goods? ¹² If others have the right to expect this from you, do we not have a better claim? However, we have not made use of this right. Rather, we put up with anything that we may not hinder the Good News of Christ.

¹³ Do you not know that the men who work at the Temple receive their share of what is on the altar? ¹⁴ In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Good News should receive their living from

the Good News. ¹⁵ However, I have not used any of these rights. I am not writing this to have such things done for me. For I would rather die than let anyone take away my boast. ¹⁶ If I tell the Good News, I have nothing to boast about, because I am compelled to preach it. How terrible for me if I do not tell the Good News! ¹⁷ For, if I do it because I want to do it, I receive a reward. However, if I do not want to do it, I still have this work entrusted to me.

¹⁸ What then is my reward? Just this: That when I tell the Good News, I shall not let the Good News cost anyone anything, that I may not take advantage of my authority in the Good News.

Paul's use of his freedom with different kinds of people

¹⁹ For, although I am free from all people, I have made myself a slave to all, that I may win more. ²⁰ To the Jews I have become like a Jew, that I may win Jews. To those who are under the Law I have become like one under the Law, although I myself am not under the Law, that I may win those who are under the Law. ²¹ To those who are without the Law I have become like one who is without Law, although I am not without God's Law but am under Christ's law —, that I may win those who are without the Law. ²² To weak persons I have become a weak person, that I may win those who are weak. I have become all things to all people, that in every way I may save some. ²³ I am doing everything because of the Good News, that I may become a participant in it. ²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one wins the prize? Run in such a way that you may win! ²⁵ Everyone who enters an athletic contest goes into strict training. Now, they do it to win a wreath that withers, but we do it to win one that never withers. ²⁶ Therefore, I am not like one who runs aimlessly. I do not box like one who beats the air. ²⁷ Rather, I treat my body roughly and make it my slave, so that, after I have been a herald to others, I myself may not be disqualified.

10

A warning against temptations to fall from faith

¹ I want you to know, fellow-Christians, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea. ² They were all baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. ³ They all ate the same spiritual food ⁴ and they all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that accompanied them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ Yet God was not pleased with most of them. For **they were scattered over the desert.** ⁶ Now, these things happened as examples for us, that we might not **covet** evil things as they coveted them. ⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were, as the Scripture has said, "**The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to play!**" ⁸ Let us not sin sexually as some of them did! Twenty-three thousand fell on one day. ⁹ Let us not put Christ to a

test, as some of them did! They were destroyed by snakes. ¹⁰ Do not grumble, as some of them grumbled! The angel of death destroyed them. ¹¹ These things happened to them to give examples to others and were written down to warn us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come. ¹² Therefore, the one who thinks that he is standing firm should beware that he does not fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to all human beings. However, God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tested beyond what you can bear. Rather, when you are tested, He will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

A warning that sacrifices to idols involve communion with the demons behind them

¹⁴ Therefore, dearly loved people, flee from the worship of idols! ¹⁵ I am talking as to people who are sensible. Judge for yourselves what I am saying! ¹⁶ Is not the cup of blessing that we bless the communion of the blood of Christ? Is not the bread that we break the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body. For we all partake of the one bread. ¹⁸ Consider Israel according to human standards! Are not those who eat from the sacrifices partners in the altar? ¹⁹ What am I saying, then? That a sacrifice made to an idol is anything or that an idol is anything? ²⁰ Rather, I am saying that what they are offering they are **sacrificing to demons and not to God**. I do not want you to become partners with demons. ²¹ You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake from **the table of the Lord** and from the table of demons. ²² Or are we **trying to make the Lord jealous**? We are not stronger than He is, are we?

Advice about freedom and conscientious scruples

²³ “All things are permissible” — but not all things are beneficial. “All things are permissible” — but not all things are constructive. ²⁴ Let no one try to get his own advantage but that of the other person! ²⁵ Eat whatever is sold in the meat-market, without asking any questions because of your consciences! ²⁶ For “**The earth is the Lord’s, and all that fills it.**” ²⁷ If one of the unbelievers invites you and you wish to go, eat whatever is set before you, without asking any questions because of your consciences! ²⁸ However, if someone tells you, “This has been sacrificed to idols,” do not eat it, because of the man who has informed you and because of conscience! ²⁹ I say “conscience,” meaning not your own but the other person’s. For why is my freedom being judged by someone else’s conscience? ³⁰ If I partake with thankfulness, why am I being denounced because of something when I thank God for it? ³¹ Therefore, whether you eat or drink or do anything else, do everything to glorify God! ³² Do not give any offence, either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, ³³ just as I also try to please all people in every way! I do not try to get my own advantage but that of many people, that they may be saved.

11

The custom of the head-covering for women

¹ Imitate me as I also imitate Christ!

² I praise you for thinking of me in every way and for keeping the teachings as I have delivered them to you.

³ I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God. ⁴ Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonours his head. ⁵ Every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered also dishonours her head. For that is one and the same thing as if her head were shaved. ⁶ For, if a woman is not covered, let her also have her hair cut off! However, if it is shameful for a woman to have her hair cut or shaved off, let her be covered! ⁷ For a man ought not to cover his head! For he is **the image and glory of God**; but woman is the glory of man. ⁸ For man is not from woman, but woman from man. ⁹ Nor was man created because of the woman but woman because of the man. ¹⁰ For this reason, the woman ought to have authority on her head because of the angels! ¹¹ Nevertheless, neither is woman without man nor man without woman in the Lord. ¹² For, as the woman was from the man, even so, the man also is through the woman; but all things are from God. ¹³ Judge among yourselves! Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? ¹⁴ Does not even nature itself teach you that, if a man has long hair, it is a dishonour to him, ¹⁵ but, if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For long hair has been given to her instead of a cloak. ¹⁶ However, if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom—, nor do the churches of God.

b. The Lord’s Supper (11:17-34)

Admonitions to discern the Lord’s body and blood in the Lord’s Supper and not to ignore fellow-members — 1 Cor 10:16-17

¹⁷ As I instruct you in this matter, I do not praise you, because you do not come together for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For, in the first place, I hear that, when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you and, to some extent, I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be divisions among you to indicate which of you are genuine. ²⁰ So, when you are coming together to one place, it is not with the purpose of eating the Lord’s Supper! ²¹ For, as you eat, each one eats his own meal. One stays hungry, and another gets drunk. ²² Surely it is not so that you have no homes in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and do you humiliate those who do not have anything? What should I say to you? Should I praise you? I do not praise you for this.

²³ For I received from the Lord what I have also passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night when He was being betrayed, took bread. ²⁴ When He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me!” ²⁵ In the same way He also took the cup after the meal. He said,

“This cup is the new **Covenant** in My **blood**. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me!”²⁶ For, whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the Lord’s death, until He comes.

²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.²⁸ However, let a person examine himself and so let him eat from the bread and drink from the cup!²⁹ For he who eats and drinks without recognising the Lord’s body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

³⁰ For this reason, many among you are sick and ailing, and a number have fallen asleep.³¹ However, if we were carefully judging ourselves, we should not be under judgment.³² When the Lord judges us, we are being disciplined, that we may not be condemned with the world.³³ Therefore, my fellow-Christians, when you come together to eat, welcome one another!³⁴ If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home that you may not come together to be judged! I shall give directions concerning the other matters when I come.

12

Spiritual gifts (12:1-14:40)

The distribution of various charismatic gifts to all for the common good

¹ Now concerning spiritual gifts, fellow-Christians, I do not want you to be ignorant.² You know that you were Gentiles and were drawn away to dumb idols, however you happened to be led.³ Therefore, I tell you that no one who is speaking by God’s Spirit says, “Cursed be Jesus,” and no one can say, “Jesus is the Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ There are different kinds of charismatic gifts but the same Spirit.⁵ There are differing ways of serving but the same Lord.⁶ There are different kinds of activities but the same God, who works everything in all of them.

⁷ Now the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the common good.⁸ For to one there is given through the Spirit the Word of wisdom, to another the Word of knowledge through the same Spirit,⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another charismatic gifts of healing by the one Spirit,¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues and to another the interpretation of tongues.¹¹ One and the same Spirit works all these things and distributes them to each one individually, as He determines.

The need for differences between the members not to obscure the unity of the body

¹² For, as the body is one and yet has many members and as all the members of the body are one body, although they are many, so also is Christ.¹³ For by one Spirit we have all been baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and have all been made to drink of that one Spirit.

¹⁴ For indeed the body is not one member but many.

¹⁵ If the foot says, “Because I am not a hand, I do not

belong to the body,” it does not for that reason cease to belong to the body.¹⁶ If the ear says, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it does not for that reason cease to belong to the body.¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?¹⁸ However, now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He has wished.¹⁹ If they were all one member, where would the body be?²⁰ As it is, there are many members but one body.²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I do not need you,” or again the head to the feet, “I do not need you.”²² No, much rather, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are necessary.²³ We bestow greater honour on those members of the body that we think are less honourable, and our unpresentable members have greater modesty,²⁴ which our presentable parts do not need. However, God has composed the body and given greater honour to the member that lacks it,²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same concern for one another.²⁶ If one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it; or, if one member is honoured, all the other members rejoice with it.²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and members individually.²⁸ God has appointed in the church first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then charismatic gifts of healing, helpful deeds, positions of administration and different kinds of tongues.²⁹ Not all are apostles, are they? Not all are prophets, are they? Not all are teachers, are they? Not all work miracles, do they?³⁰ Not all have charismatic gifts of healing, do they? Not all speak in tongues, do they? Not all interpret, do they?³¹ Eagerly desire the greater gifts! I shall also show you what the best way is by far.

13

The pre-eminence of love over charismatic gifts

¹ If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become a loud gong or a clanging cymbal.² Even if I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and, if I have all faith so that I could remove mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.³ If I give away all that I possess to feed the hungry and, if I give up my body to be burnt and do not have love, I gain nothing at all.

⁴ Love is patient. Love is kind. Love is not envious. It does not brag or become conceited.⁵ It does not behave dishonourably. It is not selfish. It does not become irritated. It **keeps no record of wrongs**.⁶ It does not delight in wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.⁷ It covers everything in silence; it believes everything; it hopes for everything; it endures everything.

⁸ Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be ended. If there are tongues, they will cease. If there is knowledge, it will be ended.⁹ For we know in part and prophesy in part.¹⁰ However, when what is complete

comes, what is in part will be ended. ¹¹ When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, think like a child and reason like a child. Now that I have become a man, I have ended childish things. ¹² For now we see dimly in a mirror but then we shall see face to face. Now I know only in part but then I shall know just as I am fully known. ¹³ Moreover, now there remain these three: faith, hope and love. However, the greatest of these is love.

14

A comparison between prophecy and speaking in tongues, assessed by their ability to edify other people

¹ Pursue love and be eager to have the spiritual gifts but especially that you may prophesy! ² For he who speaks in a tongue is not speaking to human beings but to God. For no one understands him. He is speaking mysteries by his spirit. ³ However, the person who prophesies is speaking to human beings, to edify, encourage and comfort them. ⁴ The person who speaks in a tongue is edifying himself, but the person who prophesies is edifying the church. ⁵ I want you all to speak in tongues but even more that you prophesy. For the person who prophesies is greater than the person who speaks in tongues is, unless he is interpreting, that the church may receive edification. ⁶ Now, my fellow-Christians, if I come to you and speak in tongues, how shall I help you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying or by teaching? ⁷ Likewise lifeless instruments such as a flute or a harp produce sounds, but, if they produce no distinction in the notes, how will anyone know what is being played on the flute or harp? ⁸ For again, if a trumpet makes a sound that is uncertain, who will get ready for battle? ⁹ In the same way, if you people also do not give a message with your tongues that is easily recognisable, how will anyone know what you are saying? For you will be talking into the air. ¹⁰ There are probably ever so many kinds of languages in the world, and none is without meaning. ¹¹ Therefore, if I do not know what the language means, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker will be a foreigner to me. ¹² So, since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, you too should try to excel in them that the church may be edified. ¹³ Therefore, let the person who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret! ¹⁴ For, if I pray in a tongue, my spirit is praying, but my mind is not productive. ¹⁵ What is the conclusion then? I shall pray with my spirit and shall also pray with my mind. I shall sing with my spirit and shall also sing with my mind. ¹⁶ Otherwise, if you praise God only with your spirit, how can the person who occupies the place of an uninformed person say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? ¹⁷ For you indeed are giving thanks well, but the other person is not edified. ¹⁸ I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all, ¹⁹ but, in the church, I would rather say

five words with my understanding, that I may also instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue. ²⁰ Fellow-Christians, stop being childish in your minds! Be infants in evil but be mature in your minds! ²¹ Scripture has said in the Law: "**Through people with different languages and on the lips of foreigners I shall speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to Me,**" says the Lord." ²² Therefore, tongues serve as a miraculous sign, not for believers but for unbelievers. However, prophecy is a sign, not for unbelievers but for believers. ²³ Therefore, if the whole church comes together in one place and all speak with tongues and those who are uninformed or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your minds? ²⁴ However, if all prophesy and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all and is judged by all. ²⁵ Thus the secrets of his heart are revealed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and report that **God is truly among you.**

Instruction to follow God's order in Christian assemblies

²⁶ How is it then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification! ²⁷ If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret! ²⁸ However, if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church and let him speak to himself and to God!

²⁹ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge! ³⁰ However, if anything is revealed to another who is sitting by, let the first keep silent! ³¹ For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. ³² Moreover, the spirits of prophets are subordinate to other prophets. ³³ For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.

As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ let the women be silent in the churches! For it is not permitted to them to speak. Rather, let them be subordinate, as the Law also says! ³⁵ Moreover, if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home! For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. ³⁶ Or did the Word of God come from you? Or has it reached you only? ³⁷ If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or a spiritual person, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Commandment of the Lord! ³⁸ However, if anyone does not recognise this, he is not recognised. ³⁹ Therefore, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy and do not forbid speaking with tongues! ⁴⁰ Let all things be done decently and in order!

15

Christ's resurrection and the resurrection of those who believe in Him (15:1-58)

The fact of Jesus' resurrection, attested by the Old Testament and by apostolic witnesses

¹ My fellow-Christians, I am telling you the Good News that I told you, which you also received and on

1 Corinthians

which you also stand. ² You are also saved by it if you cling to the Word that I have preached to you, unless you have become believers in vain. ³ For I delivered to you, first, what I also received: that Christ died for our sins as the Scriptures said He would, ⁴ and that He was buried and that He was raised again on the third day as the Scriptures said He would, ⁵ and that He appeared to Cephas and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, He appeared to more than five hundred Christians at the same time, most of whom are still living, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then He appeared to James and then to all the apostles, ⁸ and, last of all, He appeared to me also, as to someone abnormally born. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not deserve to be called an apostle, because I had been persecuting the church of God. ¹⁰ However, by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me has not been without effect; but I have worked harder than all the others have — yet not I, but the grace of God, which has been with me. ¹¹ Now, whether I have done it or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you have believed.

The paramount importance of Jesus' resurrection for the Gospel, faith and hope

¹² If it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁴ If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is useless, and your faith is also useless. ¹⁵ We are also found to be false witnesses of God, because we have testified about God that He has raised Christ; but He did not raise Him if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For, if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile. You are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have also perished. ¹⁹ If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all other people. ²⁰ However, now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a man. ²² For, as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ However, each one in his own turn: Christ is the first-fruits. After that, when He comes, those who belong to Christ. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God, the Father, after He has put an end to all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For He must reign until God has put all His enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For “He has put all things under His feet.” However, when He says, “All things have been put under Him,” plainly this does not include the One who has put everything under Christ. ²⁸ However, when all things have been put under Him, then the Son Himself will also be put under the One who has put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

²⁹ Otherwise, what will those do who are baptised because of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, then why are people baptised because of them? ³⁰ Why are we also risking danger every hour? ³¹ Fellow-Christians, I die every day. It is as sure as the boast that I make about you in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If, like an ordinary man, I fought wild animals at Ephesus, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink! For tomorrow we die.” ³³ Do not let anyone deceive you! “Bad company corrupts good habits.” ³⁴ Become sober, as you ought to be, and do not sin any longer! For there are some who are ignorant of God. I say this to your shame.

The nature of resurrected bodies

³⁵ However, someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” ³⁶ How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ When you sow, you do not sow the body that will be but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or one of the other seeds. ³⁸ However, God gives it a body as He has determined and to each of the seeds its own body. ³⁹ Not all flesh is the same. Human beings have one kind of flesh, animals have another kind of flesh, birds have another kind of flesh, and fish have still another. ⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but the splendour of the heavenly bodies is different from that of the earthly bodies. ⁴¹ The splendour of the sun is different from the splendour of the moon, and the splendour of the stars is different again. Even one star differs in splendour from another star. ⁴² It will be like that with the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in decay: it is raised without decay. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonour: it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness: it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ As Scripture has said: “The first man, Adam, became a natural living being.” The last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was of the earth, made of dust. The second Man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ Those who are made of dust are also like the man of dust, and those who are heavenly are also like the Man from heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the Man from heaven.

The victory that the resurrection on the last day will bring

⁵⁰ Now I say this, fellow-Christians: Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does decay inherit what does not decay. ⁵¹ Look! I am telling you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but shall all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable body must clothe itself with what is imperishable, and this dying body must clothe itself with what cannot die. ⁵⁴ When this perishable body

1 Corinthians

clothes itself with what is imperishable and when this dying body clothes itself with what cannot die, then this passage of Scripture will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory!”⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law.⁵⁷ However, thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!⁵⁸ Therefore, my dearly loved fellow-Christians, stand firmly and immovably! Always do much work in the Lord, since you know that your hard work in the Lord is not in vain!

16

Conclusion (16:1-24)

An admonition to collect contributions regularly for the poor Christians in Judea — compare 2 Corinthians 8-9

¹ Concerning the collection for God’s holy people, you also should do as I have directed the churches in Galatia to do!² On the first day of the week, let each of you put something aside as he may prosper and save it up, that no collections may be made at the time when I come!³ When I come, I shall send whichever men you approve, with letters of introduction, to take your gift to Jerusalem.⁴ If it is appropriate that I should go too, they will travel with me.

Paul’s intention to visit Corinth soon

⁵ I shall come to you when I pass through Macedonia. For I shall be coming through Macedonia⁶ and perhaps stay with you or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my way wherever I may be going.⁷ For I do not want to see you now just in passing, because I hope to stay with you for some time, if the Lord permits it.⁸ However, I shall be staying on at Ephesus until Pentecost.⁹ For a great and effective door has opened for me, and there are many people who are opposing me.

Advice about Timothy, Apollos and others

¹⁰ If Timothy comes, see to it that he does not have to be afraid while he is with you! For he is doing the work of the Lord just as I am.¹¹ Therefore, no one should despise him! Send him on his way in peace, that he may come to me! For I am waiting for him together with the other Christians.¹² Concerning Apollos, our fellow-Christian — I strongly urged him to come to you with the other Christians, but it was not at all his wish to come now. However, he will come when he has an opportunity.

¹³ Be watchful! Stand firmly in the faith! Be men of courage! Be strong!¹⁴ Let all your affairs be carried out in love!¹⁵ You know that the family of Stephanas were the first-fruits of Achaia and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry to God’s holy people. I urge you, fellow-Christians,¹⁶ that you should also be subordinate to such people and to anyone else who is working and labouring with us!¹⁷ I am glad that Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus have come here, because they have supplied what was lacking from you.¹⁸ For they have refreshed my spirit and also yours. Therefore, acknowledge men like them!

Fellowship-greetings

¹⁹ The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca send you hearty greetings in the Lord, together with the church at their home.²⁰ All the fellow-Christians send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss!²¹ Here is the greeting that I, Paul, write with my own hand.²² If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be cursed! Our Lord, come!²³ May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with you!²⁴ My love be with you all in Christ Jesus! Amen.

2 CORINTHIANS

1

Introduction (1:1-7)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God and Timothy our fellow-Christian, to the church of God at Corinth and to all God's holy people who are throughout Achaia: ² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The comfort and rescue of God

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort! ⁴ He comforts us in all our distress, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any distress, with the same comfort with which God comforts us. ⁵ For, as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, so through Christ our comfort also overflows. ⁶ If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation. If we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you the patient endurance of the same sufferings as we also suffer. ⁷ Our hope for you is firm, because we know that, just as you share in our sufferings, so you also share in our comfort.

Paul's apostolic authority at Corinth (1:8-7:16)

⁸ Fellow-Christians, we do not want you to be uninformed about how distressed we were in the province of Asia. We were burdened beyond measure, beyond what we could endure, so that we despaired even of life. ⁹ However, we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we might not trust in ourselves but in God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He is the One who has rescued us from so great a death and He will continue to rescue us. We have placed our hope in Him that He will also rescue us again, ¹¹ since you are also joining in helping us through your prayers for us. As a result, many persons will thank God on our behalf for His gracious gift to us through many people.

Paul's declaration that he has been sincere

¹² For this is our boast: Our consciences testify that we have been conducting ourselves in the world and especially toward you, with the simplicity and sincerity that come from God, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God. ¹³ For we are not writing to you any other things than what you read and understand, and I hope you will fully understand, ¹⁴ as you have to some extent understood us, that we are your reason to boast, just as you will also be our reason to boast on the day of our Lord Jesus. ¹⁵ Because I was confident of this, I wanted to come to you first, that you might have a second benefit, ¹⁶ that I would pass by way of you to Macedonia, come back from Macedonia to you and be sent on by you to Judea.

A declaration that Paul wanted to spare the Corinthians

¹⁷ Therefore, when I was making this decision, did I do it lightly? Or do I make my decisions in a fleshly manner, so that with me "Yes, yes" should also mean "No, no"? ¹⁸ On the contrary! As God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes and No." ¹⁹ For the Son of God,

Jesus Christ, whom I, Silvanus and Timothy have preached among you, has not been "Yes and no," but in Him it has been "Yes." ²⁰ For, as all the promises of God are "Yes" in Him, for that reason also we speak the "Amen" to God through Him, to glorify Him. ²¹ God is the One who makes both us and you firm in Christ and who has anointed us, ²² who has also sealed us and has given us the guarantee of the Spirit in our hearts. ²³ I call on God, as witness against my soul, that I refrained from coming to Corinth again to spare you. ²⁴ I do not mean that we lord it over your faith but that we are working with you to make you joyful. For you stand by faith.

2

¹ For I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. ² For, if I make you sad, then who is there to make me happy except the one whom I am making sad? ³ That is the very thing that I wrote, so that, when I came, those who ought to be making me glad might not make me sad. I am confident about all of you, that what makes me glad also makes all of you glad. ⁴ I was deeply distressed and in anguish of heart when I wrote to you, with many tears. I did not write to make you sad but that you might realise how very much I love you.

An instruction to forgive the man who had done wrong

⁵ If someone has caused sadness, he has not made me sad, but, to some extent, he has made all of you sad — not to put it too strongly. ⁶ This reproof, which has been inflicted by the majority, is sufficient for such a person. ⁷ Therefore, on the contrary, you ought rather to be forgiving and give comfort, that someone like that may not perhaps be overwhelmed with too much sadness. ⁸ Therefore, I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. ⁹ For this was the purpose for which I wrote, to get to know your character and whether you are obedient in everything. ¹⁰ To whom you forgive anything, so do I. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I have done it for your sakes before the face of Christ, ¹¹ that Satan may not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his designs.

Those who preach the Gospel are an aroma leading to life or to death

¹² When I went to Troas to tell the Good News of Christ and, when the Lord had opened a door to me, ¹³ I had no relief in my spirit, because I did not find Titus, my brother; but I said farewell to them and departed for Macedonia. ¹⁴ However, thanks be to God! He always leads us in a triumphal procession in Christ and through us makes the fragrant knowledge of Him known in every place. ¹⁵ For we are, to God, the fragrance of Christ among those who are saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To some we are an aroma from death leading to death but to others an aroma from life leading to life. Who is qualified for these things?

¹⁷ For we are not peddlers of the Word of God, as so

many are. On the contrary, in Christ we speak out of pure motives, as men from God and before God.

3

¹ Are we beginning to recommend ourselves again? Or surely, we do not, like some people, need letters of recommendation, to you or from you? ² You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all people. ³ You show that you are a letter of Christ, which has resulted from our ministry and which has been written, not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on hearts of flesh as tablets. ⁴ Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are qualified of ourselves to regard anything as if it came from ourselves, but our qualification comes from God. ⁶ He has also qualified us to be ministers of the new Covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

The ministry of the Spirit and its glory

⁷ If the ministry that brought death, which was engraved with letters on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of “the glory of his face,” which was fading away, ⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? ⁹ If the ministry that condemns people was glorious, how much more exceedingly glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! ¹⁰ For, indeed, what had been made glorious has not been made glorious in this respect, because of the other glory that surpasses it. ¹¹ For, if what is being put out of effect came with glory, how much more does what is permanent come with glory?

¹² Therefore, since we have such hope, we speak very frankly. ¹³ We are not like Moses, who used to “put a veil over his face” to keep the Israelites from gazing at the end of the glory while it was fading away. ¹⁴ However, their minds were made dull. For to this day the same veil remains when the Old Testament is being read and is not removed, because only in Christ is it done away with. ¹⁵ Rather, to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts. ¹⁶ However, “whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.” ¹⁷ This “Lord” is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ As we all reflect “the glory of the Lord” in our unveiled faces, we are being transformed into the same likeness, from glory to glory, just as it comes from the “Lord,” who is the Spirit.

4

The Gospel is like a treasure in clay jars

¹ Therefore, since we have this ministry as we have received mercy, we do not become discouraged ² but have renounced hidden and shameful ways. We do not live by trickery, nor do we falsify the Word of God. Rather, by making the truth plain, we commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God. ³ If

our Good News has been veiled, it has been veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of these unbelievers, with the result that the light of the Good News of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, does not shine on them. ⁵ We do not preach ourselves but Jesus Christ as the Lord and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. ⁶ For it is God, who said, “Let light shine out of the darkness!” who has shone in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. ⁷ However, we have this treasure in clay jars, with the result that this all-surpassing power comes from God and not from us. ⁸ In every way we are hard-pressed but not crushed. We are perplexed but not in despair. ⁹ We are persecuted but not forsaken. We are struck down but not destroyed. ¹⁰ We are always carrying around in our bodies the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our bodies. ¹¹ For we, who are alive, are always being given over into death because of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our mortal human nature. ¹² Consequently, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. ¹³ Furthermore, since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what Scripture has said, “I have believed and therefore I have spoken,” we also believe and therefore we speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the One who has raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and will make us stand before Him with you. ¹⁵ For all things are for your benefit, that God’s grace may spread to more and more people and may cause thanksgiving to increase greatly, to the glory of God. ¹⁶ That is why we are not discouraged. Rather, even though our outward person is wasting away, our inward person is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary trouble is producing for us an utterly extraordinary and eternal weight of glory. ¹⁸ We do not look at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen. For the things that are seen are temporary, but the things that are not seen are eternal.

5

Christians’ longing for their heavenly dwelling

¹ For we know that, if the earthly tent in which we live is demolished, we have a house from God, not made by human hands, eternal in heaven. ² To be sure, in this dwelling we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling that is from heaven, ³ since, after we have put it on, we shall not be found naked. ⁴ For we, who are in this tent, groan as we are weighed down, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to put on the additional clothing, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ God is the One who has prepared us for this very thing and who has given us the Spirit as the guarantee. ⁶ Therefore, we are always confident. We know that, while we are at home in this body, we are in a strange land, away from the Lord. ⁷ For we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident and even prefer to move out

of the body and to be at home with the Lord. ⁹ Now, whether we are at home or in a strange land, we aspire to please Him. ¹⁰ We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due to him according to what he has done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Christ's love motivates His ministers

¹¹ Therefore, since we know the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade people. God already knows what we are like, and I hope that this has also become plain to your consciences. ¹² We are not recommending ourselves to you again but are giving you an opportunity to boast about us. We are doing this that you may answer those who boast about what is outward rather than about what is in the heart. ¹³ For, if we are out of our minds, it is for God. If our minds are sound, it is for you. ¹⁴ For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that One has died for all. Therefore, all have died. ¹⁵ He has died for all, that those who live may no longer live for themselves but for Him, who has died for them and has been raised. ¹⁶ Therefore, from now on we do not regard anyone from a human point of view. Although we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, yet now we no longer regard Him in this way. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Look! They have become new!

The reconciliation of God to the world is the basis for His ministers' appeal to people to receive it

¹⁸ However, all things are from God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors on Christ's behalf, since God, as it were, is making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: "Be reconciled to God!" ²¹ God made Him who did not know sin to be sin for us, that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

6

¹ As men who are working with God, we also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "**At a favourable time I have heard you and on the day of salvation I have helped you.**" **Look! Now is the favourable time. Look! Now is the day of salvation.**

Paul's request to be accepted as a genuine minister of God

³ We do not lay any kind of obstacle, to avoid discredit on our ministry. ⁴ Rather, in everything we commend ourselves as the ministers of God: in great endurance, in troubles, in calamities, in difficulties; ⁵ in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots; in hard work, in sleepless nights, in hunger; ⁶ in purity, in knowledge, in patience, in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in sincere love, ⁷ in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness on the right hand and on the left;

⁸ through glory and dishonour, through bad report and good report; as deceivers and yet true; ⁹ as unknown and yet well known; as **dying** and, you see, we go on **living**; as **chastened and yet not killed**; ¹⁰ as made sad but always rejoicing; as beggars but making many rich; as having nothing and yet possessing everything. ¹¹ O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you. **Our hearts have opened wide.** ¹² We are not being narrow in our feelings for you, but you are being narrow in your hearts toward us. ¹³ Treat me as I am treating you! I am speaking to you as my children. You, too, should open your hearts wide!

A warning not to be yoked with unbelievers

¹⁴ Do not be unevenly yoked together with unbelievers! For what do righteousness and lawlessness have in common? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? ¹⁵ What agreement is there between Christ and Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God, as God has said: "**I shall live and walk among them and be their God, and they will be My people.**" ¹⁷ **Therefore, come out from among them and be separate!**' says the Lord. '**Do not touch what is unclean! I shall receive you.**' ¹⁸ **I shall be your Father, and you will be My sons and daughters,**' says the Lord Almighty."

7

¹ Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that defiles body and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God!

Paul's encouragement about the Corinthians after the arrival of Titus from Corinth

² Make room for us in your hearts! We have not wronged anyone. We have not ruined anyone. We have not taken advantage of anyone. ³ I am not saying this to condemn you. I have already told you that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. ⁴ I have great boldness toward you. I have much to boast about to others concerning you. I have been greatly encouraged. I am exceedingly joyful in all our trouble. ⁵ For indeed, since we came to Macedonia, our bodies have had no rest, but we have been troubled in every way. Outside there have been conflicts, inside there have been fears. ⁶ However, **God, who comforts downcast people, has comforted** us by the arrival of Titus, ⁷ and not only by his arrival but also by the comfort that he received about you. He has told us how you long for me, how sorry you are and how eager you are on my behalf, so that my joy has been greater. ⁸ For, even if I have made you sad with my letter, I do not regret it. Even if I have felt sorry, because I see that that letter has made you sad, although only for a while, ⁹ now I am glad, not because you have been sad but because your sorrow has led you to repentance. You have been made sad in a godly way. So, you have not suffered any loss at all because of us. ¹⁰ For godly sorrow produces

repentance that leads to salvation and that is not regretted. However, worldly sorrow produces death. ¹¹ For observe this very thing! When you have been led to godly sorrow, how eager it has made you! What a defence of yourselves also, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to punish wrongdoing! In every way, you have shown that you are innocent in this matter. ¹² Therefore, although I wrote to you, I did not write for the sake of the man who did wrong or for the sake of the one who had been wronged but that it might be made evident to you how zealous you are for us in the sight of God. ¹³ This is what has comforted us. In addition to our own encouragement, we have been much more delighted to see how glad Titus is, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. ¹⁴ For, if I have boasted to him about you in any way, I have not been put to shame. Rather, as we have told you everything truthfully, so our boasting to Titus has also been found to be true. ¹⁵ Moreover, his affection for you is all the greater as he remembers how obedient you have all been and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling. ¹⁶ I am glad that I have confidence in you in every way.

8

The collection for the needy Christians at Jerusalem (8:1-9:15)

An admonition to finish the collection

¹ Fellow-Christians, we make known to you the grace that God has bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. ² While they were severely tested by trouble, their overflowing joy and their deep poverty overflowed to produce their rich generosity. ³ For I testify that they were freely willing, according to their ability and beyond their ability. ⁴ They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to God's holy people. ⁵ They did not do as we expected but through the will of God first gave themselves to the Lord and to us. ⁶ This has led us to urge Titus to complete among you this work of kindness also, in the same way as he had earlier begun it. ⁷ As you abound in everything, in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all eagerness and in your love for us, see that you abound in this work of kindness also! ⁸ I do not say this as a command but am using the eagerness of others to test how genuine your love is. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, although He was rich, yet because of you He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. ¹⁰ I am giving you advice about this, because this is helpful to you. Last year you had made a beginning, not only to do something but also to want to do something. ¹¹ Now complete the doing of it, that your eagerness to want to do it may be matched by your completion of it, out of what you have! ¹² For, if a person is willing, his willingness is acceptable according to what he has, not according to what he does not have. ¹³ We do not desire others to have relief and you to

have hardship but equality. ¹⁴ At the present time, your plenty will supply what they need, that their plenty may also supply what you need, that there may be equality, ¹⁵ as Scripture has said: "**Anyone who gathered much did not have too much, and anyone who gathered little did not have too little.**" ¹⁶ I thank God, who has put into the heart of Titus the same devotion as I have for you. ¹⁷ For he welcomed my request and is very eagerly going from here to you on his own initiative. ¹⁸ We are also sending with him the Christian brother who is praised for his work in the Good News throughout all the churches. ¹⁹ More than that, the churches have elected him to travel with us in this work of love, which we are carrying on to honour the Lord Himself and to show our eagerness to help. ²⁰ We are trying to avoid any criticism of the way in which we are handling this lavish gift. ²¹ For we **have regard for what is honourable, not only in the sight of the Lord but also in the sight of men.** ²² We are also sending with them our Christian brother, whom we have often tested in many ways and found to be zealous, and now we find him to be much more zealous, because he has great confidence in you. ²³ As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow-worker among you. As for our fellow-Christians, they are the representatives of the churches and are the glory of Christ. ²⁴ Therefore, show to them the proof of your love and of our boasting about you, that the churches may see it!

9

Instructions about how to contribute

¹ There is no need for me to write to you about this service to God's holy people. ² For I know how eager you are. I have been boasting about your eagerness to the people of Macedonia: "Achaia has been ready since last year," and your enthusiasm has stirred up most of them. ³ I am sending my fellow-Christians, that our boasting about you may not prove to be empty in this regard but that, as I have been saying, you may be ready. ⁴ Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, you will make us (to say nothing of yourselves) feel ashamed of having been so confident. ⁵ Therefore, I thought it necessary to urge these fellow-Christians to go to you ahead of me and arrange in advance your generous gift, which you had previously promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift and not as one grudgingly granted by avarice. ⁶ In addition, I say this: **The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.** ⁷ Each person should give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion! **For God loves a cheerful giver.**

Blessings that result from generosity in response to God's kindness

⁸ God can make all grace abound toward you, that you may always have all that you need in every way and may abound in every good work, ⁹ as Scripture has said: "**He has distributed. He has given to the poor.**"

His righteousness remains for ever.” ¹⁰ He who provides **seed for the sower and bread for food** will supply and multiply your seed and will increase what your **righteousness produces.** ¹¹ You are being made rich in every way that you may be totally generous. This is producing thanksgiving to God through us. ¹² This work, which you are doing in serving others, not only supplies the needs of the believers but is also overflowing through many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³ By this service, by which you prove yourselves, you are glorifying God for your subordinate confession of the Good News of Christ and for your generous contribution to them and to all people, ¹⁴ while they also long for you deeply and pray for you, because of the extreme kindness that God has shown you. ¹⁵ Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

10

Paul's defence against his opponents (10:1-13:10)
Paul's assertion of his apostolic authority

¹ Now I myself, Paul, am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I, who am “humble when I am face to face with you” but “bold toward you when I am away”! ² I beg you that, when I am present, I shall not have to be as confident and bold as I think I shall dare to be against some men who think we are living by the standards of the sinful human nature. ³ For, although we are living in sinful human nature, we do not wage war according to the sinful human nature. ⁴ For the weapons with which we wage war do not belong to the sinful human nature but have God's power to tear down fortresses. ⁵ We use them to tear down arguments and everything that rises up against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive, so that it obeys Christ. ⁶ We are ready to take vengeance on every act of disobedience once your obedience is complete. ⁷ You are looking at things as they appear outwardly. If anyone is convinced in himself that he belongs to Christ, he should consider, as he examines his own position again, that we belong to Christ just as he does! ⁸ For, even if I boast a little too much about our authority, which the Lord has given us to build you up and not to tear you down, I shall not be ashamed. ⁹ I do not want to seem to be frightening you with my letters. ¹⁰ For someone is saying, “His letters are weighty and forceful, but, when he is present in person, he is unimpressive, and his speaking amounts to nothing.” ¹¹ Such a person should understand that we shall be the same in our actions when we are present as we are through the words of our letters when we are absent!

Paul's confidence that God authorises his apostolic ministry

¹² For we do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who are commending themselves. Rather, when they are measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves with themselves, they are not being wise. ¹³ We, however, shall not boast about things that cannot be measured but within the measure of the sphere that God has appointed for us, a

measure that reaches even as far as you. ¹⁴ For we are not overextending ourselves, as though our authority did not extend to you. For we were the first to come even as far as you with the Good News of Christ. ¹⁵ We are not boasting about things that cannot be measured in the labours of other people. We have the hope that, as your faith grows, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, ¹⁶ by telling the Good News in the regions beyond you, so that we do not boast about things that have already been accomplished in someone else's sphere. ¹⁷ Rather, “**the one who boasts should boast in the Lord!**” ¹⁸ For it is not the person who commends himself who is approved, but the person whom the Lord commends.

11

Paul's zeal for the congregation and his opposition to false apostles

¹ I wish that you would put up with a little foolishness from me! Indeed, you are already putting up with me. ² For I am jealous for you with the jealousy of God, because I have promised you in marriage to one Husband, to Christ, that I may present you as a pure virgin to Him. ³ However, I am afraid that, as **the snake deceived** Eve by his trickery, your minds will somehow be seduced away from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. ⁴ For, if someone comes along and preaches a different Jesus from the One we have preached or if you receive a different spirit, which you have not received or different good news, which you have not received, you put up with it well enough! ⁵ For I consider that I am not in the least inferior to those “super-apostles.” ⁶ Even if I am untrained as a speaker, yet I am not untrained in knowledge. Rather, we have made this perfectly plain to you in every way. ⁷ Did I commit a sin when I humbled myself, that you might be lifted up, through my telling you the Good News of God free of charge? ⁸ I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to minister to you. ⁹ When I was present with you and needed anything, I was not a burden to anyone, because our fellow-Christians who came from Macedonia supplied everything that I needed. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way and shall continue to do that. ¹⁰ As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, this boast of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. ¹¹ Why? Because I do not love you? God knows that I do. ¹² I shall also keep on doing what I am doing, to remove the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be considered the same as we are in what they boast about. ¹³ For such men are false apostles and deceitful workers, since they disguise themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ No wonder, indeed! For Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ So, it is no great thing if his servants also disguise themselves as the servants of righteousness. Their end will be appropriate to what they are doing.

Paul's insistence that he could boast about more than the false apostles could

¹⁶ I repeat: No one should think that I am foolish! However, if you do, then receive me just as you would a fool, that I also may boast a little! ¹⁷ What I say in this confident boasting is not speaking in the Lord's way but foolishly. ¹⁸ Since many are boasting as sinful human beings do, I shall boast too. ¹⁹ For, since you are wise, you gladly put up with fools! ²⁰ For you put up with it if anyone makes you his slaves, if anyone exploits you, if anyone takes advantage of you, if anyone pushes himself forward or if anyone slaps you in the face. ²¹ I am ashamed to admit it, but we have been too weak to do that. Nevertheless, whatever anyone else dares to do — I am talking foolishly, — I too dare to do the same. ²² Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I. ²³ Are they ministers of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this) I am more. I have done much more hard work, I have been in prison much more, I have been flogged more severely and have often faced death. ²⁴ Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was punished by stoning. Three times I was in a shipwreck. I spent a night and a day in the sea. ²⁶ I have often been travelling. I have been in danger from rivers and from robbers, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles, in danger in the city, in danger in the wilderness, in danger at sea and in danger from false brothers. ²⁷ I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often been without food. I have been cold and naked. ²⁸ Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? ³⁰ If I must boast, I shall boast of the things that show how weak I am. ³¹ The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is blessed for ever, knows that I am not lying. ³² In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas had the city of the people of Damascus guarded to arrest me. ³³ However, I was let down in a rope-basket through a window in the wall and escaped from his hands.

12

Paul's determination to boast about his weaknesses

¹ I must boast. There is nothing to be gained by it, but I shall go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. ² I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago — whether in his body, I do not know or outside of the body, I do not know, God knows. Such a man was caught up to the third heaven. ³ I know that a man like that — whether in his body or without his body, I do not know, God knows — ⁴ was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible Words, which are not permissible for a human being to speak. ⁵ About a man like that I shall boast but shall not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. ⁶ For, if I want to boast, I shall not be a

fool. For I shall be telling the truth. However, I am sparing you, to prevent anyone from thinking more of me than he sees I am or than when he hears something from me. ⁷ Therefore, to keep me from becoming proud because of these surpassingly great revelations, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to plague me, that I might not become proud. ⁸ About this, I begged the Lord three times, that it would leave me. ⁹ Nevertheless, He told me: "My grace is enough for you. For My power is made complete when you are weak." Therefore, I shall boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions and in difficulties. For, when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul's determination not to be a burden to the people at Corinth

¹¹ I have become a fool. You have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you. For I have not been inferior at all to those "most eminent" apostles, even if I am nothing. ¹² Truly, the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in miraculous signs, wonders and mighty deeds. ¹³ For in which respect were you treated worse than the other churches, except that I did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong! ¹⁴ Look! I am ready to come to you for the third time now and shall not burden you. For I do not try to get what you have but you. For children are not obliged to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. ¹⁵ In addition, I shall be very glad to spend and be spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more, am I loved less? ¹⁶ However, be that as it may, I did not burden you; but, because I was a crafty fellow, I caught you by cunning! ¹⁷ Did I take advantage of you through any of the men whom I sent to you? ¹⁸ I urged Titus and sent our brother with him. Titus did not take advantage of you, did he? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same footsteps? ¹⁹ Have you been thinking all along that we were only defending ourselves before you? We are speaking before God in Christ, and everything, dearly loved people, is meant to build you up.

Paul's wish to avoid grief over the Corinthians

²⁰ I am afraid that somehow, when I come, I shall not find you as I want you to be and that you will not find me as you want me to be. I am afraid that somehow there will be quarrelling, jealousy, outbursts of wrath, instances of selfish ambition, of slander, of gossiping, of pride and of disorderly conduct. ²¹ I am afraid that, when I come again, my God will humble me concerning you and that I shall weep over many of those who have been sinning previously and who have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication and lewdness that they have been practising.

13

Final warnings

¹ This is the third time I am coming to you. **"Every matter must be established by the testimony of two**

2 Corinthians

or three witnesses.” ² I have said it before and am saying it in advance, as if I were present for the second time, even though I am now absent, to all those who have previously been sinning and to all the rest: When I come again, I shall not spare you, ³ since you are demanding proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak in dealing with you but is powerful among you. ⁴ For, although He was crucified in weakness, He lives by God's power. For we also are weak in Him but by God's power we shall live with Him in our dealings with you. ⁵ Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith! Test yourselves! Do you not know yourselves that Christ Jesus is in you, unless, perhaps, you fail the test? ⁶ I hope that you will realise that we have not failed the test. ⁷ We pray to God that you will not do anything wrong, not that we may be shown to have passed the test but that you may do what is right, even

if we are allegedly failing the test. ⁸ For we cannot do anything against the truth but only for the truth. ⁹ For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. We are also praying for this, that you may be complete. ¹⁰ This is why I am writing these things while I am absent, that, when I am present, I may not be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me to build you up and not to tear you down.

Conclusion (13:11-14)

Final fellowship-greetings

¹¹ Finally, fellow-Christians, farewell! Mend your ways! Receive encouragement! Be of one mind! Live in peace! The God of love and peace will be with you.

¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss! ¹³ All God's holy people greet you. ¹⁴ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

GALATIANS

1

Introduction (1:1-5)

¹ Paul, an apostle (not sent from men or through any man but through Jesus Christ and through God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), ² and all the Christians who are with me, To the churches in Galatia: ³ Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴ who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present wicked age according to the will of our God and Father! ⁵ To Him be glory for ever and ever! Amen.

Paul's defence of the Gospel that he had been preaching (1:6-2:21)

A warning against a different "Gospel" that is turning the Galatians away from the truth

⁶ I am astonished that you are so quickly turning away from Him who has called you by the grace of Christ to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another Gospel.¹⁸³ Rather, some men are troubling you and want to pervert the Gospel of Christ. ⁸ However, even if we or an angel from heaven tell you any other gospel than the one that we have told you, let him be anathema! ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is telling you any other gospel than the one that you have received, let him be anathema! ¹⁰ For am I now trying to win the approval of men or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I should not be a slave of Christ.

An assertion that Jesus had given Paul the Good News that he is preaching

¹¹ For I make known to you, fellow-Christians, that the Good News that has been told by me does not fit human standards. ¹² For I did not receive it from a human being, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹³ For you have heard about my previous way of life in the Jewish religion, that I fiercely persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it, ¹⁴ and that I was advancing in the Jewish religion beyond many who were my contemporaries in my own nation, since I was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵ However, when God, who **set me apart from my mother's womb** and called me through His grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me, that I might tell the Good News about Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. ¹⁷ Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had been apostles before I was. Rather, I went away to Arabia and came back again to Damascus. ¹⁸ Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Peter and stayed with him for fifteen days. ¹⁹ I did not see any of the other apostles, only James, the brother of the Lord. ²⁰ I declare before God that I am not lying in what I am writing to you. ²¹ Afterwards, I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³ The only thing

that they were hearing was this: "The man who once used to persecute us is now telling the Good News about the faith that he once tried to destroy," ²⁴ and they used to glorify God because of me.

2

A declaration that the apostles at Jerusalem had endorsed the Gospel that Paul was preaching

¹ Then, after fourteen years, I went up to Jerusalem again with Barnabas and also took Titus with me. ² Because of a revelation, I went up and laid before them the Good News that I preach among the Gentiles. I laid it privately before those who were influential, that I might not in any way be running or had been running, in vain. ³ Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, although he was a Greek. ⁴ This occurred because of false Christians who had been brought in secretly. They came in by stealth to spy on our freedom, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might make us slaves. ⁵ We did not yield in subordination to them even for an hour, that the truth of the Good News might continue with you. ⁶ However, as for those who seemed to be important — what sort of people they once were makes no difference at all to me. **God does not show favouritism** to any human being — indeed, those who were influential did not add anything to me. ⁷ On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the Good News for uncircumcised people, as Peter had been with the Good News for circumcised people. ⁸ For He who had been working effectively in Peter as an apostle to the circumcised had also been working effectively in me as an apostle to the Gentiles. ⁹ When James, Cephas and John, who had the reputation of being pillars, came to know the grace that had been given to me, they gave Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles and that they should go to the circumcised. ¹⁰ They asked only that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing that I was also eager to do.

Paul's criticism of Peter for giving the impression that Christians had to fulfil the Law

¹¹ When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned. ¹² For he had been eating with the Gentiles before certain persons came from James. However, when they came, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles, because he was afraid of those who insisted on circumcision. ¹³ The rest of the Jews also joined him in his hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. ¹⁴ However, when I saw that they were not being straightforward about the truth of the Gospel, I told Cephas in front of them all: "If you, a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?" ¹⁵ We, who are Jews by birth and not "Gentile sinners," ¹⁶ know that a person is not justified by doing what the Law says but

¹⁸³ In almost all other instances, Gospel has been translated as "Good News"

through faith in Jesus Christ. So, we, too, have become believers in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law, because **no human being will be justified** by the works of the Law. ¹⁷ However, if we, who want to be justified in Christ, are found to be sinners ourselves, has Christ then become One who promotes sin? Certainly not! ¹⁸ For, if I am building up again the very things that I have demolished, I demonstrate that I am a wrongdoer. ¹⁹ For I through the Law have died to the Law that I may begin to live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. ²⁰ It is also no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life that I now live in my body I live by faith in the Son of God, who has loved me and given Himself for me. ²¹ I do not set aside the grace of God. For, if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ has died in vain.

3

Doctrinal argument about freedom from the Law (3:1-4:31)
An assertion that righteousness comes through faith in God's promise, not through doing what the Law requires

¹ Foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, you who saw Jesus Christ clearly portrayed before your eyes as crucified? ² I want to learn only this from you: Did you receive the Spirit by doing what the Law says or by believing what you heard? ³ Are you so foolish? After you have begun by the Spirit, are you being made perfect by the sinful human nature? ⁴ Have you suffered so much for nothing — if it has really been for nothing? ⁵ Therefore, does God, who supplies you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do these things by your keeping what the Law says or by your believing what you hear?

⁶ Consider **Abraham!** He **believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.** ⁷ Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. ⁸ Since the Scripture foresaw that God would justify the nations by faith, He announced the Gospel to Abraham beforehand: **“Through you all the nations will be blessed.”** ⁹ Therefore, those who have faith are blessed together with Abraham, who had faith.

¹⁰ For all who rely on doing what the Law says are under a curse, because the Scriptures have said: **“Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do all the things that have been written in the book of the Law.”** ¹¹ However, it is clear that no one is justified before God by the Law, because **“the person who is righteous will live by faith.”** ¹² However, the Law is not based on faith. Rather, it says, **“The person who has done them will live by them.”**

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us. For the Scriptures have said, **“Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.”** ¹⁴ The result is that the blessing of Abraham has come on the nations in Christ Jesus, that we may receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

An assertion that the promise about the Descendant of Abraham preceded

the Law at Sinai

¹⁵ Fellow-Christians, I am speaking in an ordinary human way. After a covenant has been ratified, even if it is only a human one, no one sets it aside or adds to it.

¹⁶ God spoke the promises about Abraham and about his Descendant. He does not say, “And to your descendants,” as if referring to many people but as referring to one Person: **“And to your Descendant,”** who is Christ. ¹⁷ What I mean is this: The Law, which came four hundred and thirty years after the Covenant that had previously been ratified by God, does not cancel it, so as to make the promise ineffective. ¹⁸ For, if the inheritance comes from Law, it no longer comes from a promise. However, God has given it to Abraham through a promise.

The role of the Law of Moses as a guardian until Christ came

¹⁹ Why then was the Law given? It was added because of trespasses until the Descendant came to whom the promise had been made. It was ordered through angels by the hand of a mediator. ²⁰ A mediator does not deal with only one, but God is one. ²¹ Therefore, is the Law opposed to the promises of God? Certainly not! For, if a law had been given that could have given life to people, then certainly righteousness would have come by law. ²² However, the Scripture has imprisoned everything under sin, that the promise may be given through faith in Jesus Christ to those who believe.

²³ Before the faith came, we were being imprisoned by the Law, locked up until the faith came, which was about to be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore, the Law was our guardian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ However, now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. ²⁶ For you are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ because all of you who were baptised into Christ put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither slave nor free. There is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ Moreover, if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants and heirs according to the promise.

4

Being children of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ

¹ What I am saying is that, while the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he is the owner of everything. ² Rather, he is under guardians and managers until the time set by his father. ³ We also, when we were children, were enslaved under the elementary principles of the world. ⁴ However, when the time had fully come, God sent out His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive adoption as His sons. ⁶ Moreover, because you are sons, God has sent out the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who cries, “Abba! Father!” ⁷ Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son. Moreover, since you are a son, you are also an heir, through God. ⁸ However, when you formerly did not know God, you were the slaves to those who by

nature are not gods. ⁹ Now that you know God or rather, now that you are known by God, how is it that you are turning back again to those weak and beggarly elementary principles and that you wish to be slaves to them all over again? ¹⁰ You are observing days, months, seasons and years. ¹¹ I am afraid for you, that the hard work that I have been doing for you has somehow been wasted.

A reminder that the Galatians had previously welcomed the Gospel

¹² I beg you, my fellow-Christians, become like me! For I also became like you. You have not injured me at all. ¹³ You know that it was because of a physical illness that I told you the Good News on the first occasion. ¹⁴ You did not despise or scorn the trial that my physical condition caused for you. Instead, you welcomed me as an angel of God or as Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Where is your blessed condition now? For I testify to you that, if it had been possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶ Have I therefore become your enemy by telling you the truth? ¹⁷ Those people are courting your favour but for no good. They want to cut you off from me that you may court their favour. ¹⁸ It is commendable if zeal is always shown for a good cause and not only when I am present with you. ¹⁹ My children, for whom I am suffering birth-pains again until Christ is formed in you, ²⁰ I wish that I were present with you now and were changing my tone! For I am perplexed about you.

An allegory about Hagar and Sarah to illustrate two kinds of children of Abraham

²¹ Tell me, you who want to be under the Law, do you not listen to the Law? ²² For Scripture says that Abraham had two sons. One was the son of the slave-woman, and the other the son of the free woman. ²³ However, the son from the slave woman was born in the natural way, but the son from the free woman was born through a promise. ²⁴ When these things have been made into an allegory, they mean this: These women are two Covenants. One Covenant is from Mount Sinai, which gives birth to children for slavery. This one is Hagar. ²⁵ Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the Jerusalem of today. For she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶ However, the Jerusalem that is above is free and is our mother. ²⁷ For Scripture says: **“Be glad, barren woman, you who do not have any children! Break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labour-pains! For the children of the deserted woman are more numerous than those of the woman who has her husband.”** ²⁸ Fellow-Christians, you, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹ However, as the son who had been born at that time in the natural way was persecuting the son who was born according to the Spirit, so it is even now. ³⁰ Nevertheless, what does the Scripture say? **“Throw out the slave-woman and her son! For the son of the slave woman will certainly not be an heir together with the son of the free woman.”** ³¹ Therefore, fellow-Christians, we are

not the children of a slave woman but of the free woman.

5

Practical applications of freedom from the Law (5:1-6:10)

An admonition to continue in freedom from the Law

¹ Christ has freed us that we may be free. Therefore, stand firm and do not be loaded down again by a yoke of slavery! ² Look! I, Paul, am telling you, if you have yourselves circumcised, Christ will not benefit you at all. ³ In addition, I testify again to every man who has himself circumcised that he is obligated to do everything that the Law says. ⁴ You who are trying to be justified by the Law have been estranged from Christ. You have fallen away from grace. ⁵ For we through the Spirit eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. ⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value, but faith, which expresses itself through love.

⁷ You were running well. Who has hindered you, so that you are not following the truth? ⁸ This persuasion does not come from the One who calls you. ⁹ “A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.” ¹⁰ I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will not think in any other way, but he who is confusing you will bear his judgment, whoever he is. ¹¹ My fellow-Christians, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case, the offence of the cross has been done away with. ¹² I wish the men who are upsetting you would castrate themselves!

¹³ For you have been called to be free, fellow-Christians. Only do not use your freedom to give your sinful nature a starting point but through love serve one another! ¹⁴ For the whole Law is summarised in a single saying: **“You shall love your neighbour as yourself!”** ¹⁵ However, if you bite and devour one another, beware that you are not destroyed by one another!

¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you will not carry out what your sinful natures desire! ¹⁷ For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is contrary to the sinful nature. For these are opposed to each other, so that you do not do what you want to do. ¹⁸ However, if the Spirit leads you, you are not under the Law.

¹⁹ The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry, witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, strife, factions, ²¹ envy; drunkenness, carousing and things like these. I warn you, as I have done before, that those who continue to do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² However, what the Spirit produces is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. There is no law against such things. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their sinful natures with their passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also follow the

Galatians

Spirit! ²⁶ Let us not be conceited, provoke one another or envy one another!

6

An admonition to bear one another's burdens

¹ My fellow-Christians, if a person is overtaken in some sin, you who are spiritual should set such a person right again in a gentle spirit! However, watch yourself, that you also may not be tempted! ² Carry each other's burdens, and so you will fulfil the Law of Christ! ³ For, if anyone thinks that he is something when he is nothing, he is deceiving himself. ⁴ Let each one test his own work! Then he will have something to boast about concerning himself alone and not concerning somebody else. ⁵ For everyone will carry his own load.

A warning that people will reap what they sow

⁶ The person who is instructed in the Word should share all good things with his instructor. ⁷ Do not be deceived! God is not mocked. For a person will harvest whatever he sows. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own sinful nature will from his sinful nature harvest destruction, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit harvest everlasting life. ⁹ Let us not become tired of doing good! For we shall harvest, each in his own

appointed time, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of faith!

Conclusion (6:11-18)

An admonition to cling to the cross of Christ and to dismiss demands for circumcision

¹¹ See what large letters I am making when I write to you with my own hand! ¹² All who want to make a good showing in an outward way are compelling you to be circumcised. The only reason why they are doing this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. ¹³ For not even those who are circumcised keep the Law themselves but want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your flesh. ¹⁴ May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world! ¹⁵ For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but what matters is a new creation. ¹⁶ May **peace** and mercy also be **on** all those who follow this rule, namely, on the **Israel** of God! ¹⁷ From now on, let no one make trouble for me! For I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. ¹⁸ May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, my fellow-Christians! Amen.

EPHESIANS

1

Introduction (1:1-2)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, to God's holy people in Ephesus who trust in Christ Jesus:

² May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace!

Doctrinal section: the church as God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus (1:3-3:21)

Praise to God for spiritual blessings in Christ

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ! ⁴ For before He made the world, His love led Him to choose us in Christ to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love ⁵ He predestined us to be adopted as His own sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with the good pleasure of His will. ⁶ He did this that His glorious grace, which He bestowed on us in His dearly loved Son, might be praised. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, because of God's rich grace. ⁸ He caused His grace to abound toward us in all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ when He made known to us the mystery of His will. According to His good pleasure it was His purpose in Christ ¹⁰ to manage everything, both in heaven and on earth, in such a way that, when the right time came, He might summarise all things in Christ. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance. He who carries out everything exactly as His will plans it has predestined us according to His purpose. ¹² He did this that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might praise His glory. ¹³ When you heard the message of the truth, the Good News that you have been saved and when you became believers, you were also sealed in Him by the Holy Spirit, whom God promised. ¹⁴ That Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance until God redeems us to be His very own, that His glory may be praised.

Thanksgiving and prayer

¹⁵ For this reason, since I heard about the faith that you have in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's holy people, ¹⁶ I do not stop thanking God for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I ask the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, to give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, that you may know Him better. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your minds will be enlightened, that you may know the hope to which He has called you, how rich His glorious **inheritance** is among **His holy people**, ¹⁹ and how incomparably great His power is for us, who believe according to the working of His mighty power. ²⁰ He worked with that same power in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and **seated Him at His right hand** in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule, authority, power, dominion and every other name that can be mentioned, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² **He**

also **put everything under His feet** and appointed Him as the Head of everything, for the benefit of the church, ²³ which is His body, filled completely by Him who fills everything in every way.

2

Salvation through God's grace in Christ for Jews and Gentiles

¹ You also were dead in your trespasses and sins. ² You once led your lives in those sins, following the ways of this present world and the ruler who governs the air, the spirit who is now working in the people who disobey. ³ All of us also once lived among them in the lusts of our sinful natures, doing what our sinful natures and minds wanted to do. By nature, we deserved God's anger like all the others. ⁴ However, God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love for us, ⁵ also made us, even when we were dead in trespasses, alive with Christ. It is by grace that you have been saved. ⁶ Moreover, in Christ Jesus, God raised us with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms, ⁷ to show, in the coming ages, the immeasurable riches of His grace by being kind to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. This is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For He has made us what we are, creating us in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared in advance, that we may live in them.

The oneness of Jews and Gentiles in Christ

¹¹ Remember, then, that once you were Gentiles in a bodily way, called "Uncircumcised" by those who were called "the Circumcised," in a bodily, hand-made way.

¹² Remember that at that time you were without Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and strangers to God's Covenants of promise! You had no hope and were without God in the world.

¹³ However, now, in Christ Jesus, the blood of Christ has brought you, who once were **far away, near**. ¹⁴ For He Himself is our **Peace**. In His human nature He has made them both, Jew and Gentile, one, by breaking down the wall of hostility that kept them apart. ¹⁵ He has abolished the Law with its Commandments and Regulations, to create the two into one new person in Himself, so making peace, ¹⁶ and that He may reconcile them both to God in one body through His cross, on which He has killed the hostility. ¹⁷ He came, **telling the Good News of peace** to you who were **far away and peace to those who were near**. ¹⁸ For through Him we both have access, by one Spirit, to the Father.

¹⁹ Therefore, you are no longer foreigners and strangers but fellow citizens with God's holy people and members of God's household. ²⁰ You have been built on the **foundation** of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus Himself is the **Cornerstone**. ²¹ In Him the whole building is fitted together and grows to be a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In Him the Spirit also is building you

up, with the others, into God's dwelling-place.

3

The revelation of the mystery of the Gospel

¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — ² (Surely you have heard that God has given me the administration of His grace toward you, ³ that He has made the mystery known to me by revelation, as I have already briefly written. ⁴ When you read this, you can know my understanding of the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that, through the Good News, the Gentiles should have the same inheritance, belong to the same body and share the same promise in Christ Jesus. ⁷ I was made a minister of this Good News by the gracious gift that God gave me by the working of His power. ⁸ Although I am less than the least of all His holy people, He gave me this grace: that I should tell the Good News of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles, ⁹ and to make clear to everyone what the administration of this mystery is, which from ages past has been hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ God did this that through the church His many-sided wisdom might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavens. ¹¹ This was according to His eternal purpose, and He carried it out in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In Him, by believing in Him, we are bold and can confidently approach God. ¹³ Therefore, I ask you not to be discouraged by my sufferings for you. They are your glory.)

Prayer for strength to know the love of Christ

¹⁴ For this reason I bend my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth has its name. ¹⁶ I ask Him to grant you that, according to His glorious riches, He will strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith and that you may be firmly rooted and established in love. ¹⁸ I ask that, with all God's holy people, you will be able to grasp what the width, length, height and depth is, ¹⁹ and that you will know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ To Him who, by the power that is working in us, can do immeasurably more than anything we ask or imagine, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

4

Practical section: the church is created to serve Christ by doing good works (4:1-6:20)

Unity in the body of Christ

¹ As a prisoner in the Lord, I urge you to live in a manner worthy of people whom the Lord has called. ² Be humble and gentle in every way, be patient and bear with one another in a loving way! ³ Make every effort

to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace! ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit — just as God has called you to one hope — ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all and in all. ⁷ However, grace has been given to each one of us as Christ, who has given it, has measured it out. ⁸ That is why the Scripture says, “When He **went up on high, He led many captives and gave gifts to people.**” ⁹ Now what can “He went up” mean except that He also had gone down to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who went down also “went up” above all the heavens, to fill everything. ¹¹ He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers. ¹² His purpose was to prepare God's holy people, to do the work of ministry and to build up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all become one in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God, until we become mature, until we reach the full height of Christ. ¹⁴ His purpose was that we might not be babies any longer, tossed and driven by every doctrinal wind, by the trickery of people and by their clever and deceitful scheming to lead us astray. ¹⁵ Instead, His purpose is that, as we speak the truth with love, we may grow up into Him who is the Head, namely, Christ. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together and unites it by every ligament that supports it; and to the extent that each and every part is doing its work, He makes the body grow, so that it builds itself up in love.

The new life in Christ

¹⁷ So, I tell you and call on you in the Lord, not to live any longer like the Gentiles. Their minds are set on worthless things. ¹⁸ Their understanding is darkened. Their natural state of ignorance, caused by their closed minds, has made them strangers to the life that God gives. ¹⁹ Having become callous, they have given themselves over to a life of lust, to practise every kind of vice with a constant desire for more. ²⁰ However, that is not what you learned when you came to know Christ, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him as the truth is in Jesus. ²² You were taught to strip off your old self, which follows your former ways of living and ruins you, as it follows the desires that deceive you. ²³ Instead, you were taught to be continually renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, which is created to be like God, truly righteous and holy. ²⁵ Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and **speak the truth to his neighbour!** For we are members of one another. ²⁶ **Be angry without sinning!** Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the Devil a foothold! ²⁸ He who has been stealing must not steal any longer! Instead, he must work hard, doing something good with his own hands, that he may have something to share with anyone in need! ²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up where they need

it, that it may impart grace to those who listen! ³⁰ Do not grieve God's Holy Spirit, by whom you were sealed for the day when you will be set free! ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, brawling and slander, along with every way of hurting one another! ³² Be kind to one another and tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you!

5

The Christian life of love

¹ Therefore, imitate God, as His dearly loved children, ² and live in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us as a "**fragrant offering and sacrifice**" to God! ³ However, sexual sin and all other impurity or greed, must not even be mentioned among you! This is proper for God's holy people. ⁴ There should be no obscenity, foolish talk or coarse jokes! These are not proper, but rather, give thanks! ⁵ For be sure of this, that no one who is immoral, impure or greedy (such a person is an idolater) has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God! ⁶ Do not let anyone deceive you with empty words! For because of these sins God's anger comes on disobedient people. ⁷ Therefore, do not be partners with them! ⁸ For once you were darkness but now you are light in the Lord. Live as people who belong to the light! ⁹ For light produces everything that is good, righteous and true. ¹⁰ Approve what is pleasing to the Lord! ¹¹ Do not have anything to do with the works of darkness, from which no good can come, but instead continue to expose them! ¹² For it is a shame even to mention the things that they do in secret. ¹³ All things that are exposed are made visible by the light. ¹⁴ For everything that is revealed is light. For this reason, it is said: "Wake up, you who sleep! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you!" ¹⁵ Therefore, be very careful how you live! Do not live as unwise people but as wise people! ¹⁶ Make the most of every opportunity! For the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore, do not be foolish but understand what the Lord wants! ¹⁸ **Do not get drunk on wine**, which leads to wild living! Instead, be filled with the Spirit! ¹⁹ Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord! ²⁰ Always give thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! ²¹ Be subordinate to one another out of respect for Christ!

The relationship of husbands and wives

²² Wives, be subordinate to your own husbands as to the Lord! ²³ For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is also the Head of the church, His body, of which He is the Saviour; ²⁴ but, as the church is subordinate to Christ, so also wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything! ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶ that He might make the church holy, by making her clean with the Washing of water by the Word! ²⁷ He did this that He might present her to Him-

self as a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any other such blemish, but that she might be holy and without fault. ²⁸ In this way husbands also ought to love their own wives, as their own bodies. A man who loves his own wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one has ever hated his own flesh. Rather, everyone feeds his body and treats it tenderly, as Christ also does the church. ³⁰ For we are members of His body. ³¹ "**This is why a man will leave his father and mother and remain united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh.**" ³² This mystery is great. However, I speak of it with reference to Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you husbands should love his own wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

6

The relationship of children and parents

¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord! For this is right. ² **Honour your father and mother**, which is the first Commandment with a promise, ³ **that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth!** ⁴ You fathers, also, do not make your children angry but bring them up in the **training** and admonition of **the Lord!**

The relationship of slaves and masters

⁵ Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and trembling and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ! ⁶ Do not serve only while you are being watched, as if you merely wanted to please people, but serve like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your hearts! ⁷ Serve eagerly, as if you were serving the Lord and not merely men! ⁸ For you know that each one will receive from the Lord whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. ⁹ You masters, also, treat your slaves in the same way and give up threatening them! For you know that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favouritism with Him.

Warfare against spiritual forces

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power! ¹¹ Put on the full armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the tricky schemes of the Devil, ¹² because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against those who control this dark world, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms! ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day and, after you have done everything, to stand! ¹⁴ Stand therefore, **having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness** ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the readiness that comes from **the Good News of peace!** ¹⁶ Besides all these, take up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the Evil One! ¹⁷ Take **the helmet of salvation** and the **sword** of the Spirit, which is the Word of God! ¹⁸ Pray on every occasion with all kinds of prayers and requests in the Spirit! For this purpose, be alert

Ephesians

with all perseverance as you pray for all God's holy people! ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that when I open my mouth what to say may be given to me, that I may boldly make known the mystery of the Good News!

²⁰ Because of it I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak it!

Conclusion (6:21-24)

Farewell greetings

²¹ Tychicus, our dear fellow-Christian and faithful

servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. ²² I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may encourage your hearts. ²³ Peace to the fellow-Christians and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

²⁴ Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ!

PHILIPPIANS

1

An introductory greeting and prayer (1:1-11)

¹ Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all God's holy people in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

An assurance that Paul is praying for the Philippians and thanking God for them

³ I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴ Every time I pray for all of you I always make my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership in the Good News from the first day until now. ⁶ I am sure of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will carry it on to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷ It is right for me to think like this about all of you, because, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the Good News, I have you in my heart, as people who are all partners in God's grace with me. ⁸ For God is my witness how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. ⁹ I also pray that your love will overflow still more and more in knowledge and in all insight, ¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are best, that you may be pure and without blame until the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Personal news (1:12-26)

Paul's desire that the Gospel should be proclaimed

¹² I want you to know, my fellow-Christians, that what has happened to me has really turned out to advance the Good News. ¹³ As a result, it has become clear to the whole palace-guard and to all the rest that I am in chains for Christ. ¹⁴ So, my chains have given most of the brothers in the Lord the confidence to speak the Word more boldly and fearlessly. ¹⁵ Some people are moved even by jealousy and rivalry to preach Christ, but others are also moved by good will. ¹⁶ Some preach out of love. For they know that God has put me here to defend the Good News. ¹⁷ However, the others preach Christ out of selfish ambition, without a pure motive and suppose that they are stirring up trouble for me while I am in chains. ¹⁸ However, what does it matter? Only this, that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is being preached, and I am glad of this. Yes, and I shall continue to rejoice.

Paul's desire to glorify Christ, either by life or death

¹⁹ For I know that this will **result in my deliverance**, through your prayer and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰ as I eagerly expect and hope that I shall in no way be ashamed but that, by speaking very boldly, I shall now, as always, glorify Christ in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I live on in my body, that will mean results from my labour. Yet I do not know which I should choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by

far. ²⁴ However, it is more necessary for you that I should remain in my body. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all, that you may progress and be joyful in the faith, ²⁶ that my coming to you again may cause you to rejoice more over me in Christ Jesus.

A plea for unity (1:27-2:18)

An exhortation to live worthily of the Gospel

²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the Good News of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am away, I may hear how you are, that you are standing firmly in one spirit and striving together with one mind for the faith of the Good News! ²⁸ Do not let those who oppose you frighten you in any way! This is a sign for them that they will be destroyed and a sign that you will be saved, and this is from God. ²⁹ For it is God's gift to you concerning Christ, not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for His sake, ³⁰ since you have the same struggle as you have seen me have and as you now hear that I still have.

2

An exhortation to harmony and humility, motivated by Christ's humbling Himself

¹ Therefore, if you have any encouragement in Christ, if you have any comfort from His love, if you have any fellowship of the Spirit, if you have any tenderness and compassion, ² make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being harmonious and setting your minds on the same thing! ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or empty conceit but in humility regard others as being better than you are! ⁴ Each of you should look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others!

⁵ Have the same attitude as Christ Jesus had! ⁶ Although He was in the form of God, yet He did not consider His equality with God as a prize to exploit. ⁷ Instead, He emptied Himself, took the form of a slave and became like other human beings; and, when He was found in the appearance of a human being, ⁸ He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹ That is why God also has very highly exalted Him and given Him the name that is above every other name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus **everyone** in heaven and on earth and under the earth **may kneel**, ¹¹ and that **everyone may confess** that Jesus Christ is **Lord**, to the **glory of God the Father**.

An exhortation to a blameless life

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only when I have been with you but also even more now that I am absent, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling! ¹³ For it is God who continues to work in you both to be willing and to be doing according to His good purpose. ¹⁴ Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹⁵ that you may be blameless and pure, **children of God without**

blame in a crooked and depraved generation, among whom you shine like stars in the universe, ¹⁶ as you cling to the Word of life, that I may boast on the day of Christ that I have not been running for nothing or **labouring for nothing!** ¹⁷ However, even if I am being poured out like a drink offering while I am offering your faith as a sacrificial service, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ¹⁸ In the same way you should also be glad and rejoice with me!

Information about Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30)

¹⁹ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be encouraged when I receive news about you. ²⁰ For I do not have anyone else so like-minded who will genuinely care for your welfare. ²¹ For they all look after their own interests, not after those of Jesus Christ. ²² However, you know that Timothy has proved himself and that he has been serving with me in the Good News like a son serving his father. ²³ I hope to send him as soon as I see how things are going with me. ²⁴ I am confident in the Lord that I myself shall also be coming soon. ²⁵ I think that it is necessary to send you Epaphroditus, my fellow-Christian, a fellow-worker and a fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and your attendant to my need, ²⁶ since he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you have heard that he has been sick. ²⁷ For indeed, he has been sick, almost to the point of death, but God has had mercy on him and not only on him but also on me, that I may not have one sorrow after another. ²⁸ Therefore, I am sending him more eagerly, that you may be glad when you see him again and that I may have less anxiety. ²⁹ Welcome him in the Lord with all joy and honour such men highly, ³⁰ because he came close to death for the work of Christ and risked his life to make up for the service that you could not give me!

3

Warnings against false teachers (3:1-21)
Righteousness through faith in Christ apart from the Law

¹ Finally, my fellow-Christians, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you and it is safe for you. ² Look out for those dogs, look out for those who do evil, look out for those who cut the body! ³ For it is we who are the circumcised people, we who worship in the Spirit of God, who boast in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in what is bodily, ⁴ although I myself have confidence even in what is bodily. If anyone else thinks that he has confidence in something bodily, I have more. ⁵ I was circumcised on the eighth day; I belong to the race of Israel, to the tribe of Benjamin. I am a Hebrew son of Hebrew parents. Concerning the Law, I was a Pharisee. ⁶ As for zeal, I used to persecute the church. As for the righteousness that is in the Law I was blameless. ⁷ However, I have reckoned those things that were gains to me as loss because of Christ. ⁸ However, more than that, I even con-

sider everything as a loss because of the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of Him I have lost all things and consider them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and to be found in Him, not having my own righteousness that is from the Law but having the righteousness that is through faith in Christ, the righteousness that is from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ, the power of His resurrection and fellowship in His sufferings, as I am conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I shall attain to the resurrection from the dead. ¹² I do not mean that I have already obtained this or have already been made perfect but eagerly strive to take hold of that for which Jesus Christ has also taken hold of me. ¹³ Fellow-Christians, I do not think I have taken hold of it. However, I do one thing: I forget the things that are behind and strain toward the things that are ahead. ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Let as many of us as are mature think in this way! However, if you think differently about anything, God will also reveal this to you. ¹⁶ Only be guided by what we have learned so far!

An exhortation to live as citizens of heaven

¹⁷ My fellow-Christians, keep on imitating me and taking note of those who live according to the example we are giving you! ¹⁸ For I have often told you and now tell you with tears, that many live as the enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ In the end they will be destroyed. Their own feelings are their god. They glory in their shame, and their minds are on earthly things. ²⁰ For we are citizens of heaven and look for the Lord Jesus Christ to come from heaven as the Saviour. ²¹ He will change our humble bodies and make them like His glorified body, because He has the power by which He can make everything subordinate to Himself.

4

An exhortation to stand firm (4:1-9)

¹ So, my fellow-Christians, dearly loved people, for whom I long, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord!

The need for two women to agree

² I urge Euodia and urge Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³ Yes, I urge you also, my loyal yoke-fellow, help these women! They have been contending together with me in the Good News, along with Clement also and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the **Book of Life**.

An encouragement to rejoice in the Lord

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always! I shall say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all people! The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything but in everything make your requests known to God by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving! ⁷ The peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, will also guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, my fellow-Christians, keep your minds on all things that are true, all things that are noble, all things

Philippians

that are right, all things that are pure, all things that are lovely, all things that are appealing and anything that is excellent and praiseworthy! ⁹ Continue to put into practice what you have learned, received and heard from me and what you have seen in me! The God of peace will also be with you.

Thanks for the Philippians' gift to Paul (4:10-20)

¹⁰ I am very glad in the Lord that now again you have revived your concern for me. You have been concerned but have not had an opportunity to show it. ¹¹ I am not saying that I need anything. For I have learned to be content in whatever situation I am in. ¹² I know how to be in need and know how to have plenty. In every way and in everything I have learnt the secret both of being fully satisfied and of being hungry, both of having plenty and of having too little. ¹³ I can do everything through Him who strengthens me. ¹⁴ Yet it has been kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵ You people of Philippi also know that in the early days of the Good News, when I left Macedonia, you were the only

church to share with me in the settlement of our mutual account. ¹⁶ Even while I was in Thessalonica, you sent aid once and again when I was in need. ¹⁷ Not that I am looking for the gift but for the growing profit in your account. ¹⁸ You have paid me in full, and I have more than enough. I am fully supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus what you have sent. It is a **sweet aroma**, an acceptable **sacrifice, which pleases God**. ¹⁹ My God will give you everything that you need according to His riches, in glory, in Christ Jesus. ²⁰ To our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever! Amen.

Concluding greetings (4:21-23)

²¹ Greet each of God's holy people in Christ Jesus! The Christians who are with me send greetings to you.

²² All of God's holy people send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household. ²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit! Amen.

COLOSSIANS

1

Introduction (1:1-12)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God and our fellow-Christian, Timothy, ² to the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father!

An assurance that Paul regularly thanks God for the Colossians and prays for them

³ We are always thanking God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ because we have heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and about the love that you have for all God's holy people, ⁵ because of the hope that has been stored up for you in heaven. You have already heard about it in the truthful Word of the Good News, ⁶ which continues to come to you. As it is producing fruit and growing all over the world, it has also been doing this among you from the day when you heard it and came to know the grace of God in truth. ⁷ It is the same Gospel as you have learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow-servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf. ⁸ He is also the one who has informed us about your love in the Spirit. ⁹ That is why, since the day when we heard about you, we also have not ceased to pray for you and to ask God to fill you with the clear knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. ¹⁰ We ask that you may live in a way that is worthy of the Lord and that you may please Him in every way, as you are fruitful in every good work and grow in the clear knowledge of God. ¹¹ We ask Him to strengthen you with all power according to His glorious might, that you may be completely enduring and patient, as you joyfully ¹² give thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of God's holy people in the light.

The pre-eminence of Christ (1:13-23)

Christ as the Head of both the creation and the church

¹³ He has rescued us from the authority of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son, whom He loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵ He is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation, ¹⁶ since in Him all things in heaven and on earth have been created, the visible things and the invisible things, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things have been created through Him and for Him; ¹⁷ and He has been before all things, and all things hold together in Him.

¹⁸ He is also the Head of His body, the church. He is the Beginning, the First-born from the dead, that He Himself may come to have the first place among all things. ¹⁹ For it has pleased God that all His fullness should dwell in Him, ²⁰ and to reconcile all things to Himself through Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood of the cross.

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and, in your minds, were His enemies, because of your wicked behaviour. ²² However, now He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you before Him holy, without blame and free from accusation, ²³ if you continue established and steadfast in the faith and are not moved away from the hope of the Good News, which you have heard. This Gospel has been preached to every creature under heaven, and I, Paul, have become a minister of it.

Paul's ministry to the church (1:24-2:7)

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you and, in my body, am filling up what is still lacking in Christ's afflictions, for the sake of His body, the church. ²⁵ I have been made a minister of this church by the commission that God has given me regarding you, to fulfil the Word of God. ²⁶ This is the mystery that has been hidden from ages and generations but that has now been disclosed to His holy people. ²⁷ God has wished to make known to them the glorious riches of this mystery among the Gentiles. This mystery is Christ in you, the Hope of glory. ²⁸ We are proclaiming Him, warning every person and teaching every person, using all wisdom, that we may present every person perfect in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I am labouring, struggling like an athlete by His power, which is working mightily in me.

2

¹ I want you to know how much I am struggling for you, for the people at Laodicea and for all who have not seen my face in person, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, when they have been knit together in love, that they may have all the riches of the full assurance of understanding and that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, ³ in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge have been hidden. ⁴ I say this that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. ⁵ For, although I am absent from you physically, yet I am with you in spirit and rejoice to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. ⁶ Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him! ⁷ Be rooted and built up in Him and be strengthened in the faith, just as you have been taught, and abound in thanksgiving!

Warnings against false teaching (2:8-3:4)

⁸ Beware that no one captures you through philosophy and empty deceit, as he follows human tradition and the basic principles of the world, rather than following Christ. ⁹ For in Him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. ¹⁰ You have also been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority. ¹¹ In Him you have also been circumcised, by a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sinful nature, by the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² since you were buried with Him by baptism, by which you were also raised with Him, through the faith that is worked

by God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ Although you were dead in sins and in your uncircumcised flesh, God has made you alive with Christ, forgiving us all our trespasses. ¹⁴ He has wiped out the written code, with its regulations, which was against us and opposed to us. He has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed rulers and authorities and made a public show of them when He triumphed over them in Christ.

A warning against legalism

¹⁶ Therefore, let no one judge you in what you eat or drink or about a feast day or a New Moon or a Sabbath day! ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come, but the reality is that of Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one rob you of your prize by delighting in false humility and in the worship of angels! Such a person goes on in detail about his visions and is groundlessly inflated by his sinful human mind. ¹⁹ Such a person does not cling to the Head, from whom the whole body, which is supported and held together by its sinews and ligaments, grows as God causes it to grow. ²⁰ Since you have died with Christ away from the basic principles of the world, why, as though you were alive in the world, do you submit to regulations: ²¹ “Do not handle, do not taste and do not touch!”? ²² All these apply to things that perish when they are used up and are in line with **what human beings command and teach**. ²³ They indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body but lack any value against the indulgence of the sinful human nature.

3

The Christian life in union with Christ

¹ Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, search for the things that are above, where Christ is **sitting at the right hand of God!** ² Keep your minds on things above, not on things on the earth! ³ For you have died, and your lives have been hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your Life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

The life in Christ (3:5-4:6)

An admonition to put off what is old and put on what is new

⁵ Therefore, put to death your members, which are on the earth: sexual sin, impurity, passion, evil desire and greed, which is idolatry! ⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming on disobedient people. ⁷ Once you also walked in these ways when you used to live in them. ⁸ However, now you yourselves must put them all off: anger, fury, malice, slander and filthy language from your mouths! ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with its deeds! ¹⁰ You have also put on the new man, which is being renewed in knowledge **according to the image of Him who created him**. ¹¹ Here there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised person nor uncircumcised person, no barbarian, Scythian, slave or free person, but Christ is all things and is in all.

Exhortations to live as God's people

¹² Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, dress yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience! ¹³ Bear with one another and forgive one another if anyone has a complaint against another! You also forgive, just as the Lord has forgiven you! ¹⁴ In addition to all these, put on love, which binds them all together perfectly! ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ, to which you have been called in one body, also rule in your hearts, and be thankful! ¹⁶ Let the Word of Christ dwell richly among you, as with all wisdom you teach and warn one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing to God with grateful hearts! ¹⁷ Moreover, whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him!

The duties of parents, children and slaves

¹⁸ Wives, be subordinate to your husbands, as is proper in the Lord! ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them!

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything! For this is pleasing to the Lord.

²¹ Fathers, do not embitter your children, that they may not become discouraged!

²² Slaves, obey in everything those who, by human standards, are your masters! Do not serve them only when they are watching you, as if you were pleasing human beings, but serve them with sincere hearts! For you fear the Lord. ²³ In whatever you are doing, work from the heart, as for the Lord and not for human beings! ²⁴ For you know that you will receive the inheritance from the Lord as your reward. You are being slaves to the Lord Christ. ²⁵ Indeed, the person who does wrong will be paid back for the wrong that he has done, and there is no favouritism.

4

¹ Masters, provide your slaves with what is just and fair! For you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

Exhortations to prayer and thanksgiving

² Devote yourselves to prayer and be watchful in it, with thanksgiving! ³ At the same time pray for us also, that God may open to us a door for the Word, that we may tell the mystery of Christ! Because of it I have also been put in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may make it known clearly, as I ought to tell it! ⁵ Be wise in the way in which you act toward those who are outside and make the most of your opportunities! ⁶ Let your speaking always be gracious, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you should answer each individual!

Conclusion (4:7-18)

Information about Tychicus and Onesimus

⁷ Tychicus, my dear fellow-Christian, a faithful minister and a fellow-servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. ⁸ I am sending him to you for this express purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹ He is

Colossians

coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear fellow-Christian, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything that is happening here.

Concluding greetings

¹⁰ Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, sends you greetings. So does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. You have received instructions about him. Welcome him if he comes to you! ¹¹ Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only men belonging to the circumcision who are fellow-workers with me for the kingdom of God and have become a comfort to me.

¹² Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you. He is always wrestling in his prayers for you, that you may stand firm, be mature and be ful-

ly convinced in everything that God wants. ¹³ For I bear him witness that he is working hard for you and for the people at Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Luke, the doctor, our dear friend, greets you, and so does Demas.

¹⁵ Give greetings to the fellow-Christians at Laodicea, to Nympha and to the church in her house! ¹⁶ When this letter has been read among you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans, and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea! ¹⁷ Tell Archippus, "Take care of the ministry that you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfil it!" ¹⁸ I, Paul, am writing this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains! Grace be with you!

1 THESSALONIANS

1

Opening greeting (1:1)

¹ Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you!

Summary remarks about the church in Thessalonica (1:2-3:13)

Paul's assurance of regular prayers for the Thessalonians and a thanksgiving for their faith and example

² We always thank God for you all when we mention you in our prayers. ³ We continually remember before our God and Father that your faith is working, that your love is toiling and that your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ is enduring patiently. ⁴ For we know, fellow-Christians, whom God loves, that He has chosen you, ⁵ because our Good News did not come to you simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with great conviction. You know what kind of men we were among you for your good. ⁶ You also became imitators of us and of the Lord when, although you suffered greatly, you received the Word, with joy, given by the Holy Spirit. ⁷ As a result, you became models for all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. ⁸ For the Word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only through Macedonia and Achaia but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. ⁹ For they themselves report concerning you what kind of reception you gave us, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for His Son to come from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, namely, Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

2

Paul's ministry to the Thessalonians

¹ For you yourselves know, fellow-Christians, that our coming to you has not been in vain. ² We had previously suffered and been mistreated at Philippi, as you know, but we had the courage in our God, to tell you the Good News of God, in much conflict. ³ For our exhortation does not come from error, impurity or deceit. ⁴ Rather, we speak the Good News just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with it. We are not trying to please human beings but God, **who tests our hearts**. ⁵ For we have never used flattering speech, as you know. Nor have we used a pretext to satisfy greed — God is our witness. ⁶ Nor have we been trying to get praise from human beings, either from you or from others.

Paul's assurance that the Thessalonians are dear to him

⁷ As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you. However, we became infants among you. We were like a nursing-mother caring for her own children. ⁸ We had such a kindly feeling for you that we were delighted to share with you not only the Good News of God but also our own lives, because you had become dear to

us. ⁹ For you remember, fellow-Christians, our toil and hardship. For we preached to you the Good News of God while we were working night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and God is also, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you believers. ¹¹ As you know, like a father who deals with his children, we used to urge, encourage and warn each one of you ¹² to live lives that are worthy of God, who is calling you into His kingdom and glory. ¹³ We also thank God without ceasing for this reason, that, when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you received it, not as the word of men but, as what it truly is, the Word of God, which is also working effectually in you who believe.

A recollection of persecution at Thessalonica

¹⁴ For you, fellow-Christians, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, since you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews. ¹⁵ Those Jews killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets. They also severely persecuted us. They do not please God and are opposed to all people. ¹⁶ They try to prevent us from speaking to the Gentiles that they may be saved. The result is that they are always **filling up the cup of their sins**, but the wrath of God has decisively come on them. ¹⁷ However, fellow-Christians, when we were made orphans by separation from you for a short time, in person but not in heart, we made even more efforts to see your faces and were intensely longing to do so. ¹⁸ For we wanted to come to you. Certainly I, Paul, did repeatedly, but Satan hindered us. ¹⁹ For what is our hope or joy or the crown of which we are proud in the presence of our Lord Jesus when He comes? Is that not precisely what you are? ²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.

3

Paul's sending of Timothy to visit the Thessalonians

¹ Therefore, when we could not endure it any longer, we thought it best to be left in Athens alone. ² We sent Timothy, our fellow-Christian and God's fellow-worker in the Good News of Christ, to strengthen you and encourage you in your faith, ³ that no one might be deceived by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we have been appointed to this. ⁴ For indeed, when we were with you, we used to tell you in advance, "We are going to be afflicted." That is also what has happened, and you know it. ⁵ That is why, when I also could no longer endure it, I sent someone to find out about your faith. I was afraid that the Tempter had in some way tempted you and that our labour would be useless. ⁶ However, Timothy has just now come back to us from you and has told us the good news about your faith and love, that you continually think kindly of us and that you are longing to see us, just as we are

1 Thessalonians

longing to see you. ⁷ Therefore, fellow-Christians, in all our affliction and distress we have been encouraged about you, through your faith. ⁸ For now we live, if you stand firm in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy that we have in the presence of our God because of you? ¹⁰ We are most earnestly praying day and night that we may see your faces and supply what is lacking in your faith. ¹¹ May our God and Father Himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you! ¹² May the Lord make you grow in love and overflow with it for one another and for all people, just as we do to you, ¹³ that He may strengthen your hearts to be blameless and holy before our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all His holy ones! Amen.

4

Instruction and encouragement (4:1-5:22)

An exhortation to live to please God

¹ Finally, therefore, fellow-Christians, we ask and urge you, in the Lord Jesus, to progress more and more in the ways that you have learned from us about how you ought to live and to please God, as in fact you are living. ² For you know what Commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³ For what God wants is that you should be holy, that you should keep away from sexual immorality, ⁴ that each of you should know how to control his own organ in a holy and honourable way, ⁵ not in passionate lust, just like **the Gentiles, who do not know God**. ⁶ No one should trespass and take advantage of his fellow-Christian in this matter! For the Lord is the Avenger of all these things, as we also have previously told you and testified to you. ⁷ For God has not called us to be unclean but to be holy. ⁸ Therefore, the person who rejects this does not reject a human being but God, **who also gives you His Holy Spirit**. ⁹ Moreover, concerning brotherly love you do not need anyone to write to you. For you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another. ¹⁰ For, indeed, you are practising it toward all the fellow-Christians throughout Macedonia. However, we urge you, fellow-Christians, to progress more and more, ¹¹ and to make it your ambition to live quietly, to mind your own business and to work with your own hands, as we have commanded you, ¹² that you may behave decently toward those who are outside and that you may have no lack of anything.

An exhortation to comfort one another about the return of the Lord

¹³ Fellow-Christians, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, that you may not grieve like the others, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For, since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, we believe that even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we tell you by the Word of the Lord, that we who are still alive, who are left until the Lord comes, shall certainly not arrive ahead of those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord

Himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead who are in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore, comfort one another with these Words!

5

An encouragement to be watchful for the day of the Lord

¹ Fellow-Christians, you do not need us to write to you about times and dates, ² because you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night. ³ When people are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come on them suddenly like labour pains on a pregnant woman, and they will certainly not escape. ⁴ You, however, fellow-Christians, are not in darkness, that this day should overtake you like a thief. ⁵ For you are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to darkness. ⁶ Therefore, let us not sleep, like the rest but let us keep awake and be sober! ⁷ For people who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. ⁸ However, let us, who live in the day, be sober, **putting on the breastplate** of faith and love and the hope of **salvation as a helmet**! ⁹ For God has not appointed us to His wrath but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ He has died for us, so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. ¹¹ Therefore, encourage each other and build one another up, as in fact you are doing!

Final instructions

¹² We ask you, fellow-Christians, to respect those who labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you. ¹³ Regard them very highly in love because of their work! Live in peace with each other! ¹⁴ We urge you, fellow-Christians, warn those who are disorderly! Encourage those who are timid! Help the weak! Be patient with everyone! ¹⁵ See to it that no one pays back wrong for wrong to anyone but always strive after what is good, both for one another and for all people! ¹⁶ Always be joyful! ¹⁷ Pray without ceasing! ¹⁸ Give thanks in everything! For this is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹ Do not put out the fire of the Spirit! ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything! Cling to what is good! ²² **Keep away from every form of evil!**

A concluding benediction (5:23-28)

²³ May the God of peace Himself make you completely holy and may your spirit, soul and body, be preserved sound and without blame when our Lord Jesus Christ comes! ²⁴ The One who calls you is faithful and will also do it. ²⁵ Fellow-Christians, pray also for us! ²⁶ Greet all the fellow-Christians with a holy kiss! ²⁷ I put you under solemn obligation by the Lord that this

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letter should be read to all your fellow-Christians. Amen.

²⁸ May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

2 THESSALONIANS

1

Opening greeting (1:1-2)

¹ Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: ² Grace to you and peace from God, our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thanksgiving and encouragement (1:3-12)

³ We ought always to thank God for you, fellow-Christians, as it is fitting, because your faith is growing more and more and the love that each one of you all has for each other is increasing. ⁴ As a result, we ourselves are boasting about you among the churches of God concerning your patient endurance and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring.

Encouragement for those who are suffering persecution

⁵ All this is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, so that you are counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering, ⁶ since it is a righteous thing for God to repay with affliction those who are afflicting you, ⁷ and to give relief to you, who are being afflicted, and to us. He will do this when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ **in blazing fire, taking vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who are not obedient to the Good News of our Lord Jesus.** ⁹ They will undergo the penalty of eternal destruction, **away from the presence of the Lord and from His glorious power,** ¹⁰ when He comes, **on that day, to be glorified among His holy ones and marvelled at** among all those who have become believers. For you have believed our testimony to you. ¹¹ For this purpose, we are also always praying for you, that our God may count you worthy of His calling and may powerfully fulfil all the purpose of His goodness and every work of faith, ¹² **that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified** among you and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.

2

Instructions about the last times and Christ's return (2:1-17)
The coming of the "man of lawlessness"

¹ We ask you, fellow-Christians, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together with Him, ² that you should not be quickly shaken out of your minds or be alarmed, either through a person possessed by a spirit or through a statement or through a letter that supposedly comes from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. ³ Let no one deceive you in any way! For that day will not come unless the revolt has first occurred and unless the "man of lawlessness," who is going to be destroyed, has been revealed. ⁴ He opposes and **exalts himself above everyone** who is called "God" or that is an object of worship, so that **he sits in the Temple of God** and proclaims that he himself **is God.** ⁵ Do you not remember

that when I was still with you I used to tell you these things? ⁶ Now you know what is holding him back, so that he will be revealed at his own time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work but only until he who is now holding it back gets out of the way. ⁸ Then the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus **will destroy him with the breath of His mouth** and make him powerless when He appears at His coming. ⁹ The coming of this lawless one is in accordance with the working of Satan, with all kinds of false miracles, signs, wonders, ¹⁰ and with every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they have not received the love of the truth that they may be saved. ¹¹ That is why God sends against them a deluding power, that they may believe what is false, ¹² that all who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness may be condemned.

An assurance that God has chosen them from the beginning

¹³ However, we ought to give thanks to God always for you, fellow-Christians, whom **the Lord has loved**, because from the beginning God has chosen you for salvation by the Spirit's making you holy and by faith in the truth. ¹⁴ For this purpose He has also called you through our Good News, that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ Therefore, fellow-Christians, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you have been taught, whether by spoken Word or by our letter! ¹⁶ May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God, our Father, who has loved us and who, by His grace, has given us eternal encouragement and good hope, ¹⁷ encourage your hearts and establish you in everything good that you do and say!

3

Prayer and discipline (3:1-15)

Paul's request for their prayers

¹ Finally, fellow-Christians, pray for us that the Word of the Lord may run swiftly and be honoured, just as it has also with you, ² and that we may be rescued from evil and wicked people! For not all have faith. ³ However, the Lord is faithful, will strengthen you and protect you from the Evil One. ⁴ We have confidence in the Lord about you, that you both are doing the things that we command and will continue to do them. ⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient endurance of Christ!

A warning against idleness

⁶ We command you, fellow-Christians, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should keep away from any Christian who lives in a disorderly manner and not according to the tradition that you have received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not disorderly among you. ⁸ Nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it but worked night and day, labouring and toiling, that we might not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ It is not that

2 Thessalonians

we do not have a right to receive support. However, we did it to give you an example, that you might imitate us.

¹⁰ For, even when we were with you, we gave you this instruction: "If anyone does not want to work, let him not eat, either!" ¹¹ For we hear that some are living in a disorderly manner among you, not doing any work but being busybodies. ¹² We command such people and encourage them in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and eat their own bread. ¹³ As for you, fellow-Christians, do not become tired of doing good!

¹⁴ If anyone does not obey what we are saying through

this letter, take special note of him and do not associate with him, that he may be ashamed! ¹⁵ Yet do not regard him as an enemy but warn him like a brother!

Conclusion (3:16-18)

A benediction and a greeting

¹⁶ May the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in every way! The Lord be with you all! ¹⁷ I, Paul, am writing this greeting with my own hand. This is a distinguishing mark in every letter. This is how I write. ¹⁸ May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

1 TIMOTHY

1

Introduction and a warning about false teaching (1:1-20)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God, our Saviour, and of Christ Jesus, our Hope, ² to Timothy, my real son in the faith. Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord!

A warning against false teachers and their doctrine

³ When I was going to Macedonia, I urged you to stay in Ephesus, that you might command certain men not to teach a different doctrine, ⁴ and not to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to speculations rather than promote God's plan, which is by faith. ⁵ The purpose of this command is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience and from sincere faith. ⁶ Certain people have deviated from these and have turned to meaningless talk. ⁷ They want to be teachers of the Law but understand neither what they are saying nor the things about which they are speaking so confidently. ⁸ However, we know that the Law is good if someone uses it lawfully. ⁹ He knows this, that the Law has not been laid down for a righteous person but for those who are lawless and insubordinate, for ungodly and sinful people, for those who are unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers, for those who kill their mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ for those who are sexually immoral, for homosexuals, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers and for whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, ¹¹ which conforms to the glorious Good News of the blessed God, which has been entrusted to me.

Paul's acknowledgement of God's mercy to him despite his former opposition

¹² I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has made me strong. For He has considered me to be trustworthy and has appointed me into the ministry, ¹³ although I used to be a blasphemer, a persecutor and a violent man. However, I have received mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴ The grace of our Lord has also been exceedingly abundant, along with faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ The saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance: that Christ Jesus has come into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the chief. ¹⁶ However, for this reason I have received mercy, that Christ Jesus may demonstrate all His patience in me, the chief of sinners, as an example to those who are going to believe in Him for eternal life. ¹⁷ To the King eternal, the immortal, invisible and only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever! Amen.

An admonition to Timothy to hold on to faith and a good conscience

¹⁸ I am entrusting this Instruction to you, my son Timothy, according to the prophecies that were made about you long ago, that by them you may fight the good campaign, ¹⁹ while you hold on to faith and a good conscience. Some have repudiated a good conscience and have suffered shipwreck in their faith. ²⁰ Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I handed

over to Satan that they might be disciplined not to blaspheme.

2

Public worship (2:1-15)

Instructions about prayer for all people

¹ Therefore, I exhort, first, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all people, ² for kings and all who are in authority, that we may live a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and reverence. ³ This is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to know the truth. ⁵ For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself as a ransom instead of all, to be testified in its proper time. ⁷ For this purpose I was appointed as a preacher and an apostle — I am telling the truth and not lying — a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

⁸ Therefore, I desire that the men should pray everywhere, lifting holy hands, without anger and doubting.

Instructions for Christian women

⁹ Similarly, I also desire that the women should adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, ¹⁰ but with good works. This is proper for women who profess godliness.

¹¹ Let a woman learn in quietness, with all subordination! ¹² Nor do I permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but she should be in quietness! ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ Moreover, Adam was not deceived; but, when the woman was deceived, she fell into transgression. ¹⁵ However, she will be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith, love and holiness, with self-control.

3

Qualifications for church workers (3:1-16)

¹ It is a trustworthy saying: If anyone aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a noble task. ² Therefore, the bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, skilful in teaching, ³ not addicted to wine, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not one who loves money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and have his children subordinate and completely respectful. ⁵ If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how will he take care of the church of God? ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, that he may not become conceited and fall into the judgment of the Devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with those who are outside, that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the Devil.

⁸ In the same way deacons must be worthy of respect, not insincere, not addicted to much wine, not fond of dishonest gain. ⁹ They must keep hold of the mystery

of the faith with a pure conscience. ¹⁰ Let these men be tested first! After that let them serve as deacons if they are blameless! ¹¹ In the same way their wives must be worthy of respect, refraining from slander, temperate and trustworthy in everything. ¹² Let deacons be the husbands of one wife! Let them manage their children and their own families well! ¹³ For, when they have been serving well as deacons, they win a good standing for themselves and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

The reasons for good Christian behaviour

¹⁴ I am writing these things to you, although I hope to come to you soon; ¹⁵ but, if I am delayed, I am writing that you may know how people ought to conduct themselves in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. ¹⁶ Most certainly also, the mystery of godliness is great: He has been made visible in human nature, He has been justified in the Spirit, He has appeared to angels, He has been preached among the Gentiles, He has been believed on in the world, He has been taken up in glory.

4

Warnings against false teachers (4:1-16)

A warning that some will depart from the faith

¹ The Spirit says explicitly that in later times some will turn away from the faith, as they pay attention to deceiving spirits and to things taught by demons, ² because of the hypocritical speaking of liars, who have had their own consciences seared. ³ They forbid people to marry and tell them to abstain from foods that God has created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For everything that God has created is good, and nothing should be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving. ⁵ For it is made holy through the Word of God and prayer.

The behaviour of a good minister of Jesus Christ

⁶ If you instruct our fellow-Christians in these things, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished by the Words of the faith and of the good teaching that you have been faithfully following. ⁷ However, reject profane old-wives' fables! Rather, train yourself to be godly! ⁸ For physical training helps a little, but godliness helps in every way, since it has a promise for the present life and for the life to come. ⁹ The saying is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. ¹⁰ For this is the purpose for which we labour and struggle, that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Saviour of all people, especially of those who believe. ¹¹ Keep on commanding and teaching these things! ¹² Let no one despise you because you are young, but be an example to those who believe, in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity! ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to public reading, to encouragement and to teaching! ¹⁴ Do not neglect the charismatic gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy, when the body of elders laid their hands on you!

¹⁵ Cultivate these things! Continue in these things, that your progress may be evident to everyone! ¹⁶ Take pains with yourself and with your teaching! Persevere in these things! For, when you do this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

5

Instructions for various groups of Christians (5:1-6:2a)

¹ Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as a father! Treat younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers and younger women as sisters, with all purity!

Care of widows

³ Honour widows who are really widows! ⁴ If any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety toward their own family and to repay their parents and grandparents! For this is pleasing to God. ⁵ The woman who is really a widow and left all alone has put her hope in God and continues in petitions and prayers night and day. ⁶ However, the one who lives for pleasure is dead while she is alive. ⁷ Keep on commanding these things also, that they may be above reproach! ⁸ If anyone does not provide for his own relatives, especially for the members of his family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. ⁹ Let a widow be enrolled if she is over sixty, if she has been the wife of one husband, ¹⁰ if she is well spoken of because of good deeds, if she has raised children, if she has shown hospitality, if she has washed the feet of God's holy people, if she has helped people in distress and if she has devoted herself to every good work! ¹¹ However, refuse the enrolment of younger widows! For, when they feel sensuous impulses that alienate them from Christ, they want to marry ¹² and are subject to condemnation because they have broken their first pledge. ¹³ At the same time they also learn to be idle, going about from house to house, and are not only idle but also gossiping and meddling, saying things that they should not be saying. ¹⁴ Therefore, I want younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and so give the enemy no opportunity for slander. ¹⁵ For some have already turned away to follow Satan. ¹⁶ If any believing woman has widows in her family, let her help them, and let the church not be burdened, that the church may help those who are really widows!

Instructions about elders

¹⁷ Let the older men who manage well be considered worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in speaking and teaching! ¹⁸ For the Scripture says: **"You shall not muzzle an ox when he is treading out grain,"** and "The labourer deserves his wages." ¹⁹ Do not accept an accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses! ²⁰ Correct those who keep on sinning in front of everyone, that the others also may be afraid! ²¹ I put you under solemn obligation, before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen an-

1 Timothy

gels, to observe these things without discrimination and without doing anything out of favouritism. ²² Do not be hasty in laying hands on anyone and do not share in other people's sins! Keep yourself pure! ²³ Stop drinking only water but use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses! ²⁴ The sins of some people are obvious and go ahead of them to judgment, but those of other people come after them. ²⁵ Similarly also good works are obvious, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.

6

The conduct of slaves and masters

¹ Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their own masters as men who deserve all honour, that God's name and His teaching may not be slandered! ² Let those who have masters who are believers not despise them because they are fellow-Christians but let them be better slaves! For those who benefit from their service are believers and are dearly loved people. Keep teaching and urging these things!

Final warnings against false teachers and advice to Timothy (6:2b-21)

³ If anyone teaches differently and does not agree with the sound Words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that is in harmony with godliness, ⁴ he is conceited and does not understand anything but has a morbid craving for debates and arguments about words, which produce jealousy, strife, slanders, evil suspicions ⁵ and the constant irritation of people whose minds are corrupt, who have been deprived of the truth and who think that godliness is a means of financial gain.

The gain of godliness with contentment

⁶ However, godliness with contentment is great gain.

⁷ For we have not brought anything into the world and cannot take anything out of it, either. ⁸ Rather, if we have food and clothing, we shall be content with these.

⁹ However, those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and harmful desires, which drown people in destruction and ruin.

¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all evils; and, because some people have been eager for money, they have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

Encouragement to fight the good fight of the faith

¹¹ However, you, man of God, flee from these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patient endurance and gentleness! ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith! Take hold of eternal life, to which you have been called! You have also made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I charge you, in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and in the presence of Christ Jesus, who testified with His good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which He, who is the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, will display at His own right time. ¹⁶ He alone has immortality. He lives in a light that no one can approach, and no one has ever seen Him or can see Him. To Him be honour and everlasting power! Amen.

Advice for rich people

¹⁷ Keep on telling those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant or to put their hope in uncertain riches but in God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy! ¹⁸ Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a treasure, as a good foundation for the future, that they may take hold of the life that is really life!

Encouragement to guard the faith

²⁰ Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you! Turn away from the profane chatter and the contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge"! ²¹ Some people give themselves out as experts in it and have wandered from the faith.

Grace be with you!

2 TIMOTHY

1

Introduction (1:1-2)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, ² to Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus, our Lord!

Encouragement to Timothy to remain loyal and guard the truth (1:3-18)

³ I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, when I constantly remember you in my prayers, day and night. ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I recall the genuine faith that is in you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and, I am convinced, now dwells in you also. ⁶ For this reason I remind you to rekindle the charismatic gift of God that is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For God has not given us a timid spirit but a spirit of power, love and moderation. ⁸ So, do not be ashamed to bear witness about our Lord and do not be ashamed of me, His prisoner, but join me in suffering evil for the benefit of the Good News, by the power of God! ⁹ He has saved us and has called us with a holy calling, not because of what we have done but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began, ¹⁰ but has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus. He has broken the power of death and through the Good News has brought life and immortality into the light. ¹¹ Of this Good News I have also been appointed a preacher, an apostle and a teacher. ¹² This is also why I am suffering these things. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed. For I know whom I have believed and am convinced that He can guard what has been entrusted to me until that day. ¹³ Keep as a pattern of sound Words what you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus! ¹⁴ Guard the good thing that has been entrusted to you through the Holy Spirit, who dwells in us!

Praise for Onesiphorus

¹⁵ You know this, that everyone in the province of Asia has turned away from me, and Phygelus and Hermogenes are among them. ¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the family of Onesiphorus! For he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain. ¹⁷ On the contrary, when he arrived in Rome, he searched eagerly for me and found me. ¹⁸ May the Lord grant to him that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You also know very well in how many ways he helped me at Ephesus.

2

Encouragement to Timothy to face hardships (2:1-13)

¹ You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus ² and entrust the things that you have

heard from me before many witnesses to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also! ³ Endure hardships with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus! ⁴ No one who serves in the army becomes entangled in civilian affairs, because he wants to please the one who has enlisted him. ⁵ Moreover, if anyone competes in athletics, he does not receive a crown unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ The hard-working farmer must be the first to receive a share of the crops. ⁷ Understand what I am saying! For the Lord will give insight to you in all things.

⁸ Remember that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead and is a descendant of David, according to my Good News! ⁹ For this I am suffering, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. However, the Word of God has not been chained. ¹⁰ Therefore, I patiently endure all things because of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ This is a trustworthy saying: If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him. ¹² If we patiently endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we disown Him, He will also disown us. ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful. For He cannot disown Himself.

An instruction to combat false teachers (2:14-26)

¹⁴ Keep reminding them of these things and warn them before God not to quarrel about words! It is not useful at all but only ruins those who are listening. ¹⁵ Be eager to present yourself before God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, guiding the Word of truth along a straight path! ¹⁶ Avoid profane chatter! For it will progress further in ungodliness, ¹⁷ and what they say will spread like a cancer. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁸ who have wandered away from the truth. They are saying that the resurrection has already taken place and are overthrowing the faith of some people. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm and has this seal: "**The Lord knows those who are His,**" and, "Let everyone who **calls on the name of the Lord** depart from wickedness!" ²⁰ In a large house there are not only articles of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, and some are for honourable purposes and others for dishonourable purposes. ²¹ Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an article for honourable purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and made ready for every good work. ²² Flee from the evil desires of young people and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart! ²³ Do not have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments! For you know that they breed quarrels. ²⁴ A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone. He must be a skilful teacher and endure evil without resentment. ²⁵ He must be gentle in correcting those who oppose him, hoping that God will perhaps grant them repentance, that they may know the

truth, ²⁶ and that they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the Devil after they have been trapped by him into doing what he wanted.

3

A prophecy about dangers of the last days (3:1-17)

¹ However, know this, that in the last days difficult times will come! ² For people will love themselves and love money. They will be boastful, proud, blasphemous, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, savage and without love for what is good. ⁴ They will be treacherous, reckless, conceited and lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. ⁵ They will have a form of godliness but will have denied its power. Keep on avoiding such people also! ⁶ For some of these are the ones who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women who are loaded down with sins and driven by various kinds of sinful desires, ⁷ always learning and never able to come to know the truth.

⁸ As Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these people oppose the truth. They are men with depraved minds and disqualified concerning the faith. ⁹ However, they will not progress very far. For their folly will be clear to everyone, as the folly of Jannes and Jambres also was.

An encouragement to teach the truths of the Scriptures

¹⁰ You, however, have been closely following my teaching, my way of living, my purpose, my faith, my patience, my love, my patient endurance, ¹¹ my persecutions, my sufferings, the kinds of sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, Iconium and Lystra and the kinds of persecutions that I endured. Yet the Lord has delivered me from them all. ¹² Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ whereas evil people and swindlers will become worse and worse, deceiving others and being deceived. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, as for you, continue in the things that you have learned and about which you have become convinced! For you know from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which can make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be proficient and thoroughly equipped for every good work.

4

Correction of error (4:1-8)

¹ I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the Word! Be ready whether it is convenient

or inconvenient! Correct, rebuke and encourage, with all patience and teaching! ³ For a time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine. Instead, they will follow their own desires and, because they have itching ears, they will surround themselves more and more with teachers. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. ⁵ Nevertheless, as for you, be self-possessed in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist and fulfil your ministry! ⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race and have kept the faith. ⁸ For the future, there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Personal instructions (4:9-18)

⁹ Make every effort to come to me quickly! ¹⁰ For Demas has forsaken me, because he has loved this present world, and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia and Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you! For he is useful to me in my ministry. ¹² I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. ¹³ When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus in Troas, the scrolls and especially the parchments! ¹⁴ Alexander the metalworker has done me much harm. **The Lord will pay him back according to what he has done.** ¹⁵ You too should be on your guard against him! For he has strongly opposed what we have been saying. ¹⁶ At my first defence no one supported me, but they all deserted me. May it not be reckoned against them! ¹⁷ However, the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, that the message might be fully proclaimed through me and all the Gentiles might hear it. **I was also delivered from the lion's mouth.**

Paul's conviction that the Lord will deliver him

¹⁸ The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed and save me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory for ever! Amen!

Conclusion (4:19-22)

Final greetings

¹⁹ Greet Prisca and Aquila and the family of Onesiphorus! ²⁰ Erastus stayed at Corinth. I left Trophimus sick at Miletus. ²¹ Hasten to come before winter! Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the other fellow-Christians greet you. ²² The Lord be with your spirit! Grace be with you!

TITUS

1

Introductory greeting (1:1-4)

¹ Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the purpose of the faith of God's chosen people and the knowledge of the truth that promotes godliness. ² These are based on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before time began. ³ He also displayed His Word at His own right time through the preaching with which I have been entrusted, because of the command of God our Saviour. ⁴ To Titus, my real son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus, our Saviour!

The qualifications for pastors (1:5-16)

⁵ The reason why I left you in Crete was that you should straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you. ⁶ Any elder must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, one who has children who are believers and who are not open to the charge of wild living or insubordination. ⁷ For a bishop must be above reproach as God's administrator. He must not be stubborn, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not a bully and not fond of dishonest gain. ⁸ Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good and who is prudent, just, holy and disciplined. ⁹ He must be one who clings to the reliable Word, as it has been taught, so that, by sound teaching, he may be able to encourage people and refute those who oppose it.

An instruction to Titus to correct his opponents

¹⁰ For there are many people who are insubordinate, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those who belong to "the circumcised." ¹¹ It is necessary to silence them. They are ruining whole families by teaching what they must not teach, for the sake of dishonest gain. ¹² One of their own people, a prophet of their own, has said, "People of Crete are always liars, savage animals, lazy gluttons." ¹³ That testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, ¹⁴ and may not pay attention to Jewish myths and commandments of people who reject the truth! ¹⁵ All things are pure to those who are pure, but nothing is pure to those who have been corrupted and do not believe. Rather, both their minds and their consciences have been corrupted. ¹⁶ They profess that they know God but deny Him by what they do. They are abominable, disobedient and disqualified for any good deed.

2

Moral instructions for various groups of Christians (2:1-15)

¹ Nevertheless, as for you, speak the things that are suitable for sound teaching! ² Tell older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, prudent and sound in faith, in love and in patient endurance! ³ Similarly, tell older women to be reverent in their behaviour, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine and to teach what is

good, ⁴ that they may encourage young women to love their husbands and their children, ⁵ to be prudent, pure, to be good workers at home and to be subordinate to their husbands, that the Word of God may not be maligned! ⁶ Similarly, encourage the young men to be sensible! ⁷ In everything show yourself to be an example of good works! In your teaching display integrity, reverence, ⁸ and sound speech, which cannot be condemned, that a person who opposes us may be ashamed, because he cannot say anything bad about us! ⁹ Tell slaves to be subordinate to their own masters in everything, to give satisfaction and not to contradict, ¹⁰ not to misappropriate but to show that they can be trusted in every way, that in everything they may make the teaching of God our Saviour attractive! ¹¹ For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all people. ¹² It trains us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live sensible, righteous and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ as we wait for our blessed hope, namely, the glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He gave Himself for us, **to redeem us from all wickedness** and to cleanse **for Himself a people** that is His very own and eager to do good works. ¹⁵ These are the things you are to say! Continue to encourage and correct with full authority! Let no one ignore you!

3

Encouragement to be ready for every good work (3:1-7)

¹ Remind people to be subordinate to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, ² not to slander anyone, not to fight but to be yielding and to show gentleness to all people!

The Gospel of the saving grace of God in Christ

³ For once we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by many kinds of evil desires and pleasures. We used to live in malice and jealousy, being detestable and hating one another. ⁴ However, when the kindness and love of God, our Saviour, toward human beings appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not because of any righteous works that we have done but because of His mercy, through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, ⁷ that we might be justified by His grace and become heirs in keeping with the hope of eternal life.

Advice to Titus about his ministry (3:8-11)

⁸ The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, that those who have become believers in God may be careful to busy themselves with good works. These things are good and profitable to human beings. ⁹ However, avoid foolish controversies and genealogies! For these serve no purpose and are useless. ¹⁰ After you have given a warning to a person who insists on his self-chosen opinion and warned him a second time, reject him, ¹¹ because you know that such a

Titus

person has been perverted, keeps on sinning and is self-condemned!

Conclusion (3:12-15)

Final instructions and farewell greetings

¹² When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, hurry to come to me at Nicopolis! For I have decided to spend the winter there. ¹³ Do your best to send Zenas, the

lawyer, and Apollos on their journey, that they may not lack anything! ¹⁴ Let our people also learn to be busy with good works to meet pressing needs and that they may not be unproductive! ¹⁵ All who are with me send you greetings. Greet those who love us in the faith! Grace be with you all!

PHILEMON

Opening greeting (1-3)

¹ Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our fellow-Christian, to Philemon, our dear fellow-worker, ² to Apphia, our sister in the faith, to Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your house: ³ Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Philemon's love and faith (4-7)

⁴ I am always thanking my God when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵ because I hear about your love and faith, which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all God's holy people. ⁶ I pray that the sharing of your faith may be effective, as you fully understand every good thing that is in us in Christ. ⁷ For your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because, brother, you have refreshed the hearts of God's holy people.

A plea on behalf of Onesimus (8-22)

⁸ Therefore, although in Christ I am so bold as to order you to do what you ought to do, ⁹ I prefer to appeal to you moved by love. I am appealing as Paul, an old man, and now a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰ I am appealing to you about my son Onesimus, who has become my son while I have been in chains. ¹¹ Once he was useless to you but now has become useful both to you and to me. ¹² I am sending him back to you, and he is my very heart. ¹³ I would have liked to keep him with me that he might serve me on your behalf while I

am in chains for the Good News. ¹⁴ However, I do not want to do anything without your consent, that you may not be kind because you are compelled to be, as it were, but because you want to be. ¹⁵ For perhaps Onesimus left you for a while that you might have him back again for ever, ¹⁶ no longer as a slave but better than a slave, as a dearly loved brother. He is especially dear to me but how much dearer to you, both as a human being and in the Lord. ¹⁷ Now if you think of me as a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me! ¹⁸ If he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge it to me! ¹⁹ I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I shall pay it back. I do not want to mention that you owe me more than that, your own self. ²⁰ Yes, my fellow-Christian, I would like to have some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ! ²¹ As I write to you, I am confident that you will be obedient, since I know that you will do even more than I ask. ²² One thing more: prepare a guestroom for me! For I hope to be restored to you through the prayers of you all.

Conclusion (23-25)

²³ Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings, ²⁴ and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow-workers. ²⁵ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the spirits of you all!

HEBREWS

1

Christ's superiority (1:1-3:6)

The superiority of the Son to the prophets

¹ God has long ago spoken at many times and in many ways to our fathers by the prophets, ² but has in these last days spoken to us by His Son. He has made Him the Heir of all things and through Him He has also made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being. He maintains all things by His powerful Word. After He had made purification for sins, **He sat down at the right hand** of the Majesty on high.

The superiority of Christ to the angels

⁴ He has become as much greater than the angels are as the name that He has inherited is superior to theirs. ⁵ For to which of the angels has God ever said, "**You are My Son. Today I have begotten You**"? Or again, "**I shall be His Father, and He will be My Son**"? ⁶ Again, when God brings His First-born Son into the world, He says: "**And let all the angels of God worship Him!**" ⁷ With reference to the angels He says, "**Who makes His angels spirits and His servants flames of fire.**" ⁸ However, to the Son He says: "**Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever, and the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of Your kingdom.**" ⁹ **You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore, God, Your God, has put You above Your companions by anointing You with the Olive-Oil of gladness.** ¹⁰ He also says, "**Lord, in the beginning You laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands.**" ¹¹ **They will perish, but You continue. They will all become old like a garment.** ¹² **You will roll them up like a robe and like a garment, and they will be changed. However, You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end.** ¹³ To which of the angels has He ever said, "**Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet**"? ¹⁴ Are not all angels spirits in holy service, being sent to minister to those who are about to inherit salvation?

2

An exhortation not to neglect salvation

¹ That is why we must pay closer attention to the things that we have heard, that we may not drift away. ² For, if the Word that was spoken through angels was valid and every trespass and disobedience received a just penalty, ³ how shall we escape if we have neglected such a great salvation, which was proclaimed at first through the Lord and then was confirmed to us by those who heard Him? ⁴ God also added His testimony to it by both miraculous signs and wonders, by different kinds of miracles and by distributing gifts of the Holy Spirit as He wished.

The Lordship of Christ over all things

⁵ For it is not to angels that He has subordinated the

coming world, about which we are speaking. ⁶ However, somewhere someone has declared: "**What is man that You are mindful of him or a son of man that You are concerned about him?**" ⁷ **You have made him lower than the angels for a short time and have crowned him with glory and honour. You have placed him in charge of what Your hands have made.** ⁸ **You have subordinated all things under His feet.**" For, when God **subordinated all things to Him**, He left nothing that is not subordinated to Him.

At present, we do not yet see that all things have been made subordinate to him. ⁹ However, we see Jesus, who **for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour** because He suffered death, so that, by God's grace, He might taste death for everyone. ¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, because of whom all things exist and through whom all things exist, that, when He brought many sons to glory, He should make the Author of their salvation complete through sufferings. ¹¹ For He who makes people holy and those who are made holy are all derived from one. That is why He is not ashamed to call them "**brothers.**" ¹² He says: "**I shall proclaim Your Name to My brothers. Amid the congregation I shall sing Your praise.**" ¹³ Again: "**I shall trust in Him.**" Again, He says, "**Here am I, and the children whom God has given to Me.**"

¹⁴ Therefore, since the **children** have shared in blood and flesh, He also in just the same way participated in the same things, that, through His death, He might destroy the one who has power over death, that is, the Devil, ¹⁵ and that He might release all those who were subjected to slavery all their lives by fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely, He is not **concerned with angels**. Rather, He is concerned with **the offspring of Abraham**. ¹⁷ Therefore, He was obliged to be made like His brothers in every way, that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For, because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He can help others who are being tempted.

3

The superiority of Christ to Moses

¹ Therefore, fellow-Christians, who are holy and share the heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession! ² He was **faithful** to the One who appointed Him, as **Moses** also **was faithful in all God's household**. ³ For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honour than the house. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. ⁵ **Moses was faithful in all God's household as a servant**, to testify to what would be said in the

¹⁸⁴ Several manuscripts omit the last sentence in 2:7.

future, ⁶ but Christ is faithful as a Son over **God's household**. We are also His house if we hold on to our confidence and to the hope about which we boast.

A warning against unbelief, 3:7-4:13

An exhortation not to be stubborn

⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: "**Today, if you hear His voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts, as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, ⁹ where your fathers tested and tried Me and saw My works for forty years!** ¹⁰ That was why I was angry with that generation and said: 'In their hearts they are always going astray and have not known My ways.' ¹¹ So, I declared on oath in My anger, 'They will certainly not enter My place of rest.'" ¹² Be careful, fellow-Christians, that none of you has in him a wicked, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God! ¹³ Rather, encourage one another daily, while it is called "**Today,**" that none of you may be **hardened** by the deceitfulness of sin! ¹⁴ For we have become people who share in Christ, if we firmly hold the reality that we had at the beginning until the end. ¹⁵ When it is said: "**Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as you did in the rebellion!**" ¹⁶ Who, indeed, were those that heard Him and rebelled? Were they not, in fact, all those who were brought out of Egypt through Moses? ¹⁷ With whom was **He angry for forty years**? Was it not with those who sinned and whose **bodies fell in the wilderness**? ¹⁸ To whom did He **declare on oath that they would not enter His place of rest**, if it was not to those who disobeyed? ¹⁹ So, we see that they could not enter because of unbelief.

4

An admonition not to miss the rest that is to come

¹ Therefore, since the promise about entering His place of rest remains, let us be fearful that any of you will seem to have missed it! ² For indeed we have had the Good News told us, just as they had, but the Word that they heard did not benefit them, because it was not united with faith in those who heard it. ³ For we who have become believers **are entering His place of rest**, as He has said: "**As I declared on oath in My anger, 'They will certainly not enter My place of rest.'**" Yet His works have been brought into being since the foundation of the world. ⁴ For somewhere He has spoken about the seventh day in this way: "**And on the seventh day God rested from all His works.**" ⁵ Again, in this passage: "**They will certainly not enter My place of rest.**" ⁶ Therefore, since it is certain that **some people are entering** it, although those to whom the Good News was formerly told **did not enter** because of their disobedience, ⁷ He is again appointing a certain day, "**today.**" A long time afterwards, He says, through David, as has been stated above, "**Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts!**" ⁸ For, if Joshua had given them rest, God would not be speaking subse-

quently about another day. ⁹ Therefore, a Sabbath rest remains for the people of God. ¹⁰ For the person who **has entered God's rest has himself also found rest from his works, as God did from His.** ¹¹ Therefore, let us be diligent to enter that rest, that no one may fall by following the same pattern of disobedience!

The efficacy of the living Word

¹² For the Word of God is living and active. It is sharper than any two-edged sword. It penetrates even as far as the dividing of soul and spirit and joints and marrow. It also discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

¹³ No creature is hidden from Him. All things are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account.

The superiority of Christ's priesthood to that of the Levitical priesthood (4:14-7:28)

The High Priesthood of Jesus

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great High Priest, who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us cling to what we confess! ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathise with our weaknesses. However, we have One who has been tempted in every way like us. Yet He was without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace to help us when we need it!

5

A comparison of the High Priesthood of Christ to the priesthood of Melchizedek

¹ Every High Priest is selected from human beings and is appointed to represent human beings in matters that are related to God, that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can be gentle with ignorant and erring people, because he himself is subject to weakness. ³ For that reason, he is obliged to offer sacrifices for his own sins, just as he does for the sins of the people. ⁴ No one takes this honour for himself but is called by God, just as Aaron was. ⁵ So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest but was glorified by the One who said to Him: "**You are My Son. Today I have begotten You.**" ⁶ As He also says in another place, "**You are a Priest for ever, in the order of Melchizedek.**" ⁷ During His days in the human nature, Jesus offered prayers and petitions, with loud cries and tears, to the One who could save Him from death; and, because He feared God, He was heard. ⁸ Although Jesus is the Son, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered. ⁹ When He was perfected, He also became the Source of **eternal salvation** for all who obey Him, ¹⁰ after He had been proclaimed by God to be the High Priest, "**just like Melchizedek.**"

The need of mature people for more than elementary truths

¹¹ We have much to say about this, and yet it is difficult to explain, since you have become hard of hearing. ¹² For indeed, although by this time you ought to be teachers, you again need someone to teach you the elementary truths of the Oracles of God; and you have

come to need milk, not solid food. ¹³ For anyone who lives on milk is not acquainted with the Word about righteousness. For he is an infant. ¹⁴ However, solid food belongs to mature people, to those who have senses that have been trained by practice to differentiate both good and evil.

6

¹ Let us leave behind the elementary teaching about Christ and let us move on towards maturity! Let us not lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works, of faith in God, ² of teaching about ceremonial washings, of laying on of hands, of the resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment! ³ We shall also do this if God permits it. ⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have become participants in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and who have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the coming age, ⁶ and yet have fallen away, to renew them again to repentance. They are crucifying the Son of God again, to their own disadvantage and are holding Him up to public contempt. ⁷ For **ground** that drinks in the rain that often falls on it and ground that **produces useful vegetation** for the people for whose sakes it is also farmed, receives blessing from God. ⁸ However, **ground** that **produces thorns and thistles** is worthless, is close to being under a **curse** and, in the end, it will be burnt. ⁹ However, even though we are speaking like this, we are convinced, dear friends, that in your case there are better things, yes, things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰ For God is not unjust, that He should forget your work and the love that you showed for His name when you served His holy people and when you continue to serve them. ¹¹ We want each one of you to show the same diligence, that your hope may be fully certain until the end. ¹² We do not want you to become sluggish but to imitate those who, through faith and patience, are inheriting the promises.

The certainty of God's promise

¹³ For, when God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater to swear by, He **swore by Himself**, ¹⁴ saying, "**I shall certainly bless you and certainly multiply you.**" ¹⁵ In this way, after Abraham had waited patiently, he obtained the promise. ¹⁶ For human beings swear by someone who is greater, and for them their oath ends every argument and serves as confirmation. ¹⁷ Because God wanted to point out the unchanging nature of His purpose even more clearly to those who were the heirs of His promise, He guaranteed it by means of an oath. ¹⁸ He did this so that, through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we, who have fled to Him for refuge, might have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope that has been set before us. ¹⁹ We have this hope like an anchor for our souls, a hope that is firm and secure and that **enters** the inner part **behind the**

curtain, ²⁰ where Jesus, as the Forerunner, has entered on our behalf, after He had become a High **Priest for ever "in the order of Melchizedek."**

7

The priestly order of Melchizedek

¹ For this **Melchizedek, the king of Salem and the priest of the Most High God, met Abraham when he was returning from the defeat of the kings. He blessed Abraham, ² and Abraham gave him a tenth part of everything.** His name, in the first place, is translated as "**the king of righteousness,**" but then he is also called "**the king of Salem,**" that is, "**the king of peace.**" ³ He receives no mention of his father, mother, his genealogy, the beginning of his days or of the end of his life. However, when he has been likened to the Son of God, he remains as a **priest for ever.** ⁴ See how great this man was! Even the patriarch **Abraham gave him a tenth** from the best of the spoils. ⁵ According to the Law even the descendants of Levi who receive the priesthood have a Commandment to receive a **tenth** from the people, that is, from their brothers, although their brothers are descendants of Abraham. ⁶ However, this man, who was outside of their line of descent, received a **tenth** from **Abraham** and **blessed the one** who had the promises. ⁷ Beyond all contradiction those who are better bless those who are inferior. ⁸ Moreover, in the one case, human beings, who die, receive a tenth, but, in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. ⁹ In addition, one might almost say, even Levi, who receives a tenth, has **paid a tenth** through **Abraham**, ¹⁰ for Levi was still in the body of his forefather when **Melchizedek** met him.

A comparison of the priesthood of Jesus to that of Melchizedek

¹¹ Therefore, if there had been perfection through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), why was there still a need for another **Priest** to arise who was "**in the order of Melchizedek,**" rather than to be described as "in the order of Aaron"? ¹² For, when the priesthood is being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the Law. ¹³ For the One about whom these things are being said belongs to a different tribe, from which no one has officiated at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord has descended from Judah, and Moses has not said anything about priests in connection with this tribe. ¹⁵ It is even more evident if a different **priest** appears who is exactly **like Melchizedek**, ¹⁶ who has not come according to a Law with a Commandment about something bodily but on the basis of a powerful life that cannot be destroyed. ¹⁷ For the testimony is made, "**You are a Priest for ever in the order of Melchizedek.**" ¹⁸ For there is a cancellation of a former Commandment because it has been weak and useless. ¹⁹ For the Law did not make anything perfect. However, a better hope is introduced, through which we continue to come near to God. ²⁰ To the degree that this Priesthood was not

without an oath (for those men have been made priests without any oath, ²¹ whereas Jesus became a priest with an oath, through the One who said to Him: “**The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind: ‘You are a Priest for ever’**”), ²² to the same degree Jesus has also become the Guarantee of a better testament. ²³ Many were made priests because death prevented them from continuing. ²⁴ However, because Jesus continues **for ever**, the **Priesthood** that He has is permanent. ²⁵ Therefore, He can save completely those who come to God through Him, because He is always alive to intercede for them. ²⁶ For such a High Priest is what we needed, who is holy, blameless, spotless, separated from sinners and has been made higher than the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need to offer sacrifices every day, like those High Priests, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people. For He did this once for all when He offered Himself. ²⁸ For the Law appoints as High Priests men who are weak; but the Word of the oath, which came after the Law, has appointed the **Son**, who has been made perfect **for ever**.

8

The superiority of Christ's sacrifice to the sacrifices of animals by Levitical priests (8:1-10:39)

The superiority of the new and better Covenant

¹ The point in what is being said is this: We have such a High Priest, who has **sat down at the right hand** of the throne of the Majesty in heaven ² as a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true **Tabernacle**, which **the Lord**, not a human being, **has set up**. ³ For every High Priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore, it was necessary that this One also should have something to offer. ⁴ Therefore, if He were on earth, He would not even be a priest, because the men already exist who offer the gifts according to the Law. ⁵ They serve the imitation and the shadow of the heavenly things, as a divine revelation was given to Moses when he was about to erect the Tabernacle. For He said: “**See to it that you make everything exactly like the pattern that has been shown you on the mountain!**” ⁶ However, now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, to the degree that He is also the Mediator of a better Covenant, which has been enacted on the basis of better promises. ⁷ For, if that first Covenant had been without fault, there would have been no need for a second Covenant. ⁸ For God is finding fault with the people when He says: “**‘Look! The days are coming,’ says the Lord, ‘when I shall establish a new Covenant for the family of Israel and the family of Judah. ⁹ It will not be like the Covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by their hands to lead them out the land of Egypt, because they did not abide by My Covenant. So, I have disregarded them,’ says the Lord. ¹⁰ ‘For this is the Covenant that I shall make with the family of Israel after those days,’ says the Lord: ‘I shall put My Laws into their minds and write them on their**

hearts and I shall be their God, and they will be My people. ¹¹ Each one will certainly not teach his fellow citizen and each one will certainly not teach his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord!’ For they will all know Me from the least to the greatest of them.

¹² For I shall be merciful toward their iniquities and certainly not remember their sins any longer.”

¹³ By calling the **Covenant** “**new**,” He has made the first Covenant “old.” Moreover, what is becoming obsolete and is growing old is at the point of disappearing.

9

The inability of the first Tabernacle to make the consciences of the worshippers perfect

¹ The first Covenant used to have regulations for worship and its earthly sanctuary. ² For a Tabernacle was set up. There is the first part, which contains the lampstand, the table and the presentation of the sacred bread. This is called “the Holy Place.” ³ Behind the second curtain there is the part of the Tabernacle that is called “the Most Holy Place,” ⁴ which has the golden altar of incense and the Ark of the Covenant, which had been overlaid on all sides with gold. In it there are the golden jar containing the manna, the staff of Aaron that had budded and the tablets of the Covenant. ⁵ Above it are the cherubim of glory overshadowing the **propitiatory-cover**. It is not possible to speak in detail now about these things. ⁶ After these things had been arranged in this way, the priests always used to go into the first part of the Tabernacle as they performed the rites. ⁷ However, into the second part only the High Priest used to go once a year, but not without blood, and used to offer it for himself and for the sins that the people had committed in ignorance. ⁸ The Holy Spirit was showing this clearly that the way into the Most Holy Place had not yet been disclosed while the first Tabernacle was still standing. ⁹ This is an illustration for the present time, in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered, although they cannot make the worshipper perfect in his conscience. ¹⁰ They are regulations imposed on the body only about kinds of food and drink and various ceremonial washings until the time of the new order.

Complete redemption through the blood of Jesus

¹¹ However, Christ has come as a High Priest of the good things that have been done, through the greater and more perfect Tabernacle, which has not been made by human hands, that is, not a part of this creation.

¹² Moreover, not through the blood of goats and calves but through His own blood He entered once for all into the Most Holy Place, when He obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For, if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer that are sprinkled on people who have been defiled make them holy, so that their bodies are clean, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, has offered Himself without blemish to God, make our consciences clean from dead works, that we may serve the living God? ¹⁵ This is

also why He is the Mediator of the new Covenant, that, after death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions under the first Covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. ¹⁶ For, where there is a testament, ¹⁸⁵ it is necessary that the death of the one who has made the testament must be established. ¹⁷ For a testament is in force after people have died, since it is never valid while the one who has made the testament is still alive. ¹⁸ That is why even the first Covenant has not been inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ For, after **Moses** had told all the people every Commandment in accordance with the Law, he **took the blood** of calves and goats, together with water, scarlet wool and hyssop and **sprinkled** both the scroll itself and **all the people**. ²⁰ He said, **“This is the blood of the Covenant, which God has commanded for you.”** ²¹ Then in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the Tabernacle and all the objects used in worship. ²² According to the Law almost everything is made clean by blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

The superiority of the one perfect sacrifice to the sacrifices under the Law

²³ Therefore, it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified by these means, but the heavenly things themselves are purified with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴ For Christ has not gone into sacred places that have been made by hands, which are representations of the genuine ones. Rather, He has gone into heaven itself, where He now appears in the presence of God for us. ²⁵ Nor did He go in to offer Himself often, as the High Priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Otherwise He would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world. Instead, now He has appeared once, at the end of the ages, to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷ Moreover, as it has been appointed for human beings to die once, but after this the judgment, ²⁸ so Christ also has been sacrificed once to **“take away the sins of many people.”** He will appear a second time, dissociated from sin, to those who are eagerly waiting for Him, to bring salvation.

10

The ineffectiveness of animal sacrifices

¹ The Law, which has only a dim outline of the good things in the future and not their substance, can never — by the same sacrifices repeatedly offered year after year — make perfect those who worship. ² Otherwise would they not have stopped offering sacrifices? Once cleansed, the worshippers would no longer be aware of any sins. ³ Instead, year after year these sacrifices reminded people of their sins. ⁴ For the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins. ⁵ Therefore, when Christ came into the world, He said: **“You have not wanted sacrifice and offering, but You have prepared a body for Me.”** ⁶ **You have had no pleasure in burnt**

offerings and sacrifices for sin. ⁷ **Then I said: ‘Look! I have come (It has been written about Me in the scroll of the book). I have come to do Your will, O God.’”** ⁸ First Christ says: **“You have not wanted sacrifices, offerings, burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin,”** which are offered according to the Law, and **“You have had no pleasure in them.”** ⁹ Then He has said, **“Look! I have come to do Your will.”** He does away with the first, in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ **By this will** we have been made holy, through the **sacrifice of the body** of Jesus Christ once and for all. ¹¹ Every priest stands ministering every day and repeatedly offering the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² However, when this Priest had offered one sacrifice for sins, which is good for ever, **He sat down at the right hand of God.** ¹³ Since that time, He is waiting for **His enemies to be made a footstool for His feet.** ¹⁴ For by one offering He has made perfect for ever those who are being made holy. ¹⁵ The Holy Spirit also witnesses to us. For, after He has said, ¹⁶ **“This is the Covenant that I shall make with them after those days,’ says the Lord: ‘I shall put My Laws on their hearts and write them on their minds’,”** ¹⁷ He then adds: **“I shall certainly not remember their sins and their lawless deeds any longer.”** ¹⁸ Where these have been forgiven, there is also no offering for sin any longer. ¹⁹ Therefore, fellow-Christians, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new, living way that He has opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His body, ²¹ and, since we have a **High Priest over the house of God,** ²² let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith! For our hearts have been sprinkled to take away guilty consciences, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. ²³ Let us cling to the confession of our hope without wavering! For He who has made the promise is faithful.

An admonition to encourage one another

²⁴ Let us also consider how we may stimulate one another to love and to do good works! ²⁵ Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as some are regularly doing, but let us continue to encourage one another, and so much more as you see the day approaching! ²⁶ For, if we intentionally go on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sin is left any longer, ²⁷ but only a terrible expectation of judgment and an eager **fire, which is about to devour the adversaries.** ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the Law of Moses **died** without mercy **on the testimony of two or three witnesses.** ²⁹ How much worse a punishment do you think that person will be considered to deserve who has trampled on the Son of God, has considered as an unholy thing **the blood of the Covenant**, by which he has been made holy, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know the One who has said: **“Vengeance belongs to Me. I shall repay,”** and again, **“The Lord will judge His people.”**

¹⁸⁵ “Covenant” and “Testament” translate the same Greek word.

³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

An exhortation to patient endurance

³² Remember the earlier days, when, after you had been enlightened, you patiently endured a hard struggle with suffering! ³³ Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insults and tribulations and at other times you became companions with those who were being treated in this way. ³⁴ For you showed sympathy for the prisoners and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves have a better and lasting possession. ³⁵ Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward! ³⁶ For you need to endure patiently, so that, after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise. ³⁷ **For in a very little while “He who is coming will come and will not delay, ³⁸ and My righteous one will live by faith; and yet, if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.”** ³⁹ However, we do not belong to those who shrink back so that they perish but belong to those who have **faith**, so that our souls are kept safe.

11

Examples provided by men and women of faith (11:1-40)

¹ Faith is the confident assurance of the things we hope for, the conviction about things that are not seen. ² For by it the men of long ago were well attested. ³ By faith we understand that the universe has been created by the Word of God, so that what is seen has not been made from things that are visible.

⁴ By faith **Abel offered** to God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was approved as a righteous man, when **God** approved of **his offerings** and by faith he is still speaking, although he has died.

⁵ By faith **Enoch** was taken away so that he would not **see death** and **“he was not found, because God had taken him.”** For, before he was taken away, he had this testimony, that **he had pleased God**. ⁶ Without faith it is impossible to **please** God. For he who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly search for Him.

⁷ By faith when God had warned Noah about the things that were not yet seen, he respected God and built an ark to save his family. By this faith he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes through faith.

⁸ By faith, when **Abraham** was called to **go away** to a place that he would receive as an inheritance, he obeyed and **went**, although he did not know where he was going. ⁹ By faith he **lived as a stranger** in the Promised Land, as though it belonged to someone else. He lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose Architect and Maker is God.

¹¹ By faith Sarah herself also received the ability to conceive a child, even though she was barren and was

past the age, because she considered Him faithful who had made the promise. ¹² Therefore, **descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore** came from this one man, although he had been as good as dead.

¹³ All these people died in faith. They did not receive what had been promised but saw them from far away and welcomed them. They also confessed that they were **strangers and sojourners** on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ Indeed, if they were thinking of the country that they had left, they would have had an opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God. For He has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ By faith, when **Abraham** was **tested**, he **offered up Isaac**. Yes, this man, who had received the promises, was offering up **his only son**, ¹⁸ about whom God had said, **“It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.”** ¹⁹ He concluded that God was able even to raise him up from the dead. Moreover, figuratively speaking, he did get him back from the dead.

²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning their future.

²¹ By faith, when Jacob was dying, he blessed each of Joseph’s sons and **worshipped while he leaned on the top of his staff**.

²² By faith, when Joseph’s end was near, he spoke about the departure of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.

²³ By faith, when Moses was born, he **was hidden for three months** by his parents, because they saw that he was a good-looking child, and were not afraid of the king’s edict.

²⁴ By faith, when **Moses** had **grown up**, he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter ²⁵ and chose to be mistreated with God’s people rather than to enjoy the short-lived pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He considered **the reproach of Christ** greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, because he was paying attention to the reward.

²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, without being afraid of the king’s anger, because he persevered as a man who was seeing the One who cannot be seen. ²⁸ By faith he kept the **Passover** and the sprinkling of **blood**, that the one who was **destroying** the first-born might not touch them. ²⁹ By faith they went through the Red Sea as through dry land, but, when the Egyptians attempted it, they were drowned.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell after the people had marched around them for seven days.

³¹ By faith the prostitute Rahab did not perish with the disobedient people after she had welcomed the spies in peace.

³² What more, then, am I to say? For the time would run out for me if I were to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, and about David, Samuel and the

prophets. ³³ They through faith conquered kingdoms, they enforced justice, they obtained promises, they shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ they quenched fierce fire, they escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness they were made strong, they became powerful in battle, they turned foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again. Other people were tortured. They did not accept deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Others experienced mocking and whippings and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, tempted, sawn in two and put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins. They were destitute, oppressed and tormented. ³⁸ The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground. ³⁹ Through faith, all these had good testimony given to them but did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ since God had planned something better concerning us, that they might not be made perfect apart from us.

12

Encouragement in the present trials (12:1-29)
An exhortation to run the race with endurance

¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a large cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every impediment and the sin that so easily ensnares us and let us run with patient endurance the race that has been set before us! ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith! For the sake of the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising its shame, and has **sat down at the right hand** of the throne of God. ³ For consider Him who has endured such opposition against Himself from sinful men, that you may not become weary or discouraged in your souls! ⁴ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ You have also forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons: “**My son, do not regard lightly the Lord’s discipline and do not lose heart when He rebukes you!**” ⁶ **For the Lord disciplines the one whom He loves and whips every son whom He receives.”** ⁷ Endure hardship as a **discipline!** God is dealing with you **as with sons**. For what **son** is there whom his father does not **discipline?** ⁸ If you are without discipline, and all sons have undergone **discipline**, then you are **not sons** but illegitimate. ⁹ Furthermore, we used to have earthly fathers to discipline us and used to respect them. Shall we not, much more, be subordinate to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they used to discipline us for a short time as it seemed best to them. However, God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness. ¹¹ No discipline at the time seems pleasant, but painful. Later, however, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness for those who have been trained by it. ¹² Therefore, “**strengthen the hands that are letting go and the weakened knees,**” ¹³ and “**make**

straight paths for your feet,” that the crippled limb may not be dislocated but may, rather, be healed!

¹⁴ Keep on **striving for peace** with all people and for holiness! Without holiness no one will see the Lord.

¹⁵ Be careful that no one loses the grace of God, that a **bitter root does not grow up and cause trouble**, so that many people are defiled through it! ¹⁶ Be careful that no one is sexually immoral or is profane like **Esau**, who for a single meal **sold his rights as the first-born!** ¹⁷ For you know that afterwards, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected. Indeed, he had no opportunity for a change of mind, although he begged for the blessing with tears.

A reminder that the Hebrew Christians have come to God’s heavenly Zion

¹⁸ For you have not come to a mountain that can be **touched** and that is **burning with fire** and to **darkness, gloom and storm**, ¹⁹ to the **blast of a trumpet** or to such a **voice** speaking Words that those who heard it begged that no further Word would be spoken to them, ²⁰ because they could not endure what was commanded: “**If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.**” ²¹ The sight was so terrible that Moses said, “**I am very afraid** and trembling.” ²² Rather, you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to tens of thousands of angels in festal gathering, ²³ to the assembly of the first-born, whose names have been written in heaven. You have come to the Judge, the God of all, to the spirits of righteous people who have been made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus, the Mediator of the new testament and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. ²⁵ Be careful that you do not refuse to listen to Him who is speaking! For, if they did not escape when they refused to listen to Him who was warning them on earth, much less shall we escape if we turn away from Him who is warning us from heaven? ²⁶ At that time His voice shook the earth; but now He has promised: “**Once more I shall shake** not only **the earth** but also **the heavens.**” ²⁷ The Words “**once more**” indicate the removal of the things that are being **shaken**, as of things that have been created, that the things that are not being **shaken** may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be **shaken**, let us be thankful and with thankfulness serve God in a way that pleases Him, with reverence and awe! ²⁹ For our God “**is a consuming fire.**”

13

Concluding advice and encouragement to live in love (13:1-25)

¹ Keep on loving each other as fellow-Christians! ² Do not forget to welcome strangers! For by so doing some have welcomed angels without knowing it. ³ Remember the prisoners as if you were in prison with them! Remember those who are being mistreated, since you yourselves are in the body also! ⁴ Let everyone honour marriage and let the marriage bed be kept pure! For God will judge sexually immoral people and adul-

Hebrews

terers. ⁵ Let your way of life be free from a love for money! Be content with what you have! For God has said: **“I shall never leave you or forsake you.”**

⁶ Therefore, we may boldly say: **“The Lord is my Helper, and I shall not be afraid. What can any human being do to me?”**

⁷ Remember your leaders, who have spoken the Word of God to you! Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith! ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. ⁹ Do not be carried away with different kinds of strange teachings! For it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods. Those who live in them have not been helped by them. ¹⁰ We have an altar from which those who are serving the Tabernacle have no right to eat. ¹¹ For the bodies of the animals whose **blood is brought into the sanctuary** by the High Priest **as a sin-offering** are **burnt outside the camp**. ¹² Therefore, Jesus also suffered outside the gate to make the people holy through His own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to Him **outside the camp**, bearing His reproach! ¹⁴ For here we have no continuing city but are looking for the future one. ¹⁵ Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually **offer to God a sacrifice of praise**, that is, **the fruit of lips** that praise His name! ¹⁶ Do not forget to do good and to share! For with such sacrifices God is pleased.

¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit to them! For they keep watch over your souls as men who must give an account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief! For that would not be to your advantage.

¹⁸ Pray for us! For we are confident that we have a good conscience, since we desire to behave honourably in every way. ¹⁹ I urge you even more to do this, that I may be restored to you sooner.

A benediction

²⁰ May the God of peace, who **brought up** from the dead our Lord Jesus, the Great **Shepherd of the sheep**, through the **blood** of the **everlasting Covenant**, ²¹ equip you with every good thing, that you may do what He wants you to do! May He work in us what is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever! Amen.

Concluding information and greetings

²² I urge you, fellow-Christians, receive patiently my Word of encouragement! For the letter that I am writing to you is a short one. ²³ You should know that Timothy, our fellow-Christian, has been released. If he comes soon, I shall see you together with him. ²⁴ Greet all your leaders and all God's holy people! Those who are from Italy send you greetings. ²⁵ May grace be with all of you!

JAMES

1

Introduction (1:1)

¹ James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed in the world: Greetings!

An exhortation to turn to God, the giver of perfect gifts (1:2-27)

An admonition to rejoice when faith is tested

² Consider it nothing but joy, my fellow-Christians, when you become involved in various trials, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces patient endurance! ⁴ Let patient endurance show itself perfectly in practice, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing! ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask for it from God, who gives generously to all without resentment! He will give it to him. ⁶ However, let that person ask in faith, without doubting at all! For one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed about by the wind. ⁷ For that person should not think that he will receive anything from the Lord! ⁸ He is an indecisive man, unstable in all his ways. ⁹ Let the lowly fellow-Christian take pride in his high position ¹⁰ and the rich one in his lowliness! For he will pass away **like a wild flower**. ¹¹ For the sun comes up with its scorching heat and **dries up the wild plant. Its flower falls, and** its beautiful appearance is ruined. In this way the rich person will also fade away in his business dealings.

A warning that believers should not let desires tempt them

¹² **Blessed is the man who patiently endures** when he is tested, because, when he has passed the test, **he will receive the crown of life**, which God has promised to those who love Him! ¹³ No one should say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"! For God cannot be tempted to do evil and does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴ Each person is tempted when he is dragged away and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Next, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin and, when sin has run its course, it gives birth to death. ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my dearly loved fellow-Christians! ¹⁷ Every act of giving that is good and every gift that is perfect comes down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change or shifting shadow. ¹⁸ As He planned, He gave birth to us by the Word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.

Hearing and doing

¹⁹ My dear fellow-Christians, realise this! Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry! ²⁰ For a man's anger does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore, lay aside all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and, with a gentle spirit, welcome the Word planted in you, which can save your souls! ²² However, do what the Word says and do not merely hear it and deceive yourselves! ²³ For, if anyone listens to the Word but does not do what it says, he is like a man who looks at his natural

face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

²⁵ However, the man who looks intently into the perfect Law that gives freedom and continues in it and who is not a forgetful hearer but one who does what it says, will be blessed in what he does. ²⁶ If anyone thinks that he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, his religion is worthless.

²⁷ Religion that is pure and unstained before Him who is God and the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

2

An admonition to have true and active faith (2:1-26)

The incompatibility of faith in Christ with partiality

¹ My fellow-Christians, as you hold the faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord of glory, do not show favouritism!

² For, if a man with a gold ring on his finger and wearing fine clothes comes into your assembly for worship, and a poor man in dirty clothes also comes in, ³ and, if you give special attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "You take this good seat here!" and you tell the poor man, "You stand there!" or "Sit at my footstool!" ⁴ have you not shown favouritism among yourselves and become judges with evil motives?

⁵ Listen, my dear fellow-Christians! Has God not chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom that He has promised to those who love Him? ⁶ However, you have dishonoured the poor man. Do not rich people oppress you and are not they the ones who drag you into the courts?

⁷ Are not they the ones who say wicked things about the noble name after which you have been called? ⁸ If you really fulfil the Royal Law, according to the Scripture passage: "**You shall love your neighbour as yourself!**" you are doing well. ⁹ However, if you show favouritism, you are committing a sin, and the Law convicts you as transgressors.

The requirement of perfection by the Law

¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole Law and yet stumbles in one point has become guilty of them all. ¹¹ For He who has said, "**Do not commit adultery!**" has also said, "**Do not murder!**" If you do not commit adultery but murder, you have become a transgressor of the Law. ¹² Speak and act in such a way as people who are going to be judged by the Law that gives liberty. ¹³ For there will be judgment without mercy on the one who has not shown mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

The contrast between a faith that proves itself by works and a non-existent faith with mere words

¹⁴ What good does it do, my fellow-Christians, if someone says that he has faith but if he does not have works? That faith cannot save him, can it? ¹⁵ If a Christian man or woman is without clothes and daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you tells them, "Go in peace! Keep warm and well fed!" but you do not give them what the body

needs, what good does it do? ¹⁷ So also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ¹⁸ However, someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without works, and I shall show you my faith by my works!" ¹⁹ Do you believe that "**God is one**"? You are doing well! Even the demons believe that and shudder in fear. ²⁰ You foolish person, do you want to find out that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Was our father Abraham not justified by works when **he offered his son Isaac on the altar**? ²² You see that his faith and his works were working together, and by his works his faith was made complete. ²³ The Scripture was also fulfilled that says, "**Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,**" and he was called "**the friend of God.**" ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith only. ²⁵ Similarly, was not the prostitute Rahab also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers as guests and sent them away by a different road? ²⁶ For, as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

3

Exhortations to turn to God-given wisdom (3:1-18)
A warning against sins of the tongue

¹ Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow-Christians! For you know that we shall be judged more severely. ² For we all commit many sins. If anyone does not sin in what he says, he is a perfect man, who can also keep his whole body in check. ³ If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we turn their whole bodies. ⁴ Look also at the ships. Although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, a very small rudder turns them wherever the inclination of the pilot leads him. ⁵ So also, the tongue is a small member of the body and yet it makes great boasts. See what a small fire sets such a large forest ablaze! ⁶ The tongue is also a fire. It is a world of wickedness in our members. It defiles the whole body, it sets the whole course of life aflame and is set aflame by hell. ⁷ For every creature, from animals to birds to reptiles and to sea-creatures, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸ However, no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With the tongue we bless the Lord and Father and with it we curse human beings, who have been **made in God's likeness**. ¹⁰ Blessing and cursing come out of the same mouth. My fellow-Christians, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Surely a spring does not pour out both fresh and bitter water from the same opening? ¹² My fellow-Christians, surely a fig tree cannot produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

The contrast between earthly and heavenly wisdom

¹³ Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him by his good conduct show that his works are done in humble wisdom! ¹⁴ However, if you have bitter jeal-

ousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth! ¹⁵ This "wisdom" does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual and demonic. ¹⁶ For where there is jealousy and selfishness, disorder and every evil practice are there. ¹⁷ The wisdom that comes from above is, first, pure, then peaceful, gentle, willing to obey, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and without pretence. ¹⁸ Those who make peace are also sowing a harvest of righteousness in peace.

4

An admonition to turn to God, the giver of the Spirit and of all grace (4:1-12)

A warning not to love the world

¹ Where do wars and where do fights come from among you? Do they not come from this, from your desires for pleasure, which wage war among your members? ² You desire and do not have. So, you murder. You try to get something and cannot obtain it. So, you quarrel and wage war. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you are asking wrongly, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

⁴ Adulterous people, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wants to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think the Scripture says without reason: "God jealously longs for the Spirit, whom He has caused to dwell in us"? ⁶ However, He gives more grace. Therefore, it says, "**God opposes proud people but gives grace to humble people.**" ⁷ Therefore, be subordinate to God! Resist the Devil! He will flee from you. ⁸ Go near to God! He will come near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double minded people! ⁹ Be miserable, mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into gloom! ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord! He will lift you up.

A warning not to speak against one another

¹¹ Stop speaking against one another, my fellow-Christians! He who speaks against his fellow-Christian or judges him speaks against the Law and judges the Law. However, if you judge the Law, you are not keeping the Law but judging it. ¹² There is only one Law-giver and Judge, the One who can save and destroy. Who, then, are you to judge your neighbour?

An admonition to turn away from the world's self-assurance (4:13-5:6)

A reminder that the future is not under human control

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we shall go into this city, stay there a year, carry on business and make money." ¹⁴ You do not know about tomorrow. What is your life? For you are a mist, which is seen for a little while and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we shall live and do this or that." ¹⁶ However, now, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is wicked. ¹⁷ Therefore, if

a person knows how to do what is right and does not do it, he is sinning.

5

A warning against the deceitfulness of riches

¹ Come now, rich people, weep and wail over the miseries that are coming on you! ² Your riches have become rotten, and moths have eaten your clothes. ³ Your gold and silver have become corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will **eat** your flesh like **fire**. You have **hoarded wealth** in the last days. ⁴ Look! **The wages that you have held back** from the workers who mowed your fields are crying out, and the **outcries** of those who did the harvesting have **reached the ears of the Lord of hosts**. ⁵ You have lived on the earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened hearts in **a day of slaughter**. ⁶ You have condemned and murdered the righteous man, who does not resist you.

An admonition to turn to the Lord in patience(5:7-20)

⁷ Therefore, be patient, fellow-Christians, until the Lord comes! See how the farmer waits for the valuable crop of the ground and waits patiently for it until it receives **the Autumn and the Spring rains!** ⁸ You too, be patient and remain firm! For the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Do not grumble against one another, fellow-Christians, that you may not be judged! Consider! The Judge is standing in front of the door. ¹⁰ Fellow-Christians, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of being patient in the face of wrong treatment! ¹¹ Remember that **we call those people "blessed" who have persevered**. You have heard

how Job persevered and have seen what the Lord finally brought about, because **the Lord is very compassionate and merciful**.

A warning against using oaths

¹² Above all things, my fellow-Christians, do not swear, either by heaven or by the earth or with any other oath! Rather, let your "yes" be "yes," and your "no" be "no," that you may not come under judgment!

An encouragement about the power of prayer

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering misfortune? Let him pray! Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise! ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with olive-oil in the name of the Lord! ¹⁵ The prayer offered in faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up, and, if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed! The effective prayer of a righteous person can do much. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with the same nature as ours and prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain and the ground produced its crops.

An admonition to Christians to care for one another's welfare

¹⁹ My fellow-Christians, if anyone among you wanders away from the truth and someone turns him back, ²⁰ let him know that the person who has turned a sinner back from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will **cover a multitude of sins!**

1 PETER

1

Opening greeting (1:1-2)

¹ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the chosen people who are exiles and scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, the province of Asia and Bithynia, ² chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be **sprinkled with His blood**: May grace and **peace** be yours in ever **greater measure!**

*The living hope that believers have in Christ (1:3-12)
Reasons for Christian joy*

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has given us new birth by His great mercy, through raising Jesus Christ from the dead. Therefore, we have a living hope, ⁴ which waits for an inheritance that cannot be destroyed or defiled and never fades away and which God has reserved for you in heaven. ⁵ You are protected by God's power through faith, until you come to the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, even though now, for a little while, if it is necessary, you have been suffering grief in various trials. ⁷ These sufferings have come that your faith may be proved genuine. It is more precious than gold, which perishes, although it is tested by fire. Then the tested genuineness of your faith will result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Although you have not seen Him, you love Him. You do not see Him now but believe in Him and rejoice with unspeakable and glorious joy, ⁹ because you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ The prophets, who wrote beforehand about the grace that was to come to you, searched for and inquired carefully about this salvation. ¹¹ They were trying to find out what Person or what time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when He was bearing witness in advance about the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you in these things, which have now been reported to you through those who have been telling you the Good News by the Holy Spirit, who has been sent from heaven. These are things at which angels desire to gain a clear glance.

*Christian hope and holiness of life (1:13-2:10)
An exhortation to be holy*

¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action, be sober and set your hope completely on the grace that will be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed! ¹⁴ Be like obedient children, not conforming to the evil desires that you formerly had in your ignorance! ¹⁵ Rather, as the One who has called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct! ¹⁶ For Scripture has said: **"You shall be holy! For I am holy."** ¹⁷ Moreover, since you **call on Him as your Father**, who judges impartially, according to what each person

has done, conduct yourselves reverently, as you spend your time as resident foreigners! ¹⁸ For you know that you have **not** been **redeemed** with perishable things, **with silver** or gold, from the worthless lives you had handed over to you from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a spotless and unblemished lamb. ²⁰ He was chosen previously, before the foundation of the world but was revealed in the last time for your sakes. ²¹ Through Him you believe in God, who has raised Him from the dead and has given Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

The power of the ever-living Word to work sincere love

²² You have purified yourselves by obeying the truth, with the result that the love that you have for your fellow-Christians is not insincere. Therefore, love one another eagerly with pure hearts! ²³ For you have been born again, not from a seed that can perish but from one that cannot perish, through the **Word** of God, which **lives and remains**. ²⁴ For **"All human beings are like grass, and all their glory is like the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, ²⁵ but the Word of the Lord remains for ever."** This is the **Word** that has been **told** you as the **Good News**.

2

¹ Therefore, get rid of every kind of wickedness and every kind of deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy and every kind of slander! ² Like new-born babies, long for the pure milk of the Word, that by it you may grow up to salvation! ³ For **you have tasted that the Lord is good**.

Believers are built on Christ, the living stone

⁴ You are coming to Him, as to a living **Stone**, whom human beings have rejected but whom God has **chosen** and who is **precious** to Him; ⁵ and you are also being built, as living stones, to be a spiritual temple and to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For in Scripture it says, **"See, I am laying a Stone in Zion, a chosen and precious Cornerstone, and the person who believes in Him will by no means be put to shame."**

⁷ Therefore, He is **precious** to you who believe; but to those who do not believe, **"He is the Stone, which, although rejected by the builders, has become the Cornerstone,"** ⁸ and **"a Stone over which they stumble and a Rock over which they fall."** They stumble because they disobey the Word. That is also the end appointed for them.

Believers are God's special people

⁹ You, however, are a **chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own special people**, that you may **extol the wonderful deeds** of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. ¹⁰ Once you were **"not a people,"** but now you are **"the people of God."** Once you had **"not received mercy,"** but now you have **"received mercy."**

Christian hope in spite of suffering (2:11-4:11)

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as **resident foreigners and exiles**, to abstain from the desires of your sinful natures, which wage war against your souls. ¹² Keep conducting yourselves well among the Gentiles, so that, when they accuse you of doing wrong but observe your good conduct, they may, because of your good works, glorify God on the day **when He visits them!**

An exhortation to be subordinate to constituted authority

¹³ Be subordinate to every human institution for the Lord's sake: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, as men who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right! ¹⁵ For this is what God wants, that, by doing what is right, you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. ¹⁶ Be like free people but do not use your freedom to conceal evil! Rather, be like God's slaves! ¹⁷ Honour all people, love your fellow believers, **fear God** and honour the **emperor!** ¹⁸ Domestic slaves, be subordinate to your masters with every respect, not only to the good and considerate ones but also to those who are harsh!

An exhortation to suffer patiently

¹⁹ For this is a commendable thing, if someone is moved by his conscience toward God, to bear the pain patiently when he suffers unjustly. ²⁰ For what credit is there if you are beaten for doing wrong and you patiently endure it? However, if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, this is commendable with God. ²¹ For God has called you for this purpose, because Christ also has suffered for you and has left you an example, that you may follow in His footsteps. ²² **He did not commit any sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth.** ²³ When others insulted Him, He did not insult them in return. When He suffered, He did not make threats but handed it over to Him who judges justly. ²⁴ He Himself **carried our sins** in His body to the cross, that we might die to sins and live to righteousness. **By His wounds you were healed.** ²⁵ For you were **like sheep going astray** but now have returned to the Shepherd and Caretaker of your souls.

3

The relationship of wives and husbands

¹ In the same way, wives, be subordinate to your husbands, so that, even if some do not obey the Word, they may be won, without words, by the behaviour of their wives, ² when they observe your chaste conduct, which is accompanied by reverence! ³ Do not let your beauty be something outward, braiding the hair and wearing gold or putting on fine clothes! ⁴ Rather, let your beauty be the hidden person of the heart, with the unfading quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight! ⁵ For this is how the holy women of long ago who hoped in God also used to make themselves beautiful. They were subordinate to their husbands, ⁶ like **Sarah**, who obeyed Abraham and **called him "lord."** You have become her daughters if you do good **without letting anything make you afraid.**

⁷ Likewise, husbands, live with your wives with understanding, giving honour to the wife as to the weaker vessel, and also as fellow-heirs of life by grace, that your prayers may not be hindered!

An exhortation to be compassionate

⁸ Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love like brothers and be compassionate and humble!

⁹ Do not pay back evil for evil, insult for insult, but, on the contrary, speak a blessing! For you have been called that you may inherit a blessing.

¹⁰ For **"the person who wants to love life and see good days should keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful talk! He should turn aside from evil and do good! He should try to get peace and pursue it! He should try to get peace and pursue it!"** ¹² **For the eyes of the Lord are on those who are righteous, and His ears are attentive to their prayers. However, the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."** ¹³ Who is the one who will harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ However, even if you were to suffer because of what is right, you would be blessed. Do not be afraid of what they are afraid of and **do not let yourselves be intimidated!**

¹⁵ Rather, **in your hearts regard Christ the Lord** as holy! Always be ready to make a defence to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that you have but do this with gentleness and respect! ¹⁶ Keep a good conscience, that those who make fun of your good life in Christ may be ashamed of their slander! ¹⁷ It is better to suffer, if it is God's will, for doing right than for doing wrong.

Christians' patient suffering is motivated by Christ's innocent suffering

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the Righteous One for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the human nature but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom He also went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ who were disobedient long ago, when God waited patiently, in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared. In it only a few people, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. ²¹ That also prefigured baptism, which now saves you, not by washing dirt from the body but by guaranteeing a good conscience before God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. ²² He has gone to heaven and is at the right hand of God, after angels, rulers and powers have been made subordinate to Him.

4

¹ Since, therefore, Christ has suffered in His body, arm yourselves with the same attitude! For he who has suffered in his body has finished with sin. ² As a result, he no longer lives for the rest of his time in the body for the sinful desires of human beings but for the will of God. ³ For you spent enough time in the past in doing what the Gentiles want to do. Then you had been living in unbridled immorality, sinful desires, drunkenness, wild celebrations, carousals and the wanton worship of idols. ⁴ In this regard they are astonished that you do not run together with them into the same flood of dissi-

pation and slander you. ⁵ They will give an account to the One who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this is the reason why the Good News has been told to those who are now dead, that they may be judged in conformity with human beings in the sinful nature but may then live in conformity with God in the spirit.

An exhortation to love fervently

⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore, be reasonable and exercise self-restraint for your prayers! ⁸ Above all, continue to love one another fervently! For **“love covers a multitude of sins.”** ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling! ¹⁰ You should each serve one another with whatever charismatic gift you have received, as good managers of the manifold grace of God! ¹¹ If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the Oracles of God! If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength that God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ! To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever! Amen.

Advice for Christians who are being persecuted (4:12-5:11)

The participation of believers in Christ's sufferings

¹² Dearly loved people, do not be astonished at the fiery ordeal among you, by which you are being tested, as though something strange were happening to you!

¹³ However, rejoice in as far as you share in Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be very glad when His glory is revealed! ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, because **the Spirit of glory and of God is resting on you.** ¹⁵ Of course, none of you should suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal or one who meddles in the affairs of others!

¹⁶ However, if anyone suffers as a Christian, he should not be ashamed but should glorify God for that name!

¹⁷ For it is time for the judgment to **begin with the household of God.** However, if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who refuse to listen to the Good News of God? ¹⁸ **If it is hard for a righteous person to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and sinful person?** ¹⁹ Therefore, those who are suffering according to the will of God should commit their souls to the faithful Creator, as they continue to do good!

5

An appeal to the ministers of the Gospel

¹ I appeal to the elders among you, I, who am a fellow-elder, a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also one who will share in the glory that will be revealed: ² be shepherds of the flock of God that is with you and care for it, not because you have to but because you want to, as is God's will, not because you are fond of dishonest gain but eagerly, ³ not lording it over the people assigned to you but being examples to the flock! ⁴ When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will also receive the unfading crown of glory.

An exhortation to humility

⁵ In a similar way, younger people, be subordinate to those who are older! All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another! For **“God opposes proud people but gives grace to humble people.”**

⁶ Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the right time! ⁷ **Cast all your anxiety on Him!** For He cares for you.

An admonition to be watchful

⁸ Be self-controlled and alert! Your enemy, the Devil, is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Be strong in your faith and resist him, knowing that your fellow-Christians in the world are undergoing the same kinds of sufferings! ¹⁰ After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you in Christ Jesus to His eternal glory, will Himself make you complete, make you firm, make you strong and give you a good foundation. ¹¹ To Him be the power for ever! Amen.

Conclusion (5:12-14)

A concluding exhortation and a farewell

¹² With the help of Silvanus, a faithful fellow-Christian, as I regard him, I am writing you this short letter, to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it! ¹³ She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. ¹⁴ Greet one another with a kiss of love! Peace to all of you who are in Christ!

2 PETER

1

Opening greeting

¹ Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, To the people who have obtained a faith that is as precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ: ² May grace and peace be yours **in an ever greater measure** through the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus!

An exhortation to grow in true knowledge (1:3-21)

³ For His divine power has given us everything that we need for life and godliness, through the knowledge of the One who has called us to His own glory and excellence. ⁴ Through these He has given us His precious and very great promises, so that, through these promises, you may begin to participate in the divine nature, after you have escaped from the depravity that exists in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to provide your faith with excellence, your excellence with knowledge, ⁶ your knowledge with self-control, your self-control with perseverance, your perseverance with godliness, ⁷ your godliness with brotherly kindness and your brotherly kindness with love! ⁸ For, if you have these and, if they are increasing, they keep you from being useless and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For, if anyone does not have these, he is so shortsighted that he is blind and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, be even more eager, fellow-Christians, to be certain that your calling and election are secure! For, if you do these things, you will certainly never stumble. ¹¹ For in this way an entrance will be richly provided for you into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. ¹² For this reason, I shall always be reminding you about these things, although you know them and have been firmly established in the truth that you now have. ¹³ I think it is right, while I am in this tent, to arouse you by way of a reminder. ¹⁴ For I know that I shall soon lay aside my tent, as our Lord Jesus Christ has also shown me. ¹⁵ Moreover, I shall do my best to see to it that, after I have departed, you always remember these things.

Apostolic testimony to the transfiguration of Christ and the Word of the Old Testament as reasons for certainty

¹⁶ We were not following any clever myths when we told you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and His coming. Rather, with our own eyes we saw His majesty. ¹⁷ For He received honour and glory from God the Father when such a voice was spoken to Him by the Sublime Glory, “**This is My Son**, whom I love and **with whom I am well pleased.**” ¹⁸ We heard this voice, which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ We also have the prophetic Word confirmed, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a gloomy place, until the day dawns and the **Morning Star rises** in your

hearts. ²⁰ Understand this first, that no prophetic utterance of Scripture comes because of someone’s own interpretation! ²¹ For no prophecy was ever spoken because of a human being’s decision, but men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2

A warning about false teachers (2:1-22)

¹ There were also false prophets among the people, as there will also be false teachers among you. They will secretly bring in destructive opinions. They will deny even the Lord who has bought them and will bring swift destruction on themselves. ² Many people will follow their immoral ways, and because of them the way of truth **will be slandered.** ³ In their greed they will make a profit out of you by means of fabricated words. From ancient times their condemnation is being prepared, and their destruction is not asleep. ⁴ For, if God did not spare angels when they sinned but held them captive in the gloomy place of punishment and handed them over to be kept in chains of darkness for judgment, ⁵ and, if He did not spare the ancient world, when He brought a flood on a world of ungodly people but protected Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, and seven others, ⁶ and, if He reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, condemned them to destruction and made them an example of what is going to happen to ungodly people, ⁷ but, if He rescued righteous Lot, who used to be distressed by the indecent conduct of those lawless people ⁸ (for, as he saw and heard them while he lived among them, this righteous man tormented his righteous soul day after day because of their lawless deeds), ⁹ then the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from temptation and to keep wicked people under punishment for the day of judgment, ¹⁰ especially those who follow their sinful natures in lust for what defiles them and despise the Lord’s majesty. They are audacious and headstrong and do not tremble when they slander glorious angelic beings, ¹¹ whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not deliver an insulting condemnation from the Lord against them. ¹² However, these people slander what they do not understand. They are like unthinking animals, which by nature have been born to be caught and destroyed; and, when animals are destroyed, they too will be destroyed. ¹³ They are hurt to pay them back for the hurt that they have caused. They consider that pleasure is revelling in the daytime. As spots and blemishes, they revel in their sinful pleasures when they feast with you. ¹⁴ They have eyes that are full of desire for an adulterous woman and that cannot cease from sin. They try to trap unstable souls. They have hearts that have been trained in greed. They are going to be cursed. ¹⁵ They have forsaken the straight way and wandered off. They follow the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.

¹⁶ However, he received a rebuke for his wrongdoing: a donkey, which cannot speak, spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. ¹⁷ These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Black darkness has been reserved for them. ¹⁸ For, when they speak high-sounding but empty words, they try to trap, through the desires of the sinful nature and through indecent actions, the people who are barely escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹ Although they promise them freedom, they are themselves the slaves of depravity. For, if something has defeated someone, he has been enslaved by it. ²⁰ If they have escaped the defilements of the world by knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ but have then been entangled and conquered by them again, their final condition has become worse than their first. ²¹ For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than to have learned it and then to turn away again from the holy Commandment that had been handed over to them. ²² The proverb is true that tells what has happened to them: "**A dog goes back to its own vomit,**" and "A sow that has washed herself goes back to roll around in the mud."

3

The need to be ready for Christ's return (3:1-18)
The coming destruction of the world

¹ Dearly loved people, this is now the second letter that I am writing to you. In both of them I am stirring up your pure minds as I remind you ² to remember the Words that have been spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command of your apostles of the Lord and Saviour. ³ First, you should know that in the last days mockers, following their own evil desires, will come with their mockery ⁴ and ask, "Where is the promise of His coming? For, since the fathers fell asleep, everything has remained as it has been since the world was first created." ⁵ What they deliberately forget is that a long time ago by the Word of God the heavens began to exist, the earth was formed out of

water and by water ⁶ and that water flooded and destroyed that former world. ⁷ The same Word has also reserved the present heavens and the earth for fire and keeps them for the day when ungodly people are judged and destroyed. ⁸ Do not forget this one thing, dearly loved people, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and **a thousand years are like one day!** ⁹ The Lord is not slow to keep what He has promised, as some people understand slowness. Rather, He is patient with you, because He does not want any to be lost but wants all to come to repentance. ¹⁰ The day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will pass away with a roar, burning will destroy the elements and the earth and the works that are on it will become evident. ¹¹ Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people must you be in forms of holy conduct and godliness, ¹² as you look forward to and hasten, the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed with fire, and the elements will melt by burning? ¹³ Rather, according to His promise, we look forward to **new heavens and a new earth**, in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ Therefore, dearlyloved people, since you are looking forward to these things, make every effort to be found by Him without spot or blemish and at peace! ¹⁵ Regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, as our dear fellow-Christian Paul has also written to you, with the wisdom that God has given to him, ¹⁶ as he also does in all his letters! He speaks about these things in them. Some things in them are hard to understand, and people who are ignorant and unstable distort them, as they also do with the rest of the Scriptures, to their very own destruction. ¹⁷ As for you, therefore, dearly loved people, since you already know this, be on your guard, that you may not be carried away by the error of unprincipled people and lose your firm hold! ¹⁸ However, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! To Him be the glory both now and for the eternal day! Amen.

1 JOHN

1

Introduction: the revelation of the Word of life (1:1-4)
Apostolic testimony to the Word of life

¹ That which was from **the beginning**, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, concerning the Word of Life - ² and the Life has been revealed; and we have seen It, testify to It and proclaim to you the eternal Life that was with the Father and that has been revealed to us. ³ What we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, that you also may have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is also with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We are writing these things that our joy may be complete.

The message that God is light (1:5-2:28)

⁵ This is the message that we have heard from Him and that we are telling you: that God is Light and in Him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness, we are lying and not practising the truth.

The blood of Jesus cleanses from sin

⁷ However, if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we are making Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.

2

¹ My little children, I am writing this to you that you may not sin. If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ² He is the propitiation for our sins and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

An exhortation to live in love and in the light

³ We know that we know Him if we keep His Commandments. ⁴ The person who says, "I know Him," but does not keep His Commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ However, God's love has truly been made complete in whoever keeps His Word. That is how we know that we are in Him. ⁶ The person who says that he remains in Him should also himself live as He lived. ⁷ Dearly loved people, I am not writing a new Commandment for you but an old Commandment, which you used to have from the beginning. The old Commandment is the Word that you have heard.

⁸ Again, I am writing a new Commandment for you, and this is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the genuine Light is already shining. ⁹ The person who says that he is in the light but hates his brother is in darkness until now. ¹⁰ The person who loves his brother remains in the light, and there is nothing in him that causes someone else to stumble.

¹¹ The person who hates his brother is in the darkness,

walks in the darkness and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

A warning not to love the world

¹² I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven because of His name. ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have conquered the Evil One. ¹⁴ I am writing to you, children, because you know the Father. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you are strong, the Word of God remains in you and you have conquered the Evil One. ¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world! If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything in the world — the sinful desires of the human nature, the sinful desires of the eyes and pride in one's possessions — does not come from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world is also passing away with its sinful desires, but the person who does the will of God remains for ever.

A warning about the coming of the Antichrist and many antichrists

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour and, as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us but did not belong to us. For, if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. However, they went out that they might be made known, because not all belong to us. ²⁰ You, however, have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge. ²¹ I am not writing to you because you do not know the truth but because you know it and because no lie comes from the truth. ²² Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This one is the Antichrist: he who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Everyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either. The one who confesses the Son also has the Father. ²⁴ As for you, let what you have heard from the beginning remain in you! If what you have been hearing from the beginning remains in you, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ Moreover, this is the promise that He has promised us: eternal life. ²⁶ I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷ However, as for you, the anointing that you have received from Him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. Rather, as His own anointing teaches you about all things and, as it is true and is not a lie and as it has taught you, remain in Him! ²⁸ Now, little children, remain in Him, so that, when He appears, we may be confident and may not be put to shame before Him at His coming!

The message that believers are God's children (2:29- 4:6)
Rebirth from God and a warning against persistent sin

²⁹ If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who keeps on doing what is right has been

born from Him.

3

¹ See what great love the Father has given to us, that we are called “the children of God”! That is what we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it has not known Him. ² Dearly loved people, we are now the children of God, but it has not yet been shown what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him because we shall see Him as He is.

³ Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. ⁴ Everyone who keeps on committing sin also keeps on committing lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You also know that He appeared to take away our sins, and there is no sin in Him. ⁶ No one who remains in Him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has seen Him or known Him. ⁷ Little children, let no one lead you astray! Whoever does what is right is righteous, as He is righteous. ⁸ The person who keeps on committing sin is from the Devil, because the Devil has been sinning from the beginning. The purpose for which the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the Devil. ⁹ No one who has been born from God keeps on sinning, because God’s seed remains in him, and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born from God. ¹⁰ This is how the children of God and the children of the Devil are obvious: no one who fails to do what is right or to love his brother is from God.

An exhortation to love one another

¹¹ For this is the message that you have been hearing from the beginning: that we should love one another. ¹² We should not be like Cain, who belonged to the Evil One and murdered his brother. Why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s works were righteous. ¹³ Do not be astonished, my fellow-Christians, if the world hates you! ¹⁴ We know that we have moved away from death into life, because we love our brothers. The person who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. ¹⁶ This is how we know love: He has laid down His life for us. We also ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has this world’s goods and sees his brother in need but shuts his heart against him, how does the love of God remain in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not only love in words or in talk but in deeds and in truth! ¹⁹ This is how we shall know that we belong to the truth and how we shall assure our hearts before Him: ²⁰ For whenever our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knows everything. ²¹ Dearly loved people, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from Him whatever we ask for, because we keep His Commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³ This is also His Commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son,

Jesus Christ and love one another as He has commanded us. ²⁴ He who keeps His Commandments remains in God, and God remains in him. This is also how we know that He remains in us: by the Spirit, whom He has given to us.

4

A warning to beware of false prophets

¹ Dearly loved people, do not believe every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they are from God! For many false prophets have gone out into the world.

² This is how you recognise the Spirit of God: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. ³ However, any spirit who does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and which is already now in the world. ⁴ You are from God, little children, and you have overcome them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world. That is why they speak from the viewpoint of the world and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God. He who knows God listens to us. He who is not from God does not listen to us. In this way we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

The message that God is love (4:7-5:12)

The love of Christians is motivated by God’s love to them

⁷ Dearly loved people, let us love one another! For love comes from God, and everyone who loves has been given birth by God and knows God. ⁸ The one who does not love has not known God, because God is Love. ⁹ This is how God has shown His love among us: He has sent His only Son into the world that we may live through Him. ¹⁰ This is what love is: not that we have loved God but that He has loved us and has sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

¹¹ Dearly loved people, since that is how God has loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us, and His love has been brought to maturity in us.

¹³ This is how we know that we remain in Him and He in us: He has given us His Spirit. ¹⁴ We have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son as the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him, and he remains in God.

¹⁶ We have also known and have believed the love that God has for us. God is Love, and he who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

¹⁷ His love has been brought to maturity with us in this, that we have confidence on the Day of Judgment, because we are like Him in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but mature love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment. The person who is afraid has not been brought to maturity in love. ¹⁹ We love because He first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, “I love God,” but hates his brother, he is a liar. For no one who fails to love his brother, whom he has seen, can love God,

whom he has not seen. ²¹ This is also the Commandment that we have from Him, that he who loves God should also love his brother.

5

Faith in the Son of God and Christians' love for one another

¹ Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born from God, and everyone who loves the Father also loves the child who has been fathered by Him. ² This is how we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and carry out His Commandments. ³ For this is love for God: that we keep His Commandments. His Commands are also not burdensome. ⁴ For whatever has been born from God conquers the world, and this is the victory that has overcome the world: our faith. ⁵ Who is the one who conquers the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ⁶ This is the One who has come through water and blood: Jesus Christ. He has not come by water only but by water and by blood. Moreover, it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the Truth. ⁷ There are three who are giving witness: ⁸ the Spirit, the water and the blood, and these three have one purpose. ⁹ If we receive the testimony of human beings, the testimony of God is greater, because this is the testimony of God, which He has given about His Son. ¹⁰ The person who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. The person who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given about His Son. ¹¹ This is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life and this

life is in His Son. ¹² The person who has the Son has life. The person who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

The great certainties to which believers hold (5:13-20)

¹³ I am writing these things to you that you, who believe in the name of the Son of God, may know that you have eternal life. ¹⁴ This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask for anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ If we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we also know that we have from Him the requests that we have made. ¹⁶ If someone sees his brother committing a sin that does not lead to death, he should ask, and God will give him life. This is so for those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. ¹⁷ All wrongdoing is sin, and there is a sin that does not lead to death. ¹⁸ We know that no one who has been born from God keeps on sinning, but the One who has been born from God protects him, and the Evil One does not touch him. ¹⁹ We know that we are from God and that the whole world lies under the control of the Evil One. ²⁰ We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Closing admonition (5:21)

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols!

2 JOHN

Opening greeting (1-3)

¹ The Elder, To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not only I but also all who know the truth, ² because of the truth that remains in us and will be with us for ever. ³ Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love!

Walking in the truth (4-6)

⁴ I have been very joyful because I have found some of your children walking in the truth, as the Father has commanded us. ⁵ Now I ask you, lady, not as if I were writing a new Commandment to you but the one that we have had from the beginning, that we should love one another. ⁶ Moreover, this is love, that we walk according to His Commandments. This is the Commandment, that, as you have heard it from the beginning, you should walk in love.

Erroneous teachers (7-11)

⁷ For many deceivers, who do not confess that Jesus

Christ comes in a human body, have gone out into the world. This is the deceiver and the Antichrist. ⁸ Watch yourselves, that you may not lose what you have worked for but that you may receive a full reward.

⁹ Everyone who goes beyond limits and does not remain in what Christ has taught does not have God. The person who remains in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or say a greeting to him! ¹¹ For the person who says a greeting to him shares in his wicked deeds.

Conclusion: John's plan to visit the congregation and a greeting (12-13)

¹² Although I have many things to write to you, I do not want to do it with paper and ink but hope to come to you and talk face to face, that our joy may be complete. ¹³ The children of your chosen sister greet you.

3 JOHN

Opening greeting (1)

¹ The Elder, To my dear Gaius, whom I love in truth.

A comment about Gaius (2-8)

² Dearly loved man, I pray that you are doing well in every way and are healthy, just as your soul is doing well. ³ I was delighted when some fellow-Christians came and told me about the truth that you have — how you continue to live in it. ⁴ Nothing gives me greater joy than to hear that my children continue to live in the truth.

⁵ Dearly loved man, you are exercising your faith in what you are doing for your fellow-Christians, even though they are strangers. ⁶ They have publicly told the church about your love. Please help them on their way, as it is right before God, ⁷ because they went out for the sake of the Name, without accepting anything from the Gentiles. ⁸ We have an obligation to support such people to work with them for the truth.

Criticism of Diotrephes (9-10)

⁹ I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be in charge, will not listen to us. ¹⁰ For this reason, if I come, I shall bring up what he is doing

when he talks such wicked nonsense about us. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the fellow-Christians as guests. He also attempts to stop those who want to welcome them and tries to put them out of the church.

About Demetrius (11-12)

¹¹ Dearly loved man, do not imitate what is wrong but what is right! The one who does what is right is the child of God. The one who does wrong has not seen God.

¹² Everyone speaks well of Demetrius, and so does the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.

Conclusion: John's plan to visit Gaius and greetings (13-15)

¹³ I have much to write to you but do not want to do it with pen and ink. ¹⁴ I hope to see you very soon and talk with you face to face.

¹⁵ Peace to you! The friends here send you their greetings. Greet each of our friends by name!

JUDE

Opening greeting (1-2)

¹ Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who have been loved in God the Father and preserved through Jesus Christ:

² May mercy, peace and love be yours **in ever greater measure!**

The purpose of the letter (3-4)

An exhortation to fight for the faith

³ Dearly loved people, although I have been very eager to keep writing to you about our common salvation, I have found it necessary to write to you and urge you to contend for the faith that has once for all been delivered to God's holy people. ⁴ There are some people who have slipped in stealthily among you. Some time ago it was written that they must be condemned in this way. They are ungodly persons, who turn the grace of our God into immorality and who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Examples of God's judgment (5-7)

⁵ I want to remind you, although you already know all this, that the Lord once for all saved His people from the land of Egypt but afterwards destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ He has also kept in everlasting chains and in gloom, for the judgment of the great day, the angels who did not keep their proper domain but abandoned their own dwelling. ⁷ They are like Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, which in a similar way to theirs committed sexual sins and indulged in unnatural vice. As they suffer their penalty, they lie before us as an example of eternal fire.

A description of false teachers (8-16)

⁸ Yet, in a similar way, these men also have visions in dreams and defile the body, reject the Lord's majesty and slander glorious angelic beings. ⁹ When **the arch-angel Michael** was disputing with the Devil and having a discussion about the body of Moses, he did not dare to pronounce a slanderous judgment against him but said, "**May the Lord rebuke you!**" ¹⁰ However, these people slander whatever they do not understand and whatever they do know naturally, like unthinking animals, they use to destroy themselves. ¹¹ How terrible for them! For they have gone in the way of Cain. They have abandoned themselves to the error of Balaam for profit and been destroyed in the rebellion of Korah.

¹² They are the people who are stains on your love-

feasts when they feast together with you without fear. They are shepherds who look after themselves. They are clouds without water driven along by the winds. They are trees in late autumn without fruit, twice dead, because they have been torn up by the roots. ¹³ They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame. They are wandering stars, for whom black darkness has been reserved for ever. ¹⁴ Enoch, the seventh in descent from Adam, prophesied about them also. He said, "Look! The Lord has come with ten thousands of His holy ones, ¹⁵ to carry out judgment on all and to convict every soul for all the ungodly things that they have done in their ungodliness and for all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." ¹⁶ These people are grumblers and faultfinders. They follow their own sinful desires. Their mouths speak high-sounding words and they flatter people to gain an advantage.

Advice to remember Words of the apostles (17-23)

¹⁷ However, as for you, dearly loved people, remember the Words that have been predicted by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ! ¹⁸ They have told you, "In the last time there will be scoffers who follow their own ungodly desires." ¹⁹ These people are the ones who cause divisions. They are worldly and do not have the Spirit.

An exhortation to increase in faith

²⁰ You, however, dearly loved people, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit!

²¹ Keep yourselves in the love of God and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you eternal life!

²² Some people have doubts. Show mercy on them!

²³ Save others "**by snatching them out of the fire!**"! Show mercy to still others, with fear, detesting even the garment stained by the flesh!

Closing doxology (24-25)

²⁴ Furthermore, to Him who can keep you from falling and to make you stand without fault and with great joy in His glorious presence, ²⁵ to the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power and authority, before all ages and now and for ever and ever! Amen.

REVELATION

1

Introduction (1:1-20)

¹ This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him, to show His servants **the things that must soon happen**. He signified it and sent it through His angel to His servant John. ² John has borne witness about the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, about everything that he has seen. ³ Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the Words of this prophecy and keep the things that have been written in it! For the time is near.

Messages to the seven churches

⁴ John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from **the One Who Is** and the One Who Was and the One **Who Is Coming** and from the Seven Spirits who are before His throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, **the faithful Witness, the First-born** from the dead and **the Ruler over the kings of the earth**. To Him who loves us and has **freed us from our sins** by His blood ⁶ and has made us **a kingdom, priests** to God and His Father — to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

⁷ **Look! He is coming with the clouds**, and every eye will see Him, even the men who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

⁸ **“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, the One Who Is and the One Who Was and the One Who Is Coming, the Almighty.**

⁹ I, John, your fellow-Christian and companion with you in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patience in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, ¹¹ saying: “Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea!”

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me. When I turned **I saw** seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and among the lampstands **Someone like the Son of Man**. He was clothed **with a robe that reached down to His feet** and wore a **golden belt** around His chest.

¹⁴ **His head and His hair were white like wool, white like snow, and His eyes were like a flame of fire.**

¹⁵ **His feet were like fine brass**, as if refined in a furnace, and **His voice was like the sound of many waters**. ¹⁶ In His right hand He was holding seven stars. Out of His mouth came a sharp, double-edged sword, and His face was **like the sun when it shines in its strength**.

¹⁷ When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. He laid His right hand on me, saying: **“Stop being afraid! I am the First and the Last,** ¹⁸ and the One Who Lives; and I died, and look! I am alive for ever

and ever and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

¹⁹ Therefore, write down the things that you have seen, the things that are now and **the things that are going to happen after this!** ²⁰ **The mystery** of the seven stars that you have seen in My right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”

2

The first vision: the letters to the seven churches (2:1-3:22)

A letter to the church in Ephesus

¹ “Write to the angel of the church at Ephesus: ‘The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says these things: ² “I know your deeds, your hard work and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who say that they are apostles and are not and that you have found that they are liars. ³ You have patiently endured and have suffered trouble because of My name and have not grown weary. ⁴ However, I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, repent and do the things that you did at first! Otherwise, unless you repent, I shall come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. ⁶ However, you have this, that you hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ Let the one who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches! ‘I shall give to the one who wins the victory the right to eat from **the tree of life, which is in the Paradise** of God.’””

A letter to the church in Smyrna

⁸ “Write to the angel of the church at Smyrna: ‘**The First and the Last**, who died and came to life, says these things: ⁹ “I know your tribulation and your poverty, but you are rich. I know the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not but are the synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ Do not be afraid at all of the things that you are about to suffer. Look! The Devil is about to throw some of you into prison that you may **be tested**, and you will have tribulation **for ten days**. Continue to be faithful until death, and I shall give you the crown of life. ¹¹ Let the one who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches! ‘The one who overcomes will certainly not be hurt by the second death.’””

A letter to the church in Pergamum

¹² “Write to the angel of the church at Pergamum: ‘He who holds the sharp, two-edged sword says these things: ¹³ “I know where you are living, where the throne of Satan is, and yet you are clinging to My name and have not denied your faith in Me, even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴ However, I have a few things against you, that you have men there who hold what **Balaam** taught. He tried to teach Balak to put a

stumbling-block in front of **the people of Israel**, that they might **eat food sacrificed to idols** and **commit sexual immorality**.¹⁵ You also have those who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.¹⁶ Therefore, repent! Otherwise, I shall come to you quickly and fight against them with the sword of My mouth.¹⁷ Let the one who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches! 'I shall give to the one who overcomes some of the hidden manna and **shall give him** a white stone and **a new name** written on the stone, a name that no one knows except the one who receives it.'""

A letter to the church in Thyatira

¹⁸ "Write to the angel of the church at Thyatira: 'The Son of God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire and whose feet are like fine brass, says these things:¹⁹ "I know your deeds, your love, your faith, your service and your patient endurance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first.²⁰ However, I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and who teaches and misleads My servants **to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols**.²¹ I have given her time to repent, and yet she is unwilling to repent of her sexual immorality.²² Look! I am throwing her into a bed and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of what she is doing.²³ I shall certainly kill her children, and all the churches will know that I am the One who **searches minds and hearts** and **I shall give to each** of you **according to what you have done**.²⁴ However, I say to the rest of you at Thyatira, to all who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned the 'deep things' of Satan, as they call them: 'I am not putting any other burden on you.²⁵ Only cling to what you have until I come!²⁶ **I shall also give** authority over the **nations** to the one who conquers and continues to keep My works to the end.²⁷ 'He **will rule them with a rod of iron. They will be broken in pieces like pots made of clay,**'²⁸ as I have also received authority from My Father, and I shall give him the morning star.²⁹ Let the one who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches!""

3

A letter to the church in Sardis

¹ "Write to the angel of the church at Sardis: 'He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars says these things: "I know your deeds, that you have a reputation that you are alive and yet you are dead.² Be watchful and strengthen the rest of the things that are about to die! For I have not found that your deeds are complete in the sight of My God.³ Therefore, remember what you have received and heard and hold on to it and repent! Therefore, if you do not become watchful, I shall come like a thief, and you will certainly not know at what hour I shall come on you.⁴ However, you have a few names at Sardis who have not defiled their clothes, and they will walk with Me in white garments, because they are worthy.⁵ The one who overcomes

will be dressed in this way in white garments, and I shall certainly not **erase his name from the Book of Life** but shall confess his name before My Father and before His angels.⁶ Let the one who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches!""

A letter to the church in Philadelphia

⁷ "Write to the angel of the church at Philadelphia: 'The One who is holy, the One who is genuine, the One who has **the key of David, who opens and no one will shut and who shuts and no one opens**, says these things:⁸ "I know your deeds. See! I have placed before you an open door, which no one can shut. For you have little strength and yet you have been keeping My Word and have not denied My name.⁹ Look! I shall make those of the synagogue of Satan, those who say that they are Jews and yet are not but are lying — indeed, I shall make them **come and fall** at your feet and find out that **I have loved you**.¹⁰ Because you have kept My Word of patient endurance, I shall also keep you from the time of testing that is about to come on the whole world to test those who are living on the earth.¹¹ I am coming soon. Cling to what you have, that no one may take your crown!¹² I shall make the one who overcomes a pillar in the Temple of My God, and he will certainly not go outside any longer. I shall write on him the name of My God and **the name of the city** of My God, the New Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from My God and My **new name**.¹³ Let the one who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches!""

A letter to the church in Laodicea

¹⁴ "Write to the angel of the church at Laodicea: 'The Amen, **the Witness who is faithful** and true, **the Beginning of the creation of God**, says these things:¹⁵ "I know what you are doing, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot.¹⁶ So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth.¹⁷ Because you are saying: '**I am rich** and have become **wealthy** and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are miserable, pitiful, poor, blind and naked,¹⁸ I advise you to buy gold from Me that has been refined in fire, that you may be rich and to buy white clothes, that you may put them on and that your shameful nakedness may not be revealed and to buy salve to put on your eyes, that you may see.¹⁹ **I correct and discipline all whom I love**. Therefore, take this seriously and repent!²⁰ See! I am standing **at the door** and **knocking**. If anyone listens to My voice and opens the door, I shall come in to him and have dinner with him, and he with Me.²¹ I shall give to the one who wins the victory the privilege of sitting with Me on My throne, just as I have won the victory and have sat down with My Father on His throne.²² Let the one who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches!""

4

Second vision: seven seals (4:1-7:17)

A vision of the heavenly court in session around the throne

¹ After these things I looked and saw that a door had been opened in heaven. The first sound that I heard was like that of a trumpet speaking to me. It said, “**Come up** here, and I shall show you the things that must happen after this.”

² At once I was in the Spirit and **saw** that a throne had been placed in heaven, and **Someone was sitting on the throne!** ³ **The One who was sitting** there looked like a jasper-stone and like a carnelian-stone, and there was **a rainbow around** the throne that looked like an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne I saw twenty-four thrones and saw twenty-four elders sitting on the thrones, dressed in white garments, and I saw golden crowns on their heads. ⁵ **Flashes of lightning, rumblings** and peals of thunder **were coming** out of the throne, and seven flaming lamps, which are the Seven Spirits of God, were burning in front of the throne. ⁶ In front of the throne there was also something like a sea of glass, **like crystal**; and **in the middle** of the throne and around the throne there were **four living creatures, full of eyes**, in the front and in the back. ⁷ **The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature was like an ox, the third living creature had a face like that of a human being and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.** ⁸ **Each** of the four living creatures **had six wings** that were **full of eyes all around** and on the inside. By day and by night they do not rest and keep saying: “**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, The One Who Was and The One-Who Is and The One Who Is Coming.**”

⁹ Whenever the living creatures **give glory**, honour and thanks **to Him who is sitting on the throne**, to **Him who lives for ever and ever**, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders **fall before Him** who is **sitting on the throne** and **worship Him who lives for ever and ever**. They place their crowns before the throne, saying: ¹¹ “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power. For You have created all things, and because of Your will they came into existence and were created.”

5

A vision of the Lamb and the scroll with seven seals

¹ In the right hand of **Him who was sitting on the throne** I saw **a scroll with writing on the inside and on the back, which had been sealed** with seven seals.

² Then I saw a mighty angel, proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to break the seals on it?”

³ No one in heaven, on the earth or under the earth could open the scroll or look at it. ⁴ I was weeping bitterly because no one had been found who was worthy to open the scroll or look at it. ⁵ Then one of the elders told me: “Stop weeping! Look! The **Lion** from the tribe of **Judah, the Root of David**, has won the victory, so that He can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

⁶ Then I saw, in the middle of the throne and of the four

living creatures and in the middle of the elders, a **Lamb** standing, looking as though it had been **slain**. He had seven horns and **seven eyes**, which are the Seven Spirits of God, who have been sent **into all the earth**.

⁷ Then He went and took the scroll out of the right hand of the One who was sitting on the throne. ⁸ When He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb. Each held a harp and golden bowls full of **incense**, which are the **prayers** of God’s holy people. ⁹ They **sang a new song**, with the words: “You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals, because You have been slain, and by Your blood You have purchased people to be God’s own out of every **tribe, language, people and nation**. ¹⁰ You have made them a **kingdom and priests** to our God, and they **will reign on the earth**.”

¹¹ Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders. Their number was **ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands**. ¹² They were saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the **Lamb** who has been **slain** to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing!”

¹³ Then I heard every creature that is in heaven, on earth, under the earth and on the sea and all that are in them, saying: “**To Him who sits on the throne** and to the Lamb be blessing, honour, glory and power for ever and ever!”

¹⁴ The four living creatures were saying, “Amen!” and the elders **fell and worshipped**.

6

The carrying out of the initial verdicts, six afflictions

¹ I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come!”

² I looked and saw **a white horse**. The one who was riding it had a bow. He was given a crown and went out conquering and to conquer. ³ When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come!”

⁴ Another **horse** came out, a fiery **red** one. Its rider was given the power to take peace away from the earth, that people should kill one another, and he was given a large sword. ⁵ When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, “Come!”

I looked and saw a **black horse**. Its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶ Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying: “A kilogram of wheat for a day’s wages, and three kilograms of barley for a day’s wages. Do not damage the olive-oil and the wine!” ⁷ When the Lamb opened the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come!”

⁸ Then I looked and saw a light-green horse. Its rider had the name “**Death**,” and **Hades** was following close behind him. They were given authority over a quarter of the earth to use the **sword, famine, plague** and the

wild animals of the earth to kill **people**.⁹ When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God and because of the testimony that they used to hold.¹⁰ They called out with a loud voice, saying: “**How long, holy and true Master, until You judge the inhabitants of the earth and take revenge on them for our blood?**”¹¹ Each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow-servants and of their brothers who were about to be killed was also completed, as they themselves had also been killed.

¹² When He opened the sixth seal, I looked and a great earthquake took place. The **sun became as black** as sackcloth made of hair, and **the whole moon became like blood**.¹³ **The stars in the sky fell** to the earth as when a **fig tree** that is shaken by a strong wind drops its late figs.¹⁴ **The sky receded like a scroll when it is rolled up**, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.¹⁵ **The kings of the earth**, the great men, the generals, the rich men, the mighty men and every slave and every free man **hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks** of the mountains.¹⁶ They kept **saying to the mountains and rocks: “Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One who is sitting on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!**”¹⁷ **For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”**

7

The sealing of believers for salvation before the opening of the seventh seal, and the sounding of seven trumpets

¹ After this I saw four angels standing at the **four corners** of the earth, holding back **the four winds of the earth**, that no wind might blow on the land, on the sea or on any tree.² Then I saw another angel coming up from the east with the seal of the living God. He called out with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage the land and the sea,³ saying: “Do not damage the land or the sea or the trees until we have **sealed** the servants of our God **on their foreheads!**”

⁴ Then I heard the number of those who had been sealed: “one hundred and forty-four thousand,” sealed from every tribe of the people of Israel.⁵ From the tribe of Judah twelve thousand had been sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand,⁶ from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand,⁷ from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand,⁸ from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand and from the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand had been sealed.⁹ After this, I looked and saw a large crowd that no one could count, from every **nation and all tribes, peoples and languages**, standing before the throne and before

the Lamb, wearing white robes and carrying palm-branches in their hands.¹⁰ They called out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our **God, who sits on the throne** and to the Lamb!”

¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne, around the elders and around the four living creatures. They **fell** on their faces before the throne and **worshipped God**,¹² saying: “Amen! Blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power and strength be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.”

¹³ Then one of the elders asked me: “Who are these people who have been clothed in the white robes and where have they come from?”

¹⁴ I replied to him, “My master, you know.”

He told me: “These are the people who have come out of the great tribulation. They have **washed** their robes and have made them white in **the blood of the Lamb**.

¹⁵ Therefore, they are before the throne of God and keep serving Him day and night in His Temple, and **He who is sitting on the throne** will shelter them with His tent.¹⁶ **They will not be hungry any longer or thirsty any longer. The sun will certainly not beat on them or any scorching heat,**¹⁷ because the Lamb, who is in the middle of the throne, **will be their Shepherd and lead them to springs of the water of life. God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”**

8

The third vision: seven trumpets (8:1-11:19)

The offering of prayers with incense

¹ When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.² I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and they were given seven trumpets.³ Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and **stood at the altar**. He was given much **incense**, that he might offer it on the golden altar that was in front of the throne with the **prayers** of all God’s holy people.⁴ The smoke of the **incense**, with the **prayers** of God’s holy people, went up from the angel’s hand before God.⁵ The angel took **the censer, filled it with fire from the altar** and threw it onto the earth. There were peals of thunder, **rumblings, flashes of lightning** and an earthquake.

The sounding of verdicts by the first six trumpets: six afflictions

⁶ Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets got themselves ready to blow them.⁷ The first angel blew his trumpet, and **hail and fire** came, mixed with blood, and they were thrown **onto the earth**. A third of the earth was burnt up, a third of the trees were burnt up and all the green grass was burnt up.⁸ The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a huge **mountain blazing** with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea **became blood**.⁹ A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.¹⁰ The third angel blew his trumpet, and a huge **star**, flaming like a torch, **fell from the sky**. It fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water.¹¹ The star is named “Wormwood.” A third of the

waters became wormwood, and many human beings died from the waters, because they had been made bitter. ¹² The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of **the sun** was struck, a third of **the moon** and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were made dark and so that a third of the day had **no light** and similarly for the night. ¹³ I looked and heard an eagle flying in the zenith of the heavens, saying with a loud voice: "How terrible! How terrible! How terrible for the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining trumpet-blasts of the three angels who are about to blow their trumpets!"

9

The first woe

¹ The fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw that **a star had fallen out of the sky onto the earth**. It was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. ² It opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and **smoke went up from the shaft like the smoke of a large furnace**. **The sun** and the air **were darkened** because of the smoke from the shaft. ³ **Locusts came** out of the smoke **onto the earth** and were given the kind of power that earthly scorpions have. ⁴ They were told not to damage the grass of the earth, any green plant or any tree but to harm only the people who do not have the **seal of God on their foreheads**. ⁵ They were not given authority to kill them but only to torture them for five months. Their torture was like the torture of a scorpion when it stings a human being. ⁶ In those days, people will **look for death but will certainly not find it**. They will long to die, but death will flee from them. ⁷ The locusts looked like **horses** that have been prepared **for battle**. On their heads there seemed to be crowns that looked like gold, and yet their faces resembled human faces. ⁸ They had hair like women's hair, and yet their **teeth were like lions' teeth**. ⁹ They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was **like the roar of chariots** with many horses **rushing into battle**. ¹⁰ They had tails like scorpions and stings, and in their tails they had the power to hurt people for five months. ¹¹ They had the angel of the bottomless pit over them as king. In Hebrew his name is "Abaddon," and in Greek he has the name "Apollyon." ¹² The first woe has gone past. Be aware that two more woes are coming after these things!

The second woe

¹³ Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God. ¹⁴ He was telling the sixth angel, the one who was holding the trumpet, "Release the four angels who have been tied up at **the great river Euphrates!**" ¹⁵ The four angels, who had been prepared for that hour, day, month and year, were untied to kill a third of human beings. ¹⁶ The number of the soldiers on horses was two hundred million. I heard how many there were. ¹⁷ This was the way in which I saw the horses in the vision and those who were riding on them: the riders had breastplates that were fiery-red, hyacinth-colour

and sulphur-yellow. The horses had heads like lions' heads, and fire, smoke and sulphur were coming out of their mouths. ¹⁸ A third of human beings were killed by these three plagues, by the fire, the smoke and the sulphur, which kept coming out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For the power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails. For their tails were like snakes and had heads, with which they were causing injury. ²⁰ The rest of human beings, those who had not been not killed by these plagues, did not even repent over **what their hands had made**. If they had, they would have stopped worshipping demons and **idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood, things that cannot either see, hear or walk**. ²¹ They also did not repent of their murders, their **magic potions**, their **sexual sin** or their thefts.

10

The vision of the mighty angel and the little scroll

¹ I saw another mighty Angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow over His head. His face was like the sun, and His legs were like pillars of fire. ² He was holding in His hand a little scroll, which was unrolled. He placed His right foot on the sea and His left foot on the land. ³ He shouted with a loud voice, like the roaring of a lion. When He shouted, the seven thunders uttered their own sounds. ⁴ When the seven thunders had spoken, I was about to write but heard a voice speaking from heaven: "**Seal up** what the seven thunders have spoken and do not write them down!" ⁵ The Angel whom I had seen standing on the sea and on the land **raised His right hand up to heaven** ⁶ **and swore by Him who lives for ever and ever, who created heaven** and what is in it, **the earth and what is in it** and **the sea and what is in it**: "There will be no more time. ⁷ However, in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, when he is about to blow his trumpet, **the mystery of God** will be completed, **just as He made this good news known to His servants the prophets.**" ⁸ Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, "Go, take the scroll that is unrolled in the hand of the Angel who is standing on the sea and on the land!" ⁹ I went to the Angel and asked Him to give me the little scroll. He **told me**: "Take it and **eat it!** It will make **your stomach** bitter but in your mouth will be as **sweet as honey.**"

¹⁰ I took the little scroll from the Angel's hand and **ate it**. **It was as sweet as honey in my mouth**, but, **when I had eaten it, my stomach** became bitter. ¹¹ Then they told me: "You must prophesy again about many **peoples, nations, languages** and kings."

11

The forty-two months and the two witnesses

¹ Then I was given a measuring stick like a rod. He said: "Stand up, measure the Temple of God and the altar and count those who are worshipping in it!

² However, exclude the outer court of the Temple! Do not measure it! For it has been given **to the Gentiles**. They will **trample on the Holy City** for forty-two months. ³ I shall give authority to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days, dressed in sackcloth. ⁴ **These are the two olive-trees** and the two lampstands that **are standing before the Lord of the earth**. ⁵ If anyone wishes to damage them, **fire comes out of their mouths** and **devours their enemies**. If anyone should wish to damage them, that is how he must be killed. ⁶ These have the authority to shut up the sky so that no **rain** falls during the days when they are prophesying and have the authority over the **waters** to **turn them into blood** and the authority to **strike** the earth **with any plague** as often as they desire. ⁷ When they have finished their testimony, **the beast that comes up** out of the bottomless pit **will wage war against** them, **overcome them** and kill them. ⁸ Their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city, which is figuratively called 'Sodom' and 'Egypt,' where their Lord was also crucified. ⁹ Men from the **peoples, tribes, languages and nations** will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days and will not allow anyone to put them into graves. ¹⁰ Those who live on the earth will rejoice over them, be glad and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets have tormented those who live on the earth." ¹¹ However, after the three and a half days the **breath of life** from God **entered them**, and **they stood up on their feet**. **Great fear fell** on those who were looking at them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" They went up into heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. ¹³ **At that hour there was a great earthquake**. A tenth of the city **fell**, and the earthquake killed seven thousand people. The rest became very afraid and gave glory **to the God of heaven**. ¹⁴ The second woe has gone past. Take note that the third woe is coming soon!

The third woe

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "**The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever.**"

¹⁶ The twenty-four elders, who were sitting on their thrones before God, **fell on their faces and worshipped God**, ¹⁷ saying: "We give thanks to You, **Lord God Almighty**, the One **Who Is** and the One **Who Was**, because You have taken Your great power and have begun **to reign**. ¹⁸ **The nations have been angry**, but Your wrath has come. It is the time for the dead to be judged, for rewarding **Your servants, the prophets**, God's holy people and those **who fear** Your name, **small and great**, and for destroying those who destroy the earth."

¹⁹ Then the Temple of God in heaven was opened, and **the Ark of His Covenant** was seen **in His Temple**.

There were **flashes of lightning, rumblings**, peals of thunder, an earthquake and **heavy hail**.

12

The fourth vision: the woman, her Son and the dragon (12:1-15:4)

¹ A great miraculous sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and with a crown of twelve stars on her head. ² She was pregnant and was crying out in labour and in the **agony of giving birth**. ³ Then another miraculous sign appeared in heaven: a large fire-red dragon appeared **with seven heads** and **ten horns** and with seven crowns on his heads. ⁴ His tail swept away a third **of the stars of heaven** and **threw them onto the earth**. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, to devour her Child when she gave birth. ⁵ **She gave birth to a Son**, a male Child, **who was about to rule all the nations with an iron sceptre**, and her Child was snatched away to God and to His throne.

⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place that had been prepared by God, that they might feed her there for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days. ⁷ Then a war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was **not strong enough, and no place was found for them in heaven any longer**. ⁹ The great dragon was thrown out, the ancient **snake**, who is called "**the Devil**" and "**Satan**," who **deceives** the whole world. He was thrown onto the earth, and his angels were thrown out with him.

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying: "Now the salvation, the power, the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come. For the accuser of our fellow-Christians, the one who accuses them before our God day and night, has been thrown out.

¹¹ They have overcome him because of **the blood of the Lamb** and because of the Word of their testimony, and they have not loved their lives, even to the point of death. ¹² Therefore, **rejoice, heavens** and you who dwell in them! How terrible for the earth and the sea! For the Devil has gone down to you with great anger, because he knows that he has little time."

¹³ When the dragon saw that he had been thrown onto the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male Child. ¹⁴ However, the woman was given two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly away from the serpent's reach to her place in the wilderness, where she continued to be fed **for a time and times and half a time**.

The devil's war against the church

¹⁵ Then the serpent threw water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to cause the flood to carry her away. ¹⁶ However, the earth helped the woman. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the flood that the dragon had hurled out of his mouth. ¹⁷ The dragon was angry with the woman and went away to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who were keep-

ing the Commandments of God and who were holding the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁸ Then the dragon stood on the sandy shore of the sea. ^{*186}

13

The first beast

¹ Then I saw **a beast coming up out of the sea. He had ten horns** and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and there were blasphemous names on his heads. ² The beast that I saw was **like a leopard**, his feet were **like those of a bear**, and his mouth was **like a lion's** mouth. The dragon gave the beast his power, his throne and great authority. ³ I saw that one of his heads looked as if it had been slain, so that it was dead, but his fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and was following the beast. ⁴ They worshipped the dragon, because he had given authority to the beast and worshipped the beast, asking, "Who is like the beast and who can wage war against him?" ⁵ The beast was given a mouth **speaking arrogant** and blasphemous **things** and given authority to **act** for forty-two months. ⁶ He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, to blaspheme His name, His Tabernacle and those who were dwelling in heaven. ⁷ He was given authority to **wage war against God's holy people and to overcome them** and given authority over every **tribe, people, language** and **nation**. ⁸ All who are living on the earth will worship the beast, everyone whose name **has not been written in the Book of Life**, which belongs to **the Lamb**, who has been **slain** from the foundation of the world. ⁹ If anyone has an ear, he should listen! ¹⁰ **If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go.** If anyone is to be killed with a sword, with a sword he must be killed. Under these circumstances, God's holy people have their patience and their faith.

The second beast

¹¹ Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, and yet he spoke like a dragon. ¹² He exercises all the authority of the first beast before him. He makes the earth and those who live on it worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹³ He performs great miraculous signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven onto the earth in the sight of people. ¹⁴ He deceives those who live on the earth because of the miraculous signs that he has been given to perform in front of the beast. He tells those who are living on the earth to make an image for the beast, who had been wounded by the sword and yet had come to life. ¹⁵ He was given power to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast could both talk and cause **all who do not worship the image** of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ He compels all people, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to put a brand on their right hands or on their foreheads. ¹⁷ He also brings it about that no one can buy or sell, except one who has the brand, the name of

the beast or the number of his name. ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. The person who has insight should calculate the number of the beast. For it is the number of a human being, and his number is six hundred and sixty six.

14

The new song

¹ Then I looked and saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him there were one hundred and forty-four thousand, who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. ² I heard a sound from heaven **like the sound of many waters** and the sound of loud thunder. The sound that I heard was also like the music of harpists playing on their harps. ³ They were **singing a new song** before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth. ⁴ These are the ones who have not been defiled with women. For they are chaste people. They are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They have been redeemed from among human beings as the first-fruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵ **No deceit has been found in their mouths.** They are blameless.

Seven judgments from heaven

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying in the zenith of the sky. He had the eternal Good News to tell those who are living on the earth and every **nation, tribe, language** and **people**. ⁷ He was saying with a loud voice: "Fear God and give glory to Him! For the hour has come for Him to judge. Worship Him who has **made the heaven, the earth, the sea** and the springs of water!"

⁸ A second angel followed him, saying: "**Babylon the Great has fallen**, has fallen, she who has **made all the nations drink the wine of her** passionate fornication!"

⁹ Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice: "If **anyone worships the** beast and his **image** and receives his brand on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he himself will also **drink the wine of the fury of God**, which has been poured out **unmixed into the cup of His wrath**. He will be tormented with **fire and sulphur** in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. ¹¹ **The smoke** of their torment **keeps going up for ever and ever. Those who worship the beast** and his **image** and anyone who receives the brand of his name do not have any rest by **day or night**."

¹² Here is the patient endurance of God's holy people, those who keep the Commandments of God and the faith in Jesus.

¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!" "Yes," says the Spirit, "let them rest from their hard work! For their works follow them."

¹⁴ I looked and saw a white cloud and **One who was like the Son of Man was sitting on the cloud**. He had a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. ¹⁵ Another angel came out of the Temple, calling

¹⁸⁶ Some versions place Revelation 12:18 in 13:1.

out with a loud voice to the One who was sitting on the cloud: **“Put in Your sickle and reap! For the hour has come to reap. For the harvest on the earth has ripened.”**

¹⁶ The One who was sitting on the cloud **swung His sickle** over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

¹⁷ Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven and also had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸ Another angel, who had authority over the fire, came out of the altar. He called with a loud voice to the one with the sharp sickle: **“Put in your sharp sickle and gather the bunches from the vine of the earth! For its grapes have ripened.”**

¹⁹ The angel **applied his sickle** to the earth and gathered the grapes from the vine of the earth and threw them into the great winepress of **the wrath of God.**

²⁰ **The winepress was trodden** outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand, six hundred furlongs.

15

Seven plagues

¹ I saw another great and wonderful miraculous sign in heaven: seven angels holding the **seven last plagues**, because by them the wrath of God has been ended. ² I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire. I saw those who had won the victory over the beast, over his image and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass. They were holding harps of God.

³ They were singing **the song of Moses, the servant of God**, and the song of the Lamb, saying: **“Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God Almighty. Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations. Who is there who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all the nations will come and worship before You. For Your righteous judgments have been revealed.”**

The fifth vision: seven bowls (15:5-16:21)

⁵ After this I looked, and the sanctuary of **the Tabernacle of the testimony** was opened in heaven. ⁶ Then the seven angels who were holding the **seven plagues** came out of the sanctuary. They had been clothed in clean, shining linen and had golden sashes fastened around their chests. ⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, **who lives for ever and ever.**

⁸ **The sanctuary was filled with smoke** because of the glory of God and because of His power. No one **could go into** the sanctuary until the **seven plagues** of the seven angels had been completed.

16

¹ Then I heard **a loud voice from the sanctuary** saying to the seven angels: **“Go and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God onto the earth!”**

² The first angel went and poured out his bowl onto the earth, and ugly and **painful sores came on the people** who had the brand of the beast and those who **worshipped his image.** ³ The second angel poured out his

bowl onto the sea, and **it turned into blood** like that of a dead man, and every living creature in the sea **died.**

⁴ The third angel poured out his bowl onto the **ivers** and the springs of water, and they **became blood.**

⁵ Then I heard the angel of the waters saying: **“You are just, You Who Are and You Who Were, the Holy One, because You have judged these things, because they have poured out the blood of Your holy people and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They have deserved it.”**

⁷ Then I heard the altar responding: **“Yes, Lord God Almighty, Your judgments are true and just.”**

⁸ Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl onto the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. ⁹ People were scorched very badly and blasphemed the name of God, who had the authority over these plagues, but did not repent and give Him glory.

¹⁰ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl onto the throne of the beast, and his kingdom **was made dark**, and people gnawed their tongues in pain. ¹¹ They blasphemed **the God of heaven** because of their pains and their sores, and yet they did not repent for what they had done. ¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl onto **the great river Euphrates. Its water was dried up**, that the way for the kings **from the East** might be made ready. ¹³ Then I saw three unclean spirits, which looked like frogs, coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, who perform miraculous signs. They go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of the Almighty God.

¹⁵ **“Look! I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who is watchful and keeps his clothes, that he may not go about naked and that people may not see his private parts!”**

¹⁶ They gathered the kings together at the place that in Hebrew is called **“Armageddon.”** ¹⁷ Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl over the air, and **out of the shrine** a loud voice **came** from the throne, saying, **“It is all over.”**

¹⁸ **There were flashes of lightning and rumblings** and peals of thunder, and a great earthquake took place. It was **such** a great earthquake as has **not occurred since a human being has been on the earth.** ¹⁹ The great city was divided into three parts, and the other cities of the nations fell. **Babylon the Great** was remembered before God, so that He gave her **the cup of the wine of His furious wrath.** ²⁰ Every island fled away, and the mountains could not be found. ²¹ **Huge hailstones** weighing about fifty kilograms each kept coming down from the sky onto people. The people kept blaspheming God because of the plague of hail, because the plague of hail was **exceedingly great.**

17

*The sixth vision: God’s final triumph (17:1-20:15)
The woman and the beast*

¹ Then one of the seven angels who were holding the seven bowls came and told me: "Come here! Let me show you the judgment of the great prostitute, who sits **on many waters!** ² **The kings of the earth have been committing fornication** with her, and **those who were living on the earth have been made drunk by the wine of her sexual sin.**"

³ Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet **beast**, which was full of blasphemous names. It **had** seven heads and **ten horns.** ⁴ The woman had been dressed in purple and scarlet and had been decorated with gold, precious stones and pearls. She was holding in her hand **a golden cup**, which was filled with abominations and the filthiness of her sexual sin. ⁵ A name had been written on her forehead: "Mystery, **Babylon the Great**, the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth."

⁶ I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I was extremely astonished.

⁷ The angel asked me: "Why have you been astonished? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that is carrying her, the **beast that has** the seven heads and the **ten horns.** ⁸ **The beast** that you saw once was and is no longer and yet he is about to **come up from** the bottomless pit and go away to destruction. Those who are living on the earth, those whose names have not been **written in the Book of Life** from the foundation of the world, will be astonished when they see the beast, because he was, is no longer and yet is present again. ⁹ Here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills, on which the woman is sitting, and there are also seven kings. ¹⁰ Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, but, when he comes, he must remain for a short time.

¹¹ The beast who was and is no longer, even he is the eighth king. He comes from the seven and goes away to destruction. ¹² **The ten horns** that you saw **are ten kings**, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³ These have one intention and will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ They will make war against the Lamb the Lamb will overcome them, because He is **the Lord of lords and the King of kings**, and those who are with Him are those who have been called, those who have been chosen and those who believe."

¹⁵ Then the angel told me: "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is sitting, are **peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.** ¹⁶ **The ten horns** and the beast that you saw will hate the prostitute. They will cause her to be forsaken and be naked, devour her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to do what He has decided, to carry out one purpose and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the Words of God are brought to fulfilment. ¹⁸ The woman whom

you saw is the great city, which has royal power over **the kings of the earth.**"

18

The fall of Babylon

¹ After this I saw another angel come down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendour. ² He shouted with a mighty voice: "**Babylon the Great has fallen. She has fallen. She has become a dwelling-place of demons**, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean **bird** and a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast! ³ For all **the nations** have drunk **the wine of her** passionate fornication. **The kings of the earth have committed fornication** with her. The merchants of the earth have become rich because of her powerful sensuality."

⁴ Then I heard another voice saying from heaven: "**Come out of her, My people**, that you may not share in her sins and encounter any of her plagues! ⁵ For her sins **have reached up to heaven**, and God has remembered her crimes. ⁶ **Give back to her as she also has given!** Pay her back twice over **in the same way as she has acted!** Mix a double portion for her in the cup in which she has been mixing! ⁷ Give her as much torture and grief as she has given glory **and luxury** to herself! For **in her heart she keeps saying:** 'I sit as a queen. **I am no widow and shall certainly see no grief.'**

⁸ Therefore, **in one day** her plagues **will come**, death, grief and famine. She will be **burnt with fire**, because the **Lord God, who has judged her, is mighty.**

⁹ When **the kings of the earth, who have been committing fornication** with her and have been living in luxury with her, see the smoke when she is burnt, they will weep and mourn over her. ¹⁰ They will stand at a distance because they are afraid of her torment and say, 'Woe! Woe, O great city, **Babylon, you mighty city!**

For in one hour your judgment has come.' ¹¹ The merchants of the earth are weeping and mourning over her, because no one buys their cargoes any longer:

¹² cargoes of gold, **silver**, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth, every kind of citron wood, every kind of ivory article and every article made of very precious wood, **bronze, iron** and marble,

¹³ cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive-oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, carriages and bodies and souls of **human beings.** ¹⁴ They will say, 'The fruit that your soul longed for has gone away from you, and all your luxury and splendour have perished and left you, and people will not find them any longer at all.'

¹⁵ Those who have been trading in these things and who have been made rich through her, will stand at a distance, because they are afraid of her torment. They will weep and mourn, ¹⁶ saying: 'Woe! Woe, for the great city, which has been dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet and decorated with gold, precious stones and pearls! ¹⁷ For in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' Every sea-captain also, everyone who travels anywhere by ship, the **sailors** and

all who make a living from the sea **stood** at a distance.

¹⁸ When they saw the smoke when she was burnt, they kept on **crying out**: ‘What city has been like this great city?’ ¹⁹ **They threw dust on their heads** and kept on crying out, **weeping, mourning** and saying: ‘How terrible! How terrible for the great city, **whose wealth has made** all who had ships on the sea **rich!** For in one hour the city has been laid waste!’ ²⁰ **Rejoice** over her, O **heaven**, you holy **people**, apostles and prophets! For God has pronounced judgment for you against her.”

²¹ Then a mighty angel lifted up a **boulder** like a large millstone, **threw it into** the sea and said: “With violence **like this, Babylon, the great city, will be thrown down** and not be found any longer at all.

²² The sound of harpists, **musicians**, flautists and trumpeters **will not be heard in you any longer** at all. No skilled worker in any craft will be found in you any longer at all, and the sound of a millstone will not be heard in you any longer at all. ²³ **The light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer at all, and the voices of a bridegroom and a bride will not be heard in you any longer at all. For your merchants have been the great men of the world.** For all the nations have been led astray by your sorcery. ²⁴ The blood of prophets has been found in her, the blood of God’s holy people and of all those who have been murdered on the earth.”

19

Praise to the Lord

¹ After this I heard what seemed to be the loud sound of a great multitude in heaven, saying: “**Hallelujah!** Salvation, glory and power belong to our God! ² For **His judgments are true and just.** For He has judged the great prostitute, who has corrupted the world with her fornication, and **taken vengeance on her for the blood of His servants**, which her hand has shed.”

³ Then they said a second time: “**Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.**”

⁴ The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures **fell and worshipped God**, who was **sitting on the throne.** They were saying, “**Amen. Hallelujah!**”

⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying: “**Praise our God, all you His servants, yes, you who fear Him, small and great!**”

The wedding of the Lamb

⁶ Then I heard what **sounded like a large multitude, what sounded like many waters** and what sounded like loud peals of thunder, saying: “**Hallelujah! For the Lord, our God, the Almighty, has begun to reign.**

⁷ **Let us be glad, let us rejoice** and give Him glory! For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. ⁸ She has been permitted to put on bright and pure fine linen.”

For the fine linen consists of the verdicts over God’s holy people. ⁹ Then the angel told me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who have been invited to the wedding-banquet of the Lamb!’” He also told me, “These are the true Words of God.”

¹⁰ Then **I fell before his feet to worship him.** However, he told me: “See that you do not do that! I am a fellow-servant of yours and of your fellow-Christians, who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

A vision of the King of kings

¹¹ Then I **saw heaven opened**, and look! There was a white horse, and the One who was sitting on it is called “Faithful and True,” and **in righteousness He judges** and makes war. ¹² **His eyes are like a flame of fire** and on His head there are many crowns. He has a name written on Him, which no one knows but He Himself.

¹³ He is clothed in a garment that has been dipped in blood, and His name is called “the Word of God.”

¹⁴ The armies in heaven, dressed in white and clean fine linen, were following Him on white horses. ¹⁵ A sharp sword **comes out of His mouth**, that with it He **may strike down** the nations. He Himself **will rule them with an iron sceptre.** He Himself **treads the winepress of the furious wrath of God Almighty.**

¹⁶ He has a name written on His garment and on His thigh: “**King of kings and Lord of lords.**” ¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun. He cried out with a loud voice, saying **to all the birds that were flying in the zenith of the sky**: “Come here! **Gather together for the great banquet of God,** ¹⁸ that you may **eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of warriors, the flesh of horses and those who sit on them and the flesh of all people, both free and slave, both small and great!**”

¹⁹ Then I saw that the beast, **the kings of the earth** and their armies had **gathered** to make war against the One who was sitting on the horse and against His army.

²⁰ The beast was captured and with him the false prophet, who had performed the miraculous signs in the presence of the beast. With these signs he had led astray those who had received the brand of the beast and who **worshipped his image.** Both of them were thrown alive into the lake of fire **burning with sulphur.** ²¹ The rest were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the One who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

20

The devil’s last battle

¹ Then I saw an Angel coming down from heaven, with the key to the bottomless pit and with a large chain in His hand. ² He seized the dragon, the ancient **snake**, which is the **Devil and Satan** and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the bottomless pit, shut it and sealed it over him, to keep him from leading the Gentiles astray any longer until the thousand years were finished. After this he must be untied for a short time. ⁴ **I saw thrones**, and those who had been **given the right to judge** sat on them. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their witness to Jesus and because of the Word of God. I also saw

those who had not **worshipped the beast** or his **image** and had not received his brand on their foreheads or on their hands. **They began to live** and began to **reign** with Christ for a thousand years ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not begin to live until the thousand years had ended). This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection! The second death has no authority over them, but they will be **priests of God** and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

The judgment

⁷ When the thousand years have ended, Satan will be set free from his prison. ⁸ He will go out to lead astray the Gentiles who are in the four corners of the earth, **Gog and Magog**, to gather them for the battle. They will be as numerous as the sand by the sea. ⁹ They **came up over the breadth of the earth** and surrounded the camp of God's holy people and the city that God has loved. Then **fire came down from heaven and consumed them**. ¹⁰ Then the Devil, who had been leading them astray, was thrown into the lake of **fire and sulphur**, where both the beast and the false prophet are. They will be tormented by day and by night for ever and ever. ¹¹ Then **I saw a great white throne and the One who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky had fled from His presence, and no place was found for them**. ¹² Then I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne. **Books were opened**, and another book was opened, which is **the Book of Life**. The dead were judged **according to what they had done**, on the basis of what had been written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead people who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead people who were in them, and each person was judged **according to what he had done**. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death: the lake of fire. ¹⁵ If anyone was not found **written in the Book of Life**, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

21

The seventh vision: God's new world (21:1-22:5)

A new heaven and a new earth

¹ Then I saw **a new heaven and a new earth**. For the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw **the holy city**, a new **Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared like a bride** adorned for her husband. ³ I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying: "Look! **The Tabernacle of God is among human beings**. He will dwell with them, **they will be His people**, and **God Himself will be with them** as their God. ⁴ **He will wipe every tear from their eyes**, and there will be **no more death**. There will **not** be any **more** grief, **crying** or pain, because **the former things** have passed away." ⁵ **The One who was sitting on the throne** said: "Look! I am **making** all things **new**." He also said: "Write this down! For these Words are trustworthy and genuine."

⁶ Then He said to me: "Everything has taken place. I

am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I shall give **to him who is thirsty water** from the fountain of the **water of life, without cost**. ⁷ The one who wins the victory will inherit these things, and **I shall be his God, and he will be My son**. ⁸ However, the portion of cowardly, unbelieving and abominable people, murderers, sexual sinners, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars will be in the lake that **burns with fire and sulphur**, which is the second death."

The new Jerusalem

⁹ Then one of the seven angels who were holding the seven bowls full of the **seven last plagues** came and told me, "Come! I shall show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

¹⁰ He carried me away in the Spirit **to a large, high mountain** and showed me **the Holy City, Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ **It had the glory of God**. Its brilliance was like a very precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall with **twelve gates**, with twelve angels at the gates. Names had been **written** on the gates and are the names **of the twelve tribes of Israel**. ¹³ There were **three gates on the east side, three gates on the north, three gates on the south and three gates on the west**. ¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵ The angel who was talking to me had a golden **measuring-rod** to measure the city, its gates and its wall. ¹⁶ The city was laid out as a **square**: its length was as great as its breadth. He measured the city with the rod: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth and height were equal. ¹⁷ He measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to human measurement, which the angel was using. ¹⁸ The material of its wall was jasper, and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹ **The foundations** of the wall of the city had been decorated with every kind of precious stone: the first foundation was jasper, the second **sapphire**, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was made of a single pearl. The street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. ²² I did not see any temple in the city. For **the Lord God Almighty** and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city also does not need **the sun or the moon to shine** in it. For the **glory of God** has given it **light**, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ **The nations will walk by its light**, and **the kings of the earth bring** their splendour into it. ²⁵ **Its gates will not be shut at all by day**. For there will be no night there. ²⁶ People will bring the splendour and wealth of the nations into it. ²⁷ **Nothing that defiles** and no one who does anything abominable or tells lies **will ever come into it**, but only **those who have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life**.

22

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the **water of life**, as clear as crystal, **coming out from** the throne of God and of the Lamb. ² In the middle of its street and **on each side of the river** there was **the tree of life**. It **produces** twelve crops of **fruit**, **each** tree yielding **its fruit every month**. **The leaves of the tree serve to heal** the nations. ³ **There will be no curse any longer**. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. ⁴ They will **see His face**, and His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ **There will be no night any longer**, and people do not need the light of a lamp or the light of **the sun**, because **the Lord God will shine** on them, and **they will reign for ever and ever**.

Conclusion (22:6-21)

I am coming soon

⁶ He said to me: "These Words are faithful and genuine. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent His angel to show His servants **the things that must soon take place**. ⁷ Look! I am coming soon. Blessed is he who keeps the Words of the prophecy of this book!"

⁸ I, John, am the one who have heard and seen these things. When I had heard and seen them, **I fell to worship** at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. ⁹ However, he told me: "See that you do not do that! I am a fellow-servant of yours and of your fellow-Christians, the prophets and those who keep the Words of this book. Worship God!"

¹⁰ Then he told me: "**Do not seal up** the Words of the prophecy of **this book!** For the **time** is near. ¹¹ Let **the wrongdoer still do wrong**, let the filthy person still be

filthy! Let the righteous person still do right, and let the holy person still be holy!

¹² "See! **I am coming** soon, and **My reward is with Me, to repay everyone according to what he has done**. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, **the First and the Last**, the Beginning and the End. ¹⁴ Blessed are those who **wash their robes** that they may have the right to **the tree of life** and may enter through the gates into the city! ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs, the people who practise witchcraft, sin sexually, murder and worship idols and everyone who loves and practises falsehood. ¹⁶ I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give this testimony to you for the churches. I am **the Root and the Offspring of David**, the Bright Morning Star."

¹⁷ The Spirit and the bride also say, "Come!" Let the one who hears this also say, "Come!" **Let the one who is thirsty also come!** Let the one who desires it take **the water of life as a free gift!** ¹⁸ I testify to everyone who hears the Words of this prophetic book: If anyone **adds anything to them**, God will **add to him** the plagues that have been **written in this book**. ¹⁹ If anyone **takes away** any of the Words of this prophetic book, **God will take away** his part in the **tree of life**, in the Holy City and in the things that have been written in this book."

²⁰ He who is testifying to these things says, "Yes, **I am coming soon**."

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all! Amen.